AN ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYEE RETENTION: A STUDY OF SELECTED LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES IN THE SARAH BAARTMAN DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

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ABSTRACT

The success of municipalities largely depends on the quality (skills, knowledge and experience) of individuals employed at those institutions. As key role players in the delivery of services, municipalities struggle to retain a high calibre of employees who essentially form the backbone of the public sector due to their skills, knowledge and experiences. There is a need for municipalities to create and foster an environment that encourages existing employees to remain employed. This study adopted an interpretivist research paradigm, given the study's primary aim of gaining an in-depth understanding of employee retention as experienced by employees in the selected municipalities, together with the key influencing factors of employee retention. The qualitative research approach used a case study methodology within the Sarah Baartman District Municipality, with two category B3 and B4 municipalities selected for the study. The retention factors framework for existing employees by Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009) was used as the supporting theoretical structure. Respondents were selected through purposive sampling, and 16 in-depth semi-structured interviews were used to collect qualitative data. Through various content analysis techniques employed, this study identified seven employee retention factors (affiliation, career, work content, direct financial factors, external forces, work–life balance and indirect financial factors) with their associated themes.

Affiliation, career and work content were identified as the three key factors which influence employee retention. Management style (relationship and interaction between employees and manager), organisational commitment and work environment were the main themes giving meaning to the affiliation factor. Training, personal growth and advancement emerged as themes related to the career factor. The work content factor was defined in terms of meaningfulness, challenges and autonomy themes. Direct and indirect financial factors, external forces, and work–life balance also emerged as factors that play a role in the retention of employees within a municipal context. Base salary and incentives were the associated themes underlying the direct financial factor. However, base salary has short-term effects on retention. Political climate and organisational reputation, municipal category and organisational structure were interrelated external forces. Flexible work arrangements, access to family, and childcare facilities give meaning to the work–life balance, while the only indirect financial factor to arise was benefits. Although some of the retention factors are clearly more

influential than others, key employees attach most importance to a combination of employee retention factors that cater to their holistic needs and desires and generational differences. Therefore, the recommendations need to be implemented simultaneously. Having managers who engage employees in decisions-making and offer guidance and support, together with work environments where the physical and behavioural aspects are attended to, encourages employees to feel valued and appreciated. Municipalities should effectively communicate their mandate of ensuring adequate service delivery, which will allow employees to align their personal values to municipal objectives. Offering on-the-job training, access to career developmental programmes, evaluating job characteristics to include challenging and stimulating work and additional incentives as financial support will foster a conducive working environment for employees.

Overall, municipalities face unique challenges depending on a variety of external elements such as political influence and climate. They operate in a challenging environment where they are also accountable to the community. Ultimately, municipalities must create and develop ways to acknowledge, develop and retain key employees in order to adequately deliver services.

KEY WORDS: *Municipalities, retention factors, affiliation, career, work content, direct financial, external forces*.

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled "An analysis of employee retention: a study of selected local municipalities in the Sarah Baartman District Municipality" which I hereby submit for the degree, Master of Commerce at Rhodes University, is my own work. I also declare that this dissertation has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Name Surname (*signed*)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. OVERVIEW

South Africa is a constitutional democracy that has a three-tier system of government, with an independent judiciary. According to the Local Government Handbook South Africa (2019) and the Government Gazette (1996), the three-tier system comprises national, provincial and local spheres of government, which are distinctive, interdependent and interrelated. In terms of Chapter 7 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), local government is a sphere of government in its own right and is no longer a function of the national or provincial government (Government Gazette, 1996). The local government sphere now has a distinctive status and role in building democracy and promoting socioeconomic development. This was made in order to remove the racial basis of government and to make local government (through municipalities) a vehicle for the integration of society and to provide more fair distribution of services especially with consideration of the poor (Bekink, 2006; Government Gazette, 1998). The local government sphere consists of municipalities, which are divided into three categories, namely metropolitan, local and district municipalities (also known as category A, B and C municipalities respectively) (Local Government Handbook South Africa, 2019; Government Gazette, 2009). There are currently 257 municipalities in South Africa, comprised of 8 metropoles (metros), 44 districts and 205 local municipalities (Local Government Handbook South Africa, 2019). These municipalities are classified according to the differentiated challenges facing them. The following municipal categories are used:

- A: Metros: Large urban complexes with populations of over one million, accounting for 56% of all municipal expenditure in the country (8)

- B1: Local municipalities with large budgets and containing secondary cities (19)

- B2: Local municipalities with a large town as a core (27)

- B3: Local municipalities with small towns, with relatively small populations and a significant proportion of urban population, but with no large town as a core (108)

- B4: Local municipalities that are mainly rural with communal tenure and, at most, one or two small towns in their area (72)

- C1: District municipalities that are not water service authorities (23)

- C2: District municipalities that are water service authorities (21) (Statistics South Africa, 2017).

The metropolitan municipalities, B1 local municipalities, and to a certain extent B2 local municipalities are well-established and consolidated. However, they face sustainability challenges from urbanisation and "in-migration" (moving people into a new area in their country to live permanently) that are accompanied by high levels of household poverty. These municipalities also require more sophisticated urban management capacity and skills to deal with spatial planning, land-use management, and infrastructure life-cycle management (Statistics South Africa, 2017; Government Gazette, 2009). The B3 and B4 local municipalities are very vulnerable both from a revenue generation and from an institutional development perspective (Statistics South Africa, 2017). According to the Local Government Handbook (2019), Statistics South Africa (2017) and Government Gazette (2009), category B3 and B4 local municipalities generally struggle with capacity issues (finances, facilities, employees and knowledge) which hamper their ability to sustainably and adequately provide services to communities. Category B3 and B4 local municipalities are in economically depressed areas and have difficulty in attracting and retaining skilled managers, professionals, and technicians (Statistics South Africa, 2017; Government Gazette, 2009). They represent a total of 180 local municipalities (with 108 local municipalities under the B3 category and 72 under B4) (Local Government Handbook South Africa, 2019). Because of the unique challenges facing category B3 and B4 local municipalities, the present study found it appropriate to analyse employee retention within the Sarah Baartman District Municipality, focusing on two B3 local municipalities in the district.

Municipalities are subordinates of government and play a supportive role; they are the closest sphere of government that communities interact with. Therefore, they act as the link between government and the people (Government Gazette, 2009). Their role is concerned with the provision of services by government and public entities to their communities (Kanyane, 2010). Thus, the primary purpose of municipalities is to ensure development in their communities so that people in their areas have access to basic services such as water, electricity, sanitation and

sewage systems, refuse removal, health and education facilities, better housing and an improvement in the general quality of life (Madumo, 2015; Rankwana, 2014; Zubane, 2011; Government Gazette, 2009). South Africa has made significant strides since democracy in improving access to basic services. According to a recent non-financial census of municipalities by Statistics South Africa (2017), there has been an increase in the number of consumer units receiving basic services from municipalities and service providers such as water, electricity, sewerage and sanitation, and solid waste management. However, key elements (the financial, administrative and institutional capacities) of the local government system have been showing signs of trouble over the years (Tabane, 2018; Statistics South Africa, 2016; Madumo, 2015; Kanyane, 2014; Pillay, et al., 2013; Municipal Demarcation Board, 2012; Government Gazette, 2009). In 2005, a survey by the South African Institute of Civil Engineers showed that more than one third of all local municipalities did not have a single civil engineer, technologist or technician to manage and maintain infrastructure, and there were more than a thousand vacancies in local government for engineering practitioners (Wall, 2010). According to the 2008 State of the Nation, South Africa faces grave challenges regarding capacity within the state in relation to skills, numbers of professionals, the competence to manage complex systems, and ultimately, the ability to deliver on its mandate (Hemson, Carter and Karuri-Sebina, 2008). Koelble and LiPuma (2010, p.565) state that "one of the major institutional shortcomings of local government was that two thirds of municipalities lacked skills affecting local officials ranging from customer service and relations to financial controls, to technical competencies in the core areas of electrification, basic water and sanitation, and refuse collection". Further evidence was presented in 2012 by the member of the executive council of Local Government and Traditional Affairs, Mlibo Qoboshiyane, that nine municipalities in the Eastern Cape province did not have technical directors or city engineers in their service. This represented one fifth of the 45 municipalities in the province (Kahn, 2017).

According to the Government Gazette (2009) and Lawless (2005), municipalities have been facing an acute problem of institutional capacity due to a lack of skills, huge service delivery and backlog challenges in housing, water and sanitation, poor financial management such as negative audit opinions, high levels of corruption, and intra- and inter-political party issues negatively affecting governance and delivery. These capacity constraints have continued; there are too few engineers and far too many officials in acting capacities (for example municipal managers, chief financial officers and other senior positions) (Kanyane, 2016; Jeffery, 2010). In addition, "municipalities are faced with political-administrative interface, instability of the

3

administrative leadership, skills deficits, the erosion of accountability and authority, poor organisational design and low staff morale" (Municipal Demarcation Board, 2018, p.3). Essentially, there is a lack of financial, administrative and institutional capacity, which is hampering performance in the local government sphere (Brand, 2018; Collins and Magubane, 2016; Kings, et al., 2015; Kanyane, 2014; Municipal Demarcation Board, 2012; Nengwekhulu, 2009; Pieterse and Van Donk, 2007). From the 2016–2017 consolidated general report of local government, it appears that this situation has remained consistent over the years; municipalities are struggling to deal with capacity issues, and seem to find it difficult to retain skilled managers, professionals, and technicians (Auditor-General of South Africa, 2016–2017). Further, the report shows that municipalities have in fact regressed in the rate at which they were addressing "vacancies and instability in key positions, inadequate skills that had led to a lack of oversight by councils (including the mayor) and insufficient implementation and maintenance of financial and performance management systems by the administration, and political infighting" (Auditor-General of South Africa, 2016–2017, p.22). According to the report, these concerns are mainly behavioural in nature and could be addressed through strong, ethical leadership at the political and administrative level (Auditor-General of South Africa, 2016–2017).

It is evident "that the success or failure of a municipality largely depends on the quality of its political leadership, sound governance of its finances, the strength of its institutions and ultimately, the calibre of staff working for the municipality" (Government Gazette, 2011, p.105). Human capital forms the backbone of the public sector, particularly in its delivery of services (Palmer, Moodley and Parnell, 2017; Sheoraj, 2015; Mello, 2014; Financial and Fiscal Commission: Policy Brief, 2012). Many municipalities have been left inadequately staffed, which has resulted in worsening service delivery over the years owing to the lack of expertise (Managa, 2012). Municipalities need enough employees with the right set of skills and experience in order to deliver services effectively. Given the importance of retaining individuals in municipalities, particularly those who play a key role in ensuring that municipalities have the capacity to provide quality services required by society (Public Service Commission, 2011; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009), it becomes essential to create and continuously develop a conducive environment where municipal employees feel engaged, valued and stimulated. This can eventually lead to employees choosing to remain employed in municipalities. Therefore, municipalities need to be able to identify and understand the main

reasons that influence skilled and experienced employees into staying, in order to effectively implement strategies that retain these individuals.

Taking into consideration the above discussion, this introductory chapter presents the primary research aim and research objectives of the study in section 1.2, followed by a brief overview in section 1.3 of the research design and methodology that will be adopted. A delineation of the context of the research is also presented in section 1.4, which includes the historical role of local government, the transformation process which local government underwent, and how this affected the role of municipalities after the 1994 democratic election. In addition, the challenges facing municipalities and the importance of employee retention in addressing those challenges is discussed in section 1.4. To conclude this chapter, the structure of the overall thesis is presented in section 1.5.

1.2. PRIMARY RESEARCH AIM AND RESEARCH OBECTIVES

The primary research aim of this study is to gain an in-depth understanding of employee retention, as experienced by employees in selected local municipalities in the Sarah Baartman District Municipality.

In order to achieve this primary research aim, the following objectives have been set:

- To identify the current employee retention factors evident in municipalities.
- To ascertain the perceptions of employees regarding the current employee retention factors.
- To recommend ways to effectively retain employees.

1.3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study adopts an interpretivism research paradigm given the study's primary aim of gaining an in-depth understanding of employee retention as experienced by employees in the selected municipalities. Within this research paradigm, the researcher explores the individuals' feelings, thoughts and experiences, and ultimately brings out the meaning underlying how employees behave (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). Limited research has been done at a municipal level in the area of employee retention (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009) let alone within the

Sarah Baartman District of the Eastern Cape. This study examines the case of two selected municipalities within the Sarah Baartman District Municipality's area of jurisdiction.

Purposive sampling is used to order to collect qualitative data through semi-structured interviews. The researcher developed eligibility criteria to assist in identifying respondents from whom a better understanding of employee retention factors could be obtained. According to Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009), specific attention should be given to employees and managers who have remained for five years or longer in the employment of local government. The researcher understands that these individuals would be able to attest to their lived experiences of what has kept them in the municipalities, and they would be able to identify what they consider to be key retention factors. Thus, potential respondents are identified based on the length of service employed within their municipalities (longer than five years). In addition, potential respondents are sampled from divisions or departments struggling to retain employees (Finance and Infrastructure and Technical Services Divisions) and those who possess scarce skills in terms of human capital (individuals with formal qualifications, a spread of functions, or a level of seniority).

In order to ensure that the research is of a high quality and contributes to the body of knowledge, the research is evaluated in terms of the qualitative research quality (trustworthiness). Ethical considerations are discussed, as well as the limitations to and contributions of the study. Drawing from the literature review and research findings, this study makes final recommendations and conclusions.

1.4. DELINEATION OF THE CONTEXT OF RESEARCH

1.4.1. Local government in South Africa

In order to understand the crucial role local government plays in the current construction and development efforts in South Africa, a basic understanding is required of the historical role and background of local government in creating and perpetuating local separation and inequity, and the impact of apartheid on municipal institutions (Government Gazette, 1998).

1.4.1.1. Historical role of local government

Under the apartheid regime, local government was racist, illegitimate, exploitative and non-developmental in nature. As a result, the spatial, social and economic environments in which communities lived, worked, and raised families were severely damaged. "Housing, access to land, and service provision, the very way the governance of people and infrastructure was designed and executed ensured unequal outcomes across human settlements" (Palmer, Moodley and Parnell, 2017, p.31). According to Palmer, Moodley and Parnell (2017) and Siddle and Koelble (2012), inequality was not only evident in terms of how resources were distributed between the racially constituted local government structures (municipalities); it also affected how local government was managed. Institutional capacity (human capital availability) was and continues to be an issue in municipalities located in black areas, which mainly fall under categories B3 and B4 (Statistics South Africa, 2017). These municipalities struggled to attract and retain sufficiently competent individuals due to concerns such as the size of the municipality, salary scales and even training and development opportunities (Cameron, 1999). According to Pillay, Tomlinson and Du Toit (2006), at the time of the 1994 democratic elections, cities around South Africa were characterised by very poor housing and service backlogs. "There were inconsistencies in municipal expenditure, the spatial anomalies associated with the 'apartheid city', profound struggles against apartheid local government structures, high unemployment and many poverty-stricken households" (Pillay, Tomlinson and Du Toit, 2006, p.2).

1.4.1.2. Transformation process of local government

Since the transformation process post the 1994 democracy elections, local government became a sphere of government and no longer a function of national or provincial government. This process involved restructuring local government in order for the institution to be able to carry out the enormous task of addressing the huge backlogs in access to basic services (Rankwana, 2014). Essentially, local government aimed to remove the racial basis of government and make it a vehicle for the integration of society and to provide more fair distribution of services especially with consideration of the poor (Government Gazette, 1998). This included the establishment of municipal powers and functions that were outlined in schedule 4, part B, and schedule 5, part B, of the Constitution, with the metropolitan municipalities having all these functions (Government Gazette, 1996). However, the Constitution required a division of

powers and functions between the different categories of municipalities (as discussed in section 1.1).

1.4.1.3. Role of municipalities post 1994

The birth of the new and democratic South Africa in 1994 was met with high expectations for change. There was anticipation that the democratisation of the country would solve many of the issues that were inherited from the apartheid government (Government Gazette, 1998). For the majority of South Africans, democracy meant better health and education facilities, elimination of poverty, provision of better housing, accessibility to water, electricity and sanitation and the improvement of the general quality of life (Palmer, Moodley and Parnell, 2017; Siddle and Koelble, 2012; Zubane, 2011). Local government was assigned the responsibility of rebuilding local communities and environments, as the basis for a democratic, integrated, prosperous and truly non-racial society (Government Gazette, 1998). This was done through municipalities, which were mandated by the Constitution to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities, ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner, promote social and economic development, promote a safe and healthy environment and encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government (Siddle and Koelble, 2012). However, there were concerns over the role municipalities were expected to fulfil in terms of service delivery (Madumo, 2015; Kanyane, 2010; Koelble and LiPuma, 2010; Government Gazette, 2009). Some of the concerns were based on whether municipalities has the institutional capacity in the form of human capital, strategic leadership, organisational purpose, inter-governmental relations, infrastructure and financial abilities, structures, processes to adequately deliver services and so on (Palmer, Moodley, and Parnell, 2017; Siddle and Koelble, 2012).

1.4.1.4. Current state of municipalities

South Africa transformed the structure of municipalities, which were then aimed at equipping local government with relevant skills, as well as becoming effective and service-orientated entities (Siddle and Koelble, 2012). However, such reforms resulted in increased constitutional responsibilities for the new geographically integrated municipal authorities. Municipalities came to serve larger populations and communities with overwhelming services delivery backlogs (Khumalo, Ntlokonkulu and Rapoo, 2010). Among the challenges facing local government was ensuring that all municipalities developed the requisite capacity to convert

their limited resources into instruments they could use when confronting the problems of poverty and underdevelopment (Pretorius and Schurink, 2007). As noted in section 1.1 of this chapter, municipalities have been dealing with challenges in relation to rural and urban environments, availability of human resource capacity, degree of economic activity and overall institutional strength (Government Gazette, 2009). According to Kings, et al. (2015) and Managa (2012), poor service delivery has been linked to municipal incompetence, a lack of engineering skills, poor financial administration and planning and a general failure of management, among other things. Common features that have placed pressure on municipal level of service delivery are skills shortages, a large number of senior officials in acting capacities and general high vacancy rates (Collins and Magubane 2016; Siddle and Koelble, 2012; Hemson, Carter and Karuri-Sebina, 2008; Lawless, 2005). Municipalities depend on the organisational experience, skills and proper conduct of individuals capable of managing the institution (Atkinson, 2007). Whether it is through producing and implementing substantial budgets or taking decisions on sophisticated technical matters, it is crucial that municipalities have the right human capacity to fulfil their constitutional mandate (Siddle and Koelble, 2012).

1.4.1.5. The importance of employee retention in municipalities

No organisation, irrespective of its size, can function effectively without capable individuals performing their tasks. According to Amos et al. (2016, p.7), "people are an essential prerequisite for the formation and continued existence of any business organisation". The retention of experienced and skilled professionals, managers and key employees in South Africa's public sector has been a challenge for some time (George, 2015; Coetzee and Pauw, 2013; Lumley, et al., 2011; Mokoka, Oosthuizen and Ehlers, 2010; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009; Kaliprasad, 2006; Berthon, Ewing and Hah, 2005). According to former president, Thabo Mbeki, there is massive need to improve the management, organisational, technical and other capacities of local government so that it meets its objectives (Hemson, Carter and Karuri-Sebina, 2008). Human resource managers have cited employee development, succession planning, employee morale and retaining employees for core services as areas of concern in local government (Kellar, 2014). South Africa faces severe challenges regarding capacity with the state in relation to skills, number of professionals, the competence to manage complex systems and ultimately the ability to deliver on its mandate (Sheoraj, 2015; Nelson and McCann, 2010). Nowadays, key employees have a greater choice of employment, both locally and internationally. They directly and positively contribute to the organisation's

value. According to Ndevu (2014), key employees have a vision for the organisation's future, this is evident in the ideas they provide and the creativity they use to solve problems. Their mobility has dramatically increased over the years because of the international and national competition for talent (Coetzee, Oosthuizen and Stoltz, 2016; Stoltz, 2015; Zachariah and Roopa, 2012; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009; Marriott, 2001). In addition, it is difficult to compete with the private sector when it comes to retaining individuals with engineering and technical skills, accounting, and administration skills (Kellar, 2014). According to Niewenhuizen (2009), employee retention challenges may even be worse for the public sector, as there are fewer financial rewards in the public service than in the private sector. Losing high-calibre human capital (experience and knowledge) often results in financial losses in terms of new employees needing to be recruited, developed and trained (Coetzee and Pauw, 2013). Once an organisation loses key employees, it loses human capital, which also needs to be replaced (Irshad, 2011).

Human capital can be described as the knowledge, education, training, skills and expertise of an organisation's workforce (Ng'ethe, 2013; Dessler, 2010; Naude, 2009). It consists of intellectual capital (the unique skills and knowledge people possess), social capital (networking relationships among people that allow the organisation to link, embed and leverage its diverse knowledge) and organisational capital (which is the institutionalised knowledge possessed by an organisation that is stored in databases and manuals) (Thakur, 2017). Individuals who possess human capital have a combination of intelligence, skills and expertise that give the organisation its distinctive character (Armstrong, 2006). They have qualifications, work and life experience, work-related skills and marketability (Coetzee, Oosthuizen and Stoltz, 2016; Van Dijk, 2008). For the purposes of this study, the terms *human capital*, *professionals* and *employees* are used interchangeably.

It is evident from the above discussion that key employees are a critical resource for municipalities. They are the closest to the customers, products and services rendered by the municipalities (Mello, 2014). Employees are regarded as the prime asset of municipalities because of the value they contribute to the institution; they can deliver customer satisfaction, efficiency and effectiveness (Nguyen, 2008). Retention is therefore important, not only because of the direct and indirect costs incurred by the municipality when employees leave (Bussin and Toerien, 2015; Shaikh, 2007), but also because skills, abilities and experience of employees creates value and ultimately ensures adequate service delivery. In rapidly changing

environments, municipalities need capabilities to survive over the short and long term. They need to not only acquire, but also acknowledge, develop and retain the needed key employees to ensure a competitive advantage and perform the services promised (Naude, 2009). For this reason, municipalities need to identify and understand the key influences that satisfy and retain existing employees.

1.5. STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

This thesis is presented in seven chapters which are outlined and explained in a logical and understandable sequence. The present chapter, Chapter 1, serves as introduction to the study. The research context is discussed, and an overview of municipalities is presented. This covers the historical role and transformation process of local government's role post 1994, the challenges facing local government and significance of keeping experienced and skilled individuals within municipalities. As a result, the primary aim of this study is to gain an in-depth understanding of employee retention, as experienced by employees in selected local municipalities in the Sarah Baartman District Municipality.

Chapter 2 examines the nature of employee retention. Overall, the chapter aims to define employee retention, employee perception and to briefly discuss the complexity of employee retention factors. In addition, the different needs and values on which employee retention factors can be based on is discussed, in order to better understand the importance of organisations and municipalities catering to the holistic needs and desires of employees. The challenges facing South African organisations, particularly municipalities, in terms of retaining employees are also discussed.

Chapter 3 presents reasons why more emphasis needs to be placed on organisations and municipalities retaining staff. The chapter examines the importance of choosing a theoretical framework to provide an understanding of employee retention and key factors influencing retention given the context. In addition, Chapter 3 identifies the theoretical framework that gives structure and support to the overall aim and objectives of the study.

Chapter 4 focuses on the research design and methodology. The chapter begins with a discussion on the nature of the study, research assumptions and research aim and objectives. The research design and methodology, data collection and data analysis are discussed, and the

chapter concludes with the quality criteria and ethical considerations employed in order to ensure the quality of the research.

Chapter 5 and 6 present the findings related to employee retention in selected municipalities. Both chapters aim to contribute to understanding the essence and meaning of employee retention factors, as experienced by existing employees in selected municipalities. Chapter 5 begins with an overview of the biographical indicators of the sample to contextualise the overall findings. In addition, chapter 5 focuses on the first and second research objectives of the study, namely, to identify the current employee retention factors evident in municipalities and to ascertain the perceptions of employees regarding these retention factors. Chapter 6 is a continuation of the second research objective.

The final chapter focuses on the third research objective. Chapter 7, begins with summaries of the introductory chapter, the literature chapters (Chapters 2 and 3), the research design and methodology chapter (Chapter 4) and more detailed summaries of the main findings of Chapters 5 and 6. Thereafter, Chapter 7 discusses the limitations, contributions and the overall recommendations of the study before presenting a final conclusion to this thesis.

CHAPTER 2

NATURE OF EMPLOYEE RETENTION

2.1. OVERVIEW

Chapter 2 examines the nature of employee retention; employee perception and the different needs and values employee retention factors can be based on. Literature defining the terms is examined. The chapter focuses on employee retention factors which can be based on the four attractors and retainers: namely, compensation and benefits, work environment, organisational environment, and work–life balance. In addition, this chapter explores some of the challenges facing employee retention in South African organisations (and municipalities in particular) and concludes with highlighting the importance of understanding the different needs and values of employees.

2.2. IMPORTANCE OF EMPLOYEE RETENTION

Although several studies have focused on analysing the causes of employees leaving organisations (Khoele and Daya, 2014; Shaw, 2011), they overlook the fact that once an individual decides to leave, efforts to keep them seldom succeed (Herholdt, 2012; Mosley and Hurley, 1999). Organisations need to adopt a more proactive approach that caters to existing employees staying in the organisation. Numerous authors believe that examining employee retention is the key to building a capable organisation (Coetzee, Oosthuizen and Stoltz, 2016; George, 2015; Stoltz, 2015; Morris, 2013; Samuel and Chipunza, 2013; Kotze and Roodt, 2005). According to Zachariah and Roopa (2012), analysing employee retention allows for better understanding of employees' attitudes towards work and the organisation, the work relationships between colleagues and supervisors, and most importantly why existing employees choose to stay in an organisation. By understanding employee retention, organisations are better able to design retention policies and implement practices that in turn contribute to the organisation's sustainability and competitiveness (Coetzee, Oosthuizen and Stoltz, 2016; Herholdt, 2012). Before being able to retain employees, however, organisations need to understand the meaning and perceptions of employee retention factors.

Employee retention is defined as "a systematic effort by employers to create and foster an environment that encourages current employees to remain employed by having policies and

practices in place that address their diverse needs" (Zachariah and Roopa, 2012, p.450). This is accomplished by creating and maintaining a working environment which supports key employees to remain within the organisation for a maximum period in order to meet the organisational objectives (Das and Baruah, 2013; Masibigiri and Nienaber, 2011; Chiboiwa, Samuel and Chipunza, 2010; Armstrong, 2006; Kotze and Roodt, 2005; Frank, Finnegan and Taylor, 2004; Zineldin, 2000). Employee retention is a process of making the work environment as "sticky" (desirable) as possible in order to keep employees whom the organisation values (Cardy and Lengnick-Hall, 2011). It is a mutually beneficial relationship between employer and employees (Naude, 2009) whereby employees seek to gain and experience a form of utility by remaining in the organisation, while employers retain satisfied and committed employees whose abilities suit the needs of the company (Coetzee and Pauw, 2013; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter; 2009; Naude, 2009).

The aim of retention is to prevent loss of competent employees as this has adverse effects on productivity and service delivery (Samuel and Chipunza 2013). According to Mzini (2014), the public sector employs a diverse workforce that is characterised by knowledgeable and skilled employees. Losing this high-calibre human capital often results in financial losses for institutions, for instance new employees must be hired and trained (Bussin and Toerien, 2015; Coetzee and Pauw, 2013; Shaikh, 2007). It is evident that the value of an organisation lies between the ears of its employees (Amos, et al., 2016). As discussed in Chapter 1, employees are the lifeblood of the organisation especially in the public sector; their knowledge and skill set are central to an organisation's ability to achieve its objectives and remain competitive (Mohanty and Mohanty, 2016). When capable individuals leave the organisation, they take with them the knowledge, skills and abilities that create value (Selesho and Naile, 2014; Irshad, 2011). Therefore, maintaining employee retention is vital as it assists organisations in creating a positive work environment that strengthens employees' commitment to the organisation. Organisations such as municipalities need to be sensitive to employee needs and demonstrate an understanding of the various strategies aimed at meeting those needs (Philip and Connell, 2003). In order to do so though, organisations must first understand their employees' attitudes and in turn their perceptions, so that they are able to offer value to employees.

2.3. EMPLOYEE PERCEPTION

Perception is a process that entails actively choosing information from sensation, organising it and interpreting it to make meaning of the world (Werner, 2016; Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt, 2003). According to Comer, Gould and Furnham (2013), perceptions are based on a constructed reality, not necessarily based on reality, but on a perspective from an individual's view of a situation. Perception occurs when human sense organs gather information which the brain modifies and sorts. The information is filtered and compared with memories and expectations. Finally, consciousness of the perception is constructed as a best guess about reality (Swartz, et al., 2016). Therefore, although each person maybe be exposed to the same sensory input, each selects various cues from the input, and interprets the cues according to their own experiences. As a result, each individual can see reality differently (Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt, 2003). The same can be said of employees and their perceptions. In the case of an organisation, employee perception is what an employee thinks of the organisation, and the employee's work and relationships in the organisation. Essentially, it is how individuals view and interpret the organisation. Employees with positive perceptions about their organisation, work tasks and working relationships with colleagues are easily influenced into staying (Bastos and Barsade, 2020). Employee perceptions can be shaped by several variables such as age, tenure/length of service, job image and met expectations. This will be further discussed in section 2.5.3 which looks at generational factors that affect employee retention. The next section will discuss employee retention factors, which shape how employees perceive the organisation and ultimately affect their intention to stay. Owing to the diverse nature and background of employees, they are influenced by a variety of retention factors (Stoltz, 2015).

2.4. EMPLOYEE RETENTION FACTORS

Retention is a complex and multifaceted construct that consists of many factors (Kossivi, Xu and Kalgora, 2016; George, 2015; Das and Baruah 2013; Nazia and Begum, 2013; Morris, 2013; Samuel and Chipunza, 2013; Masibigiri and Nienaber, 2011). These factors influence the employee's decision to stay, depending on the perceived direction of an individual's priorities (Netswera, Rankhumise and Mavundla, 2005). Retention factors play a significant role in shaping employees' attitudes and perceptions of work and, in the end, their decision to remain with an organisation (Milkovich, Newman and Gerhart, 2011).

Numerous articles and studies have identified an array of factors that influence the retention of skilled and experienced employees. These include organisational culture, opportunities for training and development in the employee's field of expertise, leadership and management style, (Mohanty and Mohanty, 2016; Coetzee and Pauw, 2013; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009; Narimawati, 2007; Meyer, 2005), co-worker interactions and relationship with immediate boss (Kossivi, Xu and Kalgora, 2016; George, 2015), work–life balance (Russo and Morandin, 2019), employee empowerment and the alignment between an individual's job and career interests (Mohanty and Mohanty, 2016; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009), compensation and benefits (Armstrong, 2006), conducive working environment (Meyer, 2005; Sutherland and Jordaan, 2004), reputation of the organisation, communication of the organisation strategy and direction of the division (Mohanty and Mohanty, 2016; George, 2015; Nazia and Begum, 2013; Samuel and Chipunza 2009; Dockel, 2003). It is evident from the above-mentioned factors that "the retention of key employees goes beyond the traditional salary and benefits package as one of the key factors to cater to the diversity and long stay of the workforce in the organisations" (Sinha 2012, p.147). Employees attach a great deal of importance to a combination of retention factors that speak to their holistic needs and desires (Knox, 2013; Snelgar, Renard and Venter, 2013; Mokoka, Oosthuizen and Ehlers, 2010; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009).

According to Brown (2001), organisations need to pay greater attention to employee needs and values. In order for organisations to effectively retain employees, their focus should be on the different needs and values of employees, which can range from compensation, work environment, learning, growth and development, to relationships and general support from the organisation (Maholo, Louw and Amos, 2018; Nel and Werner, 2017; Mello, 2014; Herholdt, 2012). Furthermore, these different employee needs and values can be summarised into four attractors and retainers for highly skilled people: namely, compensation and benefits, work environment, organisational environment, and work–life balance (Corporate and Leadership Council, 2002). These four attractors and retainers are illustrated in Figure 2.1 and discussed below. Studies such as those of Knox (2013) and Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009) have used the four attractors and retainers as the basis of what is important to employees. For the organisation to able to retain its key employees, the needs and values of those individuals should be taken into consideration when identifying and implementing retention factors. Employees' perception of the organisation and ultimately their decision to stay is based on the retention factors employed by the organisation.

FIGURE 2. 1: FOUR ATTRACTORS AND RETAINERS FOR HIGHLY SKILLED PEOPLE

Compensation and benefits	Work environment
Compensation and benefits must be market-related, and mechanisms should be in place to reward and retain top performers.	The work environment must be challenging and offer real learning and growth. Job profiles should be flexible to make positions more attractive. Removing bureaucratic work from these jobs, catering for internal mobility, vertically and horizontally, together with recognition, role clarity and relevant responsibilities are key to the attraction and retention of high-value employees.
Work–life balance	**Organisational environment**
The focus here is on the notion of a flexible and stress-free work environment by making provision for childcare facilities and access to families. Location is therefore important, as is the amount of travel away from home, recreational facilities in distant locations and hours of work, leave time, overtime and flexi-time.	Issues here include the prestige and reputation of the organisation and the work. Creating an attractive image and place to work requires a more proactive marketing and communication strategy, the publication of success stories, and an emphasis on learning and innovation and on the importance of the work. Access to leading-edge technology is an important pull factor for high-end, ambitious employees.

(Source: Corporate Leadership Council, 2002 cited in Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009)

2.4.1. Compensation and benefits

Henderson (2006) defines compensation as the reward employees receive from organisations in exchange for their services. It is the total amount of monetary and non-monetary pay provided to employees by an employer for work performed as required (Nel and Werner, 2017; Nazia and Begum, 2013). According to Nel and Werner (2017), compensation can be viewed as payment which can either be received in the form of a salary or as an hourly wage, overtime pay, uniform allowance, pay contingent on performance like merit awards, cash incentives such as bonuses, recognition and profit-sharing. Milkovich and Newman (2004) describe compensation as the financial returns and benefits employees receive. It refers to a relationship that is normally based on an economically motivated process whereby certain inputs (physical

and mental work behaviour) are exchanged for outputs (rewards) that are considered to be desirable in satisfying individual needs or goals (Nel and Werner, 2017; Swanepoel, et al., 2014; Odunlade, 2012). It is essentially one of the pillars supporting the employment relationship (Nazia and Begum, 2013).

According to Gerhart and Milkovich (1992, cited in Gardner, Van Dyne and Pierce, 2004), compensation is one of the strongest determinants of employees' attitudes and behaviours and their perception of how they are viewed in an organisation. The underlying assumption is that it persuades behaviour (Parker and Wright, 2001). Monetary rewards fulfil financial and material desires as well as providing the means for employee status (Stoltz, 2015; Mello, 2014; Swanepoel, et al., 2014; Das and Baruah, 2013; Deloitte, 2012; Milkovich and Newman, 2004; Parker and Wright, 2001). Organisations need to understand that employees look for jobs that not only suit their creativity and talents, but also compensate them in terms of salaries and other benefits (Odunlade, 2012). The reason for this is that for most employees, salaries and wages represent their main sources of income and may also be taken as key indicators of their social standing or success in life (Odunlade, 2012; Rynes, Gerhart and Minette, 2004; Milkovich and Milkovich, 1992). This could be why some employees view compensation as a measure of how much the organisation values them.

An important aspect of compensation in influencing employees' decision to stay is the transparency of pay decisions made by the organisation (Horwitz, Heng and Quazi, 2003; Parker and Wright, 2001). According to Rambur, et al. (2005), the degree to which employees perceive they are paid fairly for what they contribute to the organisation is identified as the key job dimension related to the retention of professionals in public sector institutions such as municipalities. Employees value equity and want to be paid fairly for their work; organisations need to be able to ensure fair compensation in order to retain these employees (Warnich, et al., 2015). This is due to the fact that fair compensation is seen as the foundational element of the implied and contractual bond between employers and employees (Mello, 2014; Rambur, et al., 2005; Parker and Wright, 2001). Essentially, the key feature of compensation in relation to retention appears to be the perception that decisions relating to pay are transparent and that salaries are fair and based on performance and effort (George, 2015).

However, compensation is not always at the top of the list in terms of what every employee values most in an organisation. According to Chandrasekar (2011), both the private and public sectors make the mistake of thinking that the level of employees' performance and their

intention to stay on the job is proportional to the size of their pay package. Although compensation plays an important role in the retention of employees (Stoltz, 2015; Das and Baruah, 2013), salary increases and bonuses for performance, in many instances, have a very limited short-term effect (Amoatemaa and Kyeremeh, 2016). A study by Netswera, Rankhumise and Mavundla (2005) reveals that money lures potential employees to the organisation more than any other factor, but it does not retain employees. According to Netswera, Rankhumise and Mavundla (2005), it is usually employees that are seeking employment or job-hopping who are primarily motivated by money. The concern with compensation, is that employees also view it as something that is owed to them for the work performed. In the end, employees might regard the extra money (salary increase or bonuses) as an entitlement instead of an incentive (Chandrasekar, 2011).

It is evident that the role of compensation in relation to employee retention does not always appear to be straightforward (George, 2015). Several authors believe that compensation is complex, and much more important in employee's actual choices and behaviour than the employees usually state in interviews/self-reports concerning their motives for remaining in employment (Rynes, Gerhart and Minette, 2004; Rynes, Colbert and Brown, 2002). Employees often understate the importance of compensation as an influence on retention when they are directly asked and tend to place it around fifth on lists of potential motivators (Rynes, Gerhart and Minette, 2004). In contrast, meta-analytic studies of employee's actual behaviour in response to retention initiatives nearly always shows pay to be the most effective motivator (Rynes, Gerhart and Minette, 2004). This could be because some employees want to be liked and accepted by society, or lack self-insight. Although Ng'ethe, Iravo, and Namusonge (2012) suggest that salary, in and of itself, is not the most important aspect of work life and satisfaction, salaries are a necessity to employees. If employees think they are not compensated fairly, they feel the need to work outside their organisation to earn extra income.

Working hand in hand with compensation are benefits. Benefits are items in the total package offered to employees in addition to the normal salary and can vary from organisation to organisation (Nel and Werner, 2017). They can involve sick pay, holidays, pension, and a varying range of other inducements that are an integral part of every employer's conditions of employment. Benefits are described as rewards allocated to employees for being members of the organisation and for their positions within the organisation (Nel and Werner, 2017; Odunlade, 2012). According to Nel and Werner (2017), benefits acknowledge the value of

employees to the organisation. They focus on maintaining the quality of life for employees, providing a level of protection and financial stability for workers and their family members (Odunlade, 2012).

Although compensation and benefits may appear to be the most likely way to attract and keep employees, compensation has a limited short-term effect on employees' behaviour (Massoudi and Hamdi, 2017; Chandrasekar, 2011). Continuously offering salary increases or bonuses might create a sense of entitlement in employees. Organisations need to be able to offer programmes and opportunities that are sustainable and that offer employees long-term value in order to convince them to stay. Organisations and municipalities need to be able to create and sustain an environment that stimulates employees.

2.4.2. Work environment

According to Chandrasekar (2011, p.4), "how well employees engage with the organisation, especially with their immediate environment influences, to a great extent, their error rate, level of innovation and collaboration with other employees, absenteeism and ultimately how long they stay in the job". The term "work environment" refers to the surrounding conditions in which employees operate (Massoudi and Hamdi, 2017; Ajala, 2012; Briner, 2000). The work environment is the total collection of observables, physical and behavioural components (Massoudi and Hamdi, 2017; Samson, Waiganjo and Koima, 2015). These workplace components involve the social interactions at the workplace, including interaction with colleagues, supervisors and the organisation (Msengeti and Obwogi, 2005). According to Chandrasekar (2011), the concept of the work environment includes the nature of the job and whether it meets the interests and satisfies the needs of the employee. It not only includes the physical elements of the work area, but also whatever forms part of the employee's involvement with the work itself (Msengeti and Obwogi, 2005). Aspects such as organisational structure and processes, tools for the job (systems, technology), access to the latest technology, work–life balance and flexible working arrangements, office environment (facilities and support), leadership, organisational climate and stability are important elements of the working environment (Jain and Kaur, 2014; Msengeti and Obwogi, 2005).

According to Massoudi and Hamdi (2017), the work environment can encourage employees to feel positive about the space they are working in, to be more productive and stay in the organisation. A working environment that is comfortable, relatively low in physical and psychological stress, has facilities and attainment of work goals will tend to produce high levels

of satisfaction among employees (Ng'ethe, Iravo, and Namusonge, 2012). Organisations need to be able to offer employees real opportunities for learning and growth (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). In today's working environment, employees are often aware of the need to keep their knowledge and skills up to date. This means that they usually opt for a work environment that provides quality development and training, for instance, one that allows employees flexibility of learning while being employed (Kaliprasad, 2006). Although skilled or experienced individuals are affected by their identification with both the organisation and a profession, their identification with their profession might be stronger than with their organisation (George, 2015). Skilled and experienced employees spend much time and effort on developing themselves. As a result, key employees may be better retained with development and training programmes, because they value their skills more and need to feel that the organisations appreciate these skills and qualifications. The work environment needs to challenge employees to proceed to the next level. There is a need for variety, in which the job profile must be flexible to make positions more attractive (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). Employees should be recognised and respected, and there should be job alignment with their interests (Goffee and Jones 2013).

The working environment is a multifaceted construct and includes a wide range of factors. Several authors have investigated work environment and its factors (Massoudi and Hamdi, 2017; Oswald, 2012; Chandrasekar, 2011; Noe, 2008; Briner, 2000). According to Noe (2008),working environment is divided into six key factors in the workplace: namely, manageable workload, some personal control over the job, support from colleagues and supervisors, positive relationships at work, a reasonably clear role, and a sense of control or involvement in changes at the workplace. For the purposes of this chapter, various factors of the work environment, as identified by Chandrasekar (2011), are highlighted. Chandrasekar (2011) study examines factors of the work environment that affect not only the employee's performance, but also the organisation's ability to retain employees. These factors are goal setting, performance feedback, role congruity, defined processes, workplace incentives, supervisor support, mentoring/coaching, job aid and environmental factors (physical factors such as the office building). Work environment factors should aim at providing a conducive workplace for employees in order to ensure that they are productive, happy and loyal to the organisation (Chandrasekar, 2011).

Chandrasekar (2011) describes the work environment factors as follows:

- Goal-setting

Goal-setting involves employees setting meaningful goals and performance measures for their work (Chandrasekar, 2011). This can be done formally through performance management processes, or informally between the employee and their immediate supervisors. By setting up goals, the organisation is better able to guide the behaviour of the employees and to motivate them to perform at a higher level of effectiveness (Massoudi and Hamdi, 2017).

- Performance feedback

Performance feedback is the information being regularly fed back to the employee on how they are performing. It can also include items where the employee needs to improve (constructive feedback) (Chandrasekar, 2011). It is positive feedback in terms of what the employee is doing correctly (Oswald, 2012).

- Role congruity

"Role congruity looks at the consistency between the role the employee is required to perform compared to their expectations on joining the organisation and any subsequent training" (Chandrasekar, 2011, p.6). Essentially, role congruity speaks to whether the organisation's role expectations are consistent with the tasks allocated by the employee's supervisor. For instance, some employees find themselves having to complete tasks that are not part of their job descriptions (Chandrasekar, 2011).

- Defined processes

According to Chandrasekar (2011), defining processes is the organisation's responsibility. The organisation communicates to the employees how work should be performed, and the workflow is explained through documenting and communicating.

- Workplace incentives

Workplace incentives reward employees through formal and informal structures for their behaviour or for work performed. These might involve human resource management aspects such as recognition for good work, a performance appraisal system, good working conditions, significant changes in training and promotions, or even compensation and benefits that help keep employees satisfied.

- Supervisor support

Supervisor support is having immediate supervisors acting as advocates for employees by gathering and distributing the resources needed by the employees for them to be able to do a good job and providing positive encouragement for a job well done (Chandrasekar, 2011). Supervisor support refers to the extent to which leaders and managers value their employees' contributions and care about their well-being, for instance, by offering support and showing interest in employees as they perform their tasks.

- Mentoring/coaching

Mentoring and coaching should be carried out by skilled and well-respected individuals who are available to assist employees with performing better in their current role and developing into a future role.

- Job aids

Examples of job aids are templates, guides, models and checklists (Chandrasekar, 2011). Job aids assist in making the work easier and helping to minimise error rates and customer dissatisfaction. For instance, in municipalities, job aids would be policy documents such as municipal acts, finance acts and even skills development acts.

- Comfort level/environmental factors

Comfort level considers the overall influences the physical office environment may have on employees' well-being, work performance and productivity (Chandrasekar, 2011). Physical workplace design (e.g. office building), indoor temperature, lighting and even noise conditions in the office may affect the work concentration of employees and their behaviour towards the organisation they are working in (Chandrasekar, 2011).

2.4.3. Organisational environment

As argued in Chapter 1, the municipality's survival largely depends on the people working within the institution (see section 1.1.). Employees' feelings, attitudes and behaviour have a far-reaching effect on the municipality achieving its goals and objectives. According to Owolabi (2012), on top of recruitment policies and benefits that attract potential employees to an organisation, the organisational environment forms an important part of employees' satisfaction and ultimately their retention. Organisational environment speaks to how attractive the image of the organisation is to the outside world (Corporate Leadership Council, 2002).

According to Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009), the organisational environment looks at elements such as prestige and reputation of the organisation. It focuses on how an organisation or municipality may be presented and as a result, perceived by stakeholders. Fombrun and Van Riel (2004) describes this perceived organisational reputation as the overall employee evaluation of the organization over time. This evaluation may include emotional appeal, products and services, financial performance, vision and leadership, work environment, and social responsibility.

The organisational environment consists of those relevant physical and social elements outside the boundaries of the organisation. These elements have an actual or potential impact on the organisation's ability to achieve its objectives (Owolabi, 2012). Ardakani, Jowkar and Mooghali (2012) suggest that organisational environment refers to the perceptions regarding policies, activities, and organisational instructions honoured, supported and expected by an organisation. Essentially, it is the "socialite" perceptions of the organisation; it is what "the outside" thinks about a particular organisation, for instance, the kind of organisational reputation or prestige which the institution personifies (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). The organisational environment includes the opportunities in and threats to organisation and involves two layers: the task and the general environment. On one hand, the task environment involves specific dimensions of the organisation's surroundings that are very likely to influence the organisation, such as competitors, customers, employees, strategic, planners and suppliers. On the other hand, the general environment is composed of the non-specific elements of the organisation's surrounding that may affect its activities. It consists of economic, technological, sociocultural, political-legal and international perspectives. At the end, the organisational environment plays an important role in how employees perceive their municipality, it impacts their decision to stay (Ardakani, Jowkar and Mooghali, 2012). Although it occurs outside the organisation, employers need to be aware of the organisational environment and by extension the reputation due to its impact on employees' perception of the organisation.

2.4.4. Work–life balance

Work–life balance is a combination of interactions between the different areas of one's employed life (Samson, Waigan and Koima, 2015). It is a matter of the employee's ability to balance the usually competing needs in the quest to fulfil various needs and goals in their life (Massoudi and Hamdi, 2017). According to Samson, Waiganjo and Koima (2015), work–life balance is spending enough time at work, while also spending adequate time in other pursuits,

such as being with family and friends, spiritual pursuits, self-growth or even hobbies. Balance does not necessarily mean that there must be equal amount of time spent on each of the different areas of an employee's life. The aim is to ensure that there is a harmonious balance of an employee's work and personal life and that one is not in conflict with the other (Barik and Pandey, 2016). According to Downes and Koekemoer (2011) work–life balance has a positive influence on employee satisfaction and well-being. It can reduce absenteeism and can assist in successfully recruiting and retaining employees. In Russo and Morandin's (2019) study, it was found that 38% of the sampled employees would consider leaving their current employer to gain a better work–life balance, even if it meant taking a pay reduction. More employees seek a balanced lifestyle depending on where they are in life. There are several possible work–life balance policies; these can range from on-site or subsided child and/or elder care, flexible working schedules to employee assistance programmes. According to Dex (2004) and to Barik and Pandey (2016), several work–life balance human resource practices were identified in the UK by Dex and Scheibl in 1999. These were job sharing, sabbatical or career breaks, flexitime work schedules (where employees work a certain number of core hours, but can choose start and end times), and flexi-place provision (where employees work some of their regularly scheduled hours at home or at another location when they have access to a laptop or phone to communicate with their employers).

Work–life balance is an important aspect to consider when an organisation is looking at ways to retain employees. Employees value a range of factors such as work–life balance, leadership quality and clear communication, compensation, opportunity for advancement and training and conducive work conditions (Deloitte, 2012), their values and needs are complex and diverse in nature. Thus, it is vital for employers to understand the different employees within an organisation and to be aware of the challenges facing South African organisations with regards to retention.

2.5. CHALLENGES IN EMPLOYEE RETENTION

As noted in Chapter 1, the retention of experienced and skilled professionals and managers in South African municipalities has been a challenge for some time (George, 2015; Coetzee and Pauw, 2013; Lumley, et al., 2011; Mokoka, Oosthuizen and Ehlers, 2010; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009; Kaliprasad, 2006; Berthon, Ewing and Hah, 2005; Burger, Theron and Van Rooyen, 1996). According to Phago (2014) and Kerr-Phillips and Thomas (2009), South African organisations, more especially municipalities, are facing macro (country) and micro

(organisational) challenges when it comes to retaining skilled individuals. Mohanty and Mohanty (2016) believe that employee retention challenges lie in the reality that in modern times, businesses and institutions have a diverse group of individuals with diverse personal needs. According to Ndevu (2014), one of the major difficulties in retaining employees in the public sector is the ever-changing workforce coming from diverse communities with different values, social beliefs, ages and orientations. Employees are diverse in terms of age, tenure, level of education, and gender; this diversity needs to be understood for local government to be able to convince key employees to remain. The following subsection will explore some of the challenges in employee retention within a South African context.

2.5.1. Internal pressures

South Africa faces a unique situation, inheriting the legacy of apartheid which limited access to education, skills development and training to a racial majority (Mello, 2014; Kaliprasad, 2006). As a result, only a small number of much-needed skilled and experienced individuals were produced by the country before the 1994 democratic election (Daniels, 2007). According to Daniels (2007, p.4), South Africa continues to find itself "dealing with the legacy of "Bantu" education and the resultant (absolute and relative) skills shortages associated with it". Consequently, the country had few workers to adequately meet the labour skills demand especially in the public sector (Mello, 2014; Siddle and Koelble, 2012). To combat this situation, the South African government introduced skills planning, affirmative action and employment equity polices aimed at ensuring that previously disadvantaged groups deprived of their basic rights and privileges were afforded opportunities for advancement and development. According to Reddy et al. (2016) and Mello (2014), these methods to stimulate the labour market in terms of the recruitment, development and retention of previously disadvantaged groups within the public sector continue to be an issue of importance for local government.

2.5.2. Brain drain

South Africa, like many developing countries, is experiencing a brain drain that is severely influencing the country's competitiveness (Phago, 2014; Tessema and Ng'oma, 2009). Former South African president Thabo Mbeki, quoted in a report by ENCA (2015), said that the number of skilled professionals leaving the continent to live and work abroad every year is 'frightening'. Mbeki, addressing a gathering held by the Homecoming Revolution (a

recruitment organisation that encourages African professionals living abroad to return home), stated that the continent had lost 20 000 academic professionals since 1990. Additionally, in recent years, more highly skilled information technology and finance professionals had left South Africa (Kanyane, 2016; Siddle and Koelble, 2012). The brain drain has led to a depletion of intellectual and technical personnel (Kerr-Phillips and Thomas, 2009; Du Preez, 2002). This has adversely affected both private and public sector. Within the public sector, government activities are typically highly personnel-intensive: having skilled, motivated, and committed public servants is fundamental for the success of public organisations (Tessema and Ng'oma, 2009).

2.5.3. Generational factors

Today's workforce is probably the most diverse in terms of race, gender and ethnicity (Mohanty and Mohanty, 2016; Martin, 2014). One of the challenges with regards to employee retention is the organisation being able to identify a combination of retention factors that cater to the different needs and desires of the generations working alongside one another (Radford and Shacklock, 2015; Murray, Toulson, Legg, 2011). Irrespective of the generational difference, organisations need to be able to better manage and retain their valued employees. According to Kupperschmidt (2000, cited in Yusoff and Kian, 2013), a generation is defined as a distinguishable group that shares a similar birth year and age, location where they live, and consequently noteworthy life events at a critical development stage. Generational groups are often referred to as cohorts, whose members have been exposed to the same external environment and events that might influence their behaviour and way of thinking (Martin, 2014). Each generation experiences a common distinctive combination of circumstances and environment forces prevalent during formative years. These combinations of circumstances and environment shape intrinsic behaviour patterns and distinguish one generation from another (Radford and Shacklock, 2015; Murray, Toulson, Legg, 2011). The following paragraphs discuss different generations in the workplace in terms of their characteristics, attitudes, values and the retention factors that speak to each generation.

There are four different generations within today's workforce, each with its own characteristics influenced by the social, political and economic climate in which they were raised. They are veterans (also known as traditionalists), baby boomers, Generation X and Generation Y (also known as millennials) (Van der Walt, Jonck and Sobayeni, 2016; Yow, 2013), illustrated in Table 2.1. Given that most members of the South African workforce fall into the three

generations of baby boomers, Generation X and Generation Y, the emphasis of this review rests on these three.

TABLE 2.1: GENERATIONAL COHORTS ACCORDING TO COUNTRY

Generation	*South Africa*	*USA*	*Europe/UK*	*Japan*
Veterans	1930–1949	1923–1942	1918–1945	1925–1945
The Baby Boomers	1950–1969	1943–1962	1946–1965	1945–1965
Generation X	1970–1989	1963–1983	1966–1984	1966–1985
Generation Y	1990–2000	1984–2001	1985–2001	1986–2001

(Source: Codrington and Grant-Marshall, 2006, p.19)

2.5.3.1. Veterans

Veterans are the oldest generation having been born between the years 1930 and 1949 (Close, 2015; Bussin and Van Rooy, 2014; Murray, Toulson and Legg, 2011). This generation is often referred to as the conservative and mature generation, traditionalist or the silent generation (Tolbize, 2008). Veterans display work-related values such as obedience, constancy and diligence (Dries, Pepermans and De Kerpel, 2008). They are used to hierarchical organisational structures and respect authority (Yow, 2013). Veterans are a loyal generation who have a job for life (Kupperschmidt, 2000), see work as an obligation and believe in paying one's dues to gain promotion (Bussin and Van Rooy, 2014). They are the generation that finds its meaning in work. Most veterans are now retired or deceased, and therefore would not be in the workforce owing to the retirement age of 65 years in South African organisations such as municipalities (Yow, 2013).

2.5.3.2. Baby boomers

The baby boomer generation encompasses individuals born between 1950 and 1969. According to Jonck, Van der Walt and Sobayeni (2017), South African baby boomers were exposed to events like the rise of the black resistance movement from 1948 to 1960, the Sharpeville massacre of 1960, the Soweto uprising of 1976 and the banning of the African Nation Congress (ANC) and Pan African Congress (PAC) in 1960. Generally, baby boomers' values centre on idealism, creativity, tolerance and freedom; they usually have a deep identification to their

work organisation and are affiliated (attached or connected) to their place of work. They tend to be more committed and loyal to their organisation than other generations. According to Kupperschmidt (2000), baby boomers believe in paying their dues and working their way to the top in return for promotions and status symbols. They value a challenging working environment, being recognised as contributing to the organisation and moving up the hierarchy, rather than having a work–life balance (Jonck, Van der Walt and Sobayeni, 2017). Baby boomers have careers that are meaningful to them; they see work as an exciting adventure and can be known as workaholics. They value money and titles and are good team players. Although they are nearing retirement age, they are likely to be found in senior-level leadership positions with a wealth of knowledge and experience (Jones, 2017).

2.5.3.3. Generation X

Generation X are individuals born between 1970 and 1989. According to Jonck, Van der Walt and Sobayeni (2017) and Yusoff and Kian (2013), Generation X are likely to be distrusting, cynical, individualistic and independent because of economic and social turmoil (such as the HIV/Aids epidemic), rapid change and great diversity to which they were exposed growing up. For this generation, change has been the only constant. They are also flexible, capable, and comfortably adjust to change (Codrington and Grant-Marshall, 2006). According to Jones (2017), the Generation X cohort is sceptical about politics, self-reliant, teamwork orientated, and values workplace flexibility. In addition, "this generation is not intimidated by authority and prefers multiple work assignments to keep them motivated and engaged, and desires consistent training and development opportunities to enhance their skills" (Jones, 2017, p.3) Because of this, they are the most challenging to retain. According to Yow (2013), compared to the older generations of veterans and baby boomers, Generation X tend to desire personal recognition, seek meaningful work and require strong compensation packages and access to career advancements. Generation X are the human capital repositories of knowledge, skills and expertise and ensure good performance in the organisation (Jonck, Van der Walt and Sobayeni, 2017; Van der Walt, Jonck and Sobayeni, 2016). They are more loyal to their skills, are independent and expect to be trusted. Although they also value work–life balance, opportunities for growth and career advancement need to be made available for this generation in order to retain them (Yow, 2013).

2.5.3.4. Generation Y

Generation Y are individuals born from 1990 to 2000 and are currently the youngest generation in the workplace, who grew up with technology and social networking (Jonck, Van der Walt and Sobayeni, 2017). According to Bevan-Dye (2012), Generation Y makes up approximately forty per cent of the South African population. Known as "born frees" in a South African context, Generation Y are individuals who are highly educated and therefore have more options within the job market. Jonck, Van der Walt and Sobayeni (2017) describe generation Y as optimistic individuals who are confident, trusting and enjoy working with others, hence their preference for teamwork and being challenged. They prefer to be employed in a technologically orientated organisation (Codrington and Grant-Marshall, 2006). Generation Y value the use of technology; they are eager to share their ideas and opinions and appreciate technology, as it allows them open and convenient platforms to do so. It becomes difficult for this generation to feel connected with, engage and provide feedback to the organisation without the opportunities provided by technology (Justice, 2017). Generation Y also value work–life balance and leisure time They are ambitious individuals and therefore require personal development and opportunities of growth such as promotions. According to Bevan-Dye (2012), Generation Y want to feel involved and included. "Millennials are not fond of organisations that have a culture based on a need-to-know basis, prefer to work for transparent business entities that share the organisation's values, mission, expectations, goals and objectives" (Jones, 2017, p.4). Essentially, millennials are likely to be retained through being part of decision-making processes and alignment between work and personal meaning According to Van der Walt, Jonck and Sobayeni (2016), salaries and other benefits are also concerns for this generation, because they grow up being rewarded for good behaviour and expect the same in their organisations.

Ultimately, organisations – and by extension, municipalities need to be able to retain employees including individuals with diverse generational needs. Most employees within the public sector (municipalities) fall into three of the generations discussed above hence the importance of having a range of employee retention factors that cater to their different needs and values.

2.6. SUMMARY

Chapter 2 discussed the definition and nature of employee retention; employee perception and the different needs and values employee retention factors can be based on. This chapter looked at the definition of employee retention and its importance within organisations such as municipalities (section 2.2.). Employee perception was briefly discussed in section 2.3. Section 2.4. focused on employee retention factors and how these factors are based on the different needs and values of employees which can be summarised as compensation and benefits, work environment, organisational environment, and work-life balance. In the final section, some of the challenges facing private and public sector (municipalities) in retaining key employees were discussed.

CHAPTER 3

THEORY OF EMPLOYEE RETENTION

3.1. OVERVIEW

The previous chapter discussed the nature of employee retention and the different needs and values employee retention factors can be based on. Chapter 3 discusses several theoretical frameworks and models this study considered when further conceptualising employee retention and the influencing factors involved in retaining key employees. These theoretical frameworks and models are as follows: the improving employee retention rates framework by Deery (2008), the employee retention and job satisfaction model by Das and Baruah (2013), the conceptual framework of work-related variables by Mafini and Dlodlo (2014) and the retention factors framework for existing employees by Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009), which was adapted from Britton, Chadwick and Walker (1999). The four considered frameworks and models are introduced, before discussing in detail the selected theory that is used to provide structure and support to the study. The reasons for selecting the theory are also presented within the context of the study.

3.2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS CONSIDERED

The retention of valuable employees within the private and public sector (more particularly, municipalities) continues to play an essential role in the institutions remaining competitive and being able to provide adequate service delivery. Employees are an important asset in any organisation; they are considered as investments (Mello, 2014), with their skills and experiences viewed as the basis for adequate service delivery by municipalities (Mzini, 2014). It therefore becomes important to examine retention theories to support the underlying reason for this study, its aims and research objectives (Collins and Stockton, 2018; Grant and Osanloo, 2014; Merriam, 2009). The subsections below discuss each of the theoretical frameworks and models considered when attempting to conceptualise employee retention and influencing factors. The first of these is the improving employee retention rates framework, which is illustrated in Figure 3.2.1 (Deery, 2008).

FIGURE 3.2.1: IMPROVING EMPLOYEE RETENTION RATES FRAMEWORK
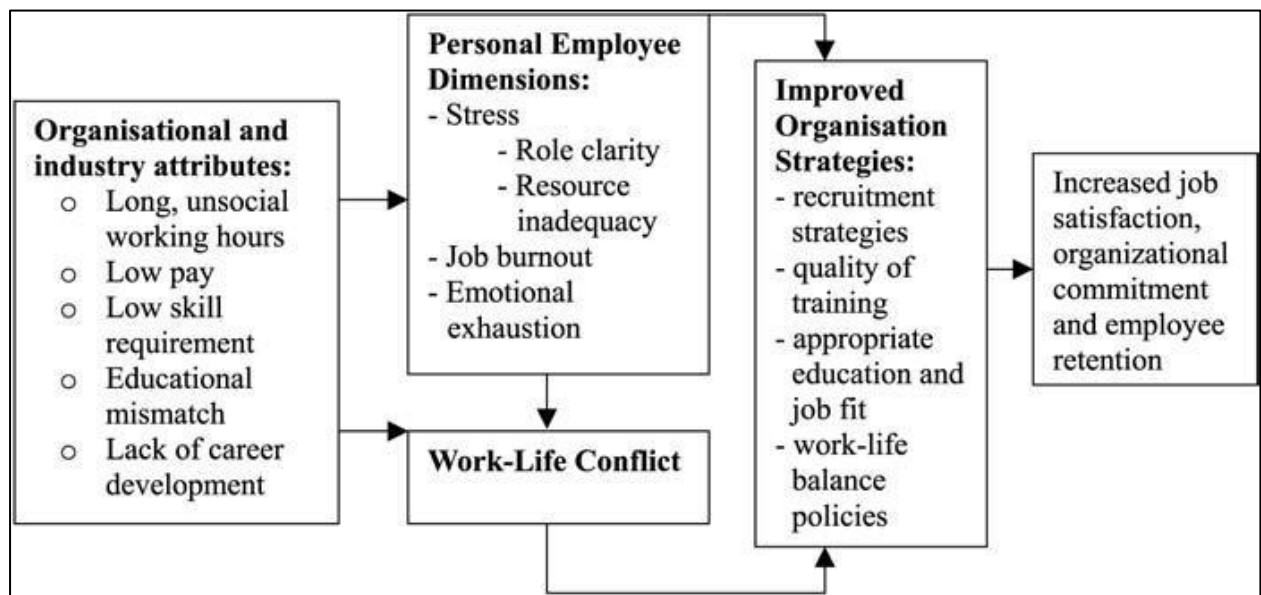
(Source: Deery, 2008, p.803)

3.2.1. The improving employee retention rates framework

The improving employee retention rates framework (as illustrated above in Figure 3.2.1) examines the need to retain talented employees specifically in the hospitality industry and its distinctive employment environment. Bearing in mind the organisational and industry attributes of the hospitality and tourism industry, and the effects that these may have on employees' attitudes and behaviour, Deery's (2008) framework specifically focuses on the role that work–life balance issues have on employees' decision to stay or leave an organisation. Poor work–life balance conditions have been attributed to the hospitality industry, such as long and unsocial working hours, contingent labour, and low pay (Deery, 2008). This framework therefore focuses on implementing work–life balance strategies to effectively retain talented employees by examining organisational and industry attributes, personal employee dimensions (employee attitudes), work–life conflict and improved organisational strategies (see Figure 3.2.1).

The main issue of concern in Deery's (2008) framework is the working environment and conditions, which differ from those in a municipal context. As a result, the framework's main organisational strategies to improving retention focus on work–life balance. This assumes that most employees view work–life conflicts as a major factor in their decision to stay or leave. Also, Deery's (2008) framework assumes that all employees in an organisation have similar

33

concerns, needs and wants. The framework does not consider the diverse nature of employees working in the private and public sectors.

The employee retention and job satisfaction model by Das and Baruah (2013) was the second theoretical framework considered when conceptualising employee retention and its influencing factors, which is illustrated in Figure 3.2.2 and briefly discussed below.

FIGURE 3.2.2: THE EMPLOYEE RETENTION AND JOB SATISFACTION MODEL
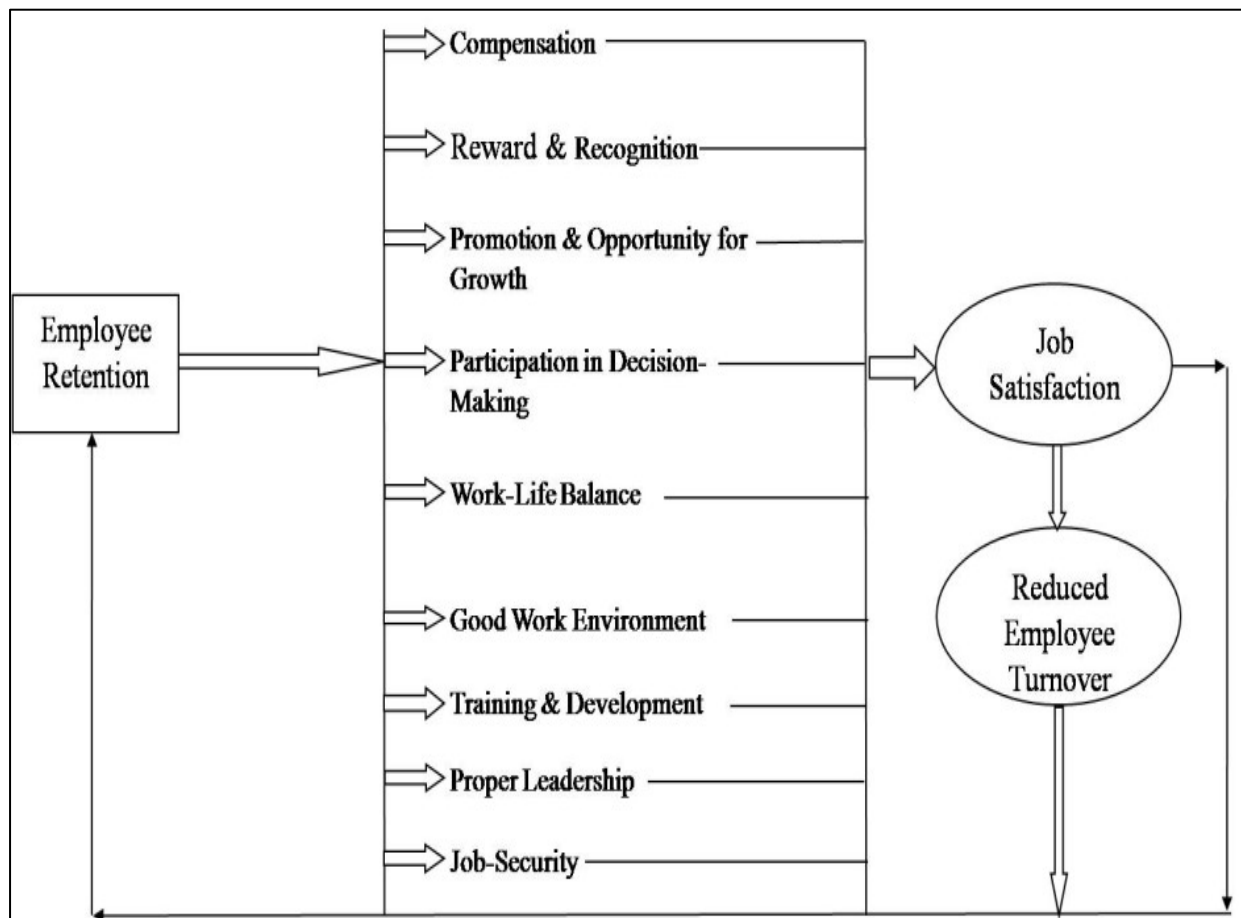
(Source: Das and Baruah, 2013, p.14)

3.2.2. The employee retention and job satisfaction model

The employee retention and job satisfaction model (as illustrated in Figure 3.2.2) explores how job satisfaction and ultimately the retention of employees is achievable through identifying a range of factors that cater to the diverse needs and wants of employees. There is no single strategy which will satisfy every employee in an organisation; employees have different personalities and, as such, have different demands and expectations from the organisation (Das and Baruah, 2013). Although it is sometimes overlooked, the study of retention is vital to any

34

organisation. The reasons individuals stay in organisations are not always the same as the reasons they leave (Das and Baruah, 2013). The employee retention and job satisfaction model is based on literature which argues that retention factors have three broad dimensions, namely social, mental and physical (Das and Baruah, 2013). The model incorporates three dimensions due to different needs and values of todays' workforce. The mental aspect of retention comprises of work characteristics and essentially targets employees who prefer flexible work tasks where they can use their capabilities (skill set, experience and knowledge) to see the results of their effort and ultimately want to remain in the organisation for that reason (Das and Baruah, 2013). The social dimension of retention looks at the interactions and relationships employees have with co-workers, management, customers and others, both internal and external to the work environment, while the physical dimension refers to the working conditions and pay (Das and Baruah, 2013).

Das and Baruah's (2013) model illustrates an understanding of the importance of employees' diverse needs and wants. This speaks to an awareness of the generational differences' organisations need to have when retaining a modern workforce (refer to section 2.5.3 for further discussion). The model is based on a collection of literature that looks at the different ways in which employees can be retained within an organisation depending on their priorities. Based on a variety of research papers (Moncraz, Zhao, and Kay, 2009; Eyster, Johnson, and Toder, 2008; Gardner, Van Dyne, and Pierce, 2004; Milkovich and Newman, 2004), the model focuses on several ways to retain a variety of employees. In addition, it helps to define employee retention and discusses its influencing factors. The model focuses on the amount of overall positive affect (or feelings) that individuals have towards their jobs, which is job satisfaction, but it needs to consider retention factors that cater to the psychological state that characterises an employee's identification, involvement and ultimate relationship with an organisation (Mafini and Dlodlo, 2014), which is organisational commitment. Another limitation is that the model has not been tested in a local government context.

The third theoretical framework considered when developing an understanding of employee retention and its influencing factors for the current study was the conceptual framework of work-related variables which is illustrated below in Figure 3.2.3 (Mafini and Dlodlo, 2014).

FIGURE 3.2.3: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF WORK-RELATED VARIABLES
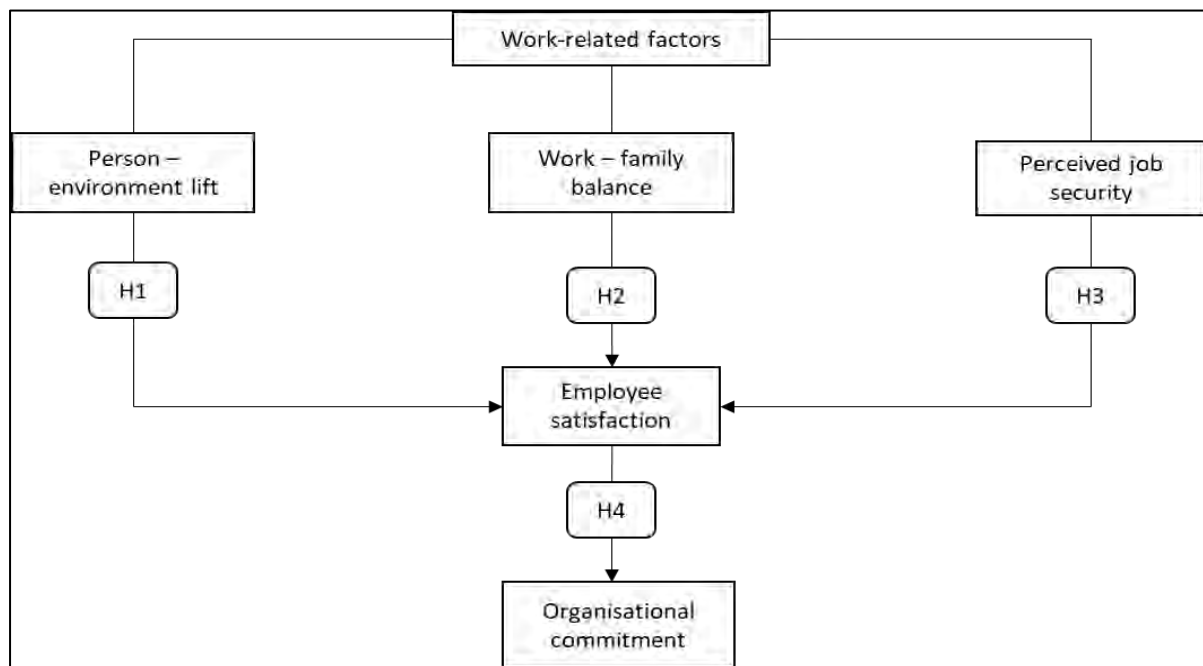
(Source: Mafini and Dlodlo, 2014, p.3)

3.2.3. Conceptual framework of work-related variables

The conceptual framework of work-related variables (as illustrated in Figure 3.2.3) examines the relationship between three work-related factors, and employee satisfaction and organisational commitment in the South African public health sector (Mafini and Dlodlo,2014). Because of internal and external environmental challenges facing public health institutions, there has been high employee turnover among health professionals. According to George, Gow and Bachoo (2013), a major concern relates to the increasing competition from private healthcare providers. Mafini and Dlodlo (2014) believe that it is essential to examine the key predicators of employee satisfaction which may subsequently contribute to the development of organisational commitment. Mafini and Dlodlo (2014, p.2) have formulated a conceptual framework (Figure 3.2.3) in order to "outline the effects of specific work-related variables that comprise of the person element (person–environment fit), situational element (work–family balance) as well as an organisational element (perceived job security)". The authors contend that all three work-related variables are positively associated with employee satisfaction among public health professionals and in turn, employee satisfaction is taken to be positively related to organisational commitment (Mafini and Dlodlo, 2014).

An issue of concern with using the conceptual framework of work-related variables as the principal structural and supportive retention theory for this study is that the framework is only based on three work-related factors. According to Mafini and Dlodlo (2014, p.9), "it is known that there are other significant factors that may be extended to the framework". In view of this, the conceptual framework of work-related variables (Figure 3.2.3) could be used generally to better understand the internal and external environment of the local government regarding employee retention. However, an appropriate retention theory for the study needs to be able to identify a range of retention factors that encompass the diverse needs and wants of today's workforce and take into account the internal and external environment of the municipal context.

The retention factors framework for existing employees was the fourth theoretical framework to be considered when conceptualising employee retention. The framework is illustrated as Figure 3.2.4.

FIGURE 3.2.4: RETENTION FACTORS FRAMEWORK FOR EXISTING EMPLOYEES
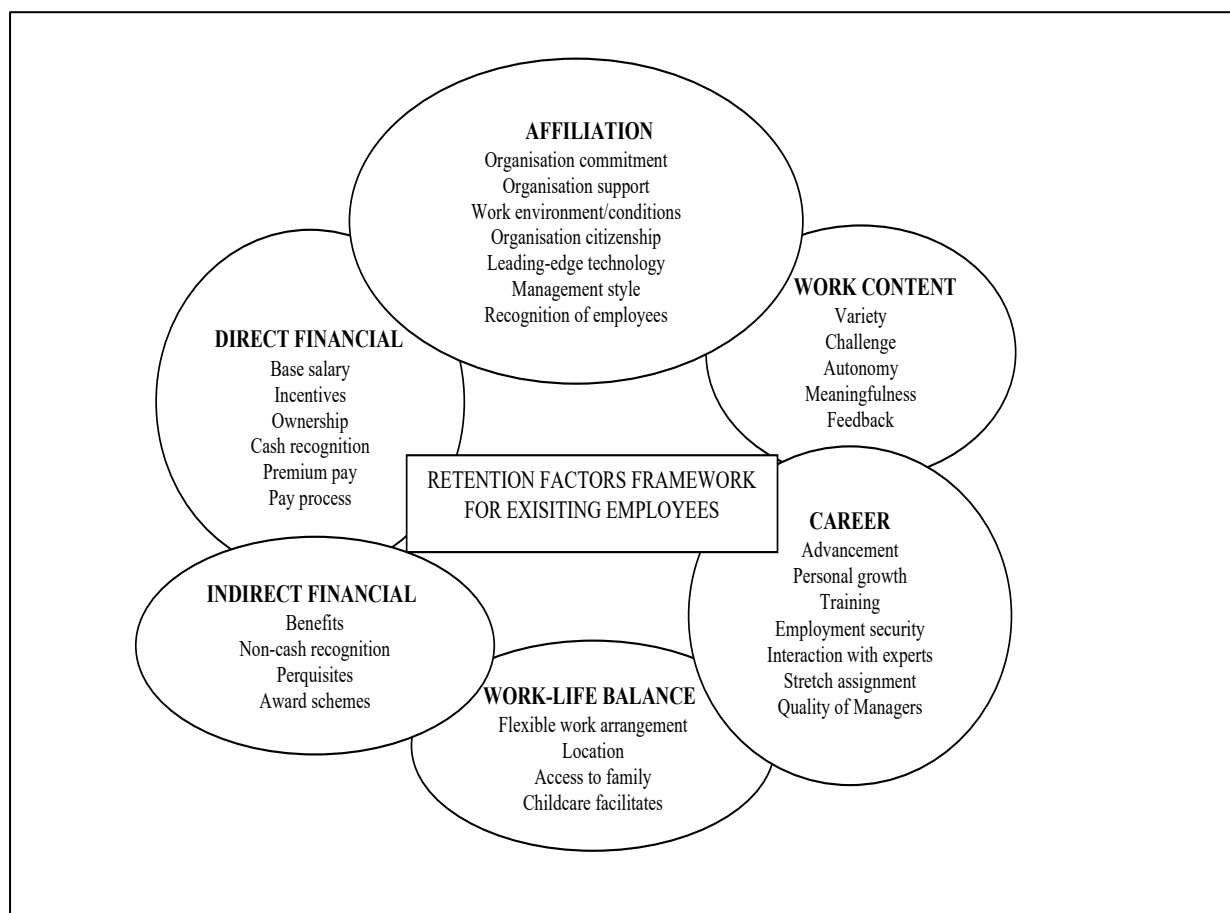
(Source: Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009, p.3)

3.2.4. The retention factors framework for existing employees

Although several studies have researched retention, few have done so in a municipal context. One of these, however, was a study undertaken by Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009) to understand the key retention factors that influenced experienced management employees, in the maintenance phase of their career in a South African municipality, to remain employed. Munsamy and Bosch-Venter's (2009) study, which gave rise to the retention factors framework for existing employees, acknowledges the ongoing "war for talent", as employees' commitment and loyalty has never been more crucial. Local government is struggling to retain professional and management employees, particularly in light of the low financial rewards in the public sector when compared to the private sector (Maserumule, 2014; Koelble and LiPuma, 2010; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). The framework illustrated in Figure 3.2.4 identifies key factors that influence professional and management employees to remain employed in a municipal context (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009).

The retention factors framework for existing employees (Figure 3.2.4) is based on a combination of studies on employee retention. It draws on literature originally developed by Britton, Chadwick and Walker (1999) and later adapted by Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009) who focus on the different needs and values of employees (discussed in section 2.4 of the current study). Like Das and Baruah's (2013) model, Munsamy and Bosch-Venter's (2009) framework reflects on the importance of examining employee retention, as compared to employee turnover, in terms of the different reasons why employees stay with rather than leave an organisation. When employees show intention to leave, it is difficult for an organisation to convince them to stay (Herholdt, 2012; Mosley and Hurley, 1999). Retention and turnover ultimately involve pull factors and push factors for employees respectively. It is therefore important to adopt a framework specifically focused on retention as opposed to frameworks or theories aimed at reducing turnover as employees would have already decided to leave. In addition, the retention factors framework for existing employees (Figure 3.2.4) adds a unique perspective in terms of this study as it is set in a municipal context. The framework has been used in a municipality context before and found to be valid and reliable (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). In addition, the retention factors framework for existing employees measure relevant retention factors for employees working in municipalities (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). Essentially, the framework by Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009) is adopted

as the supporting theoretical framework for this study because it addresses employee retention issues in a municipal context.

The retention factors framework for existing employees caters to professionals and management, skilled and experienced employees who have been in the organisation for several years (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009; Sutherland and Jordaan, 2004). Figure 3.2.4 which is based on Munsamy and Bosch-Venter's (2009) research, focuses not only on retention, but also on retaining highly skilled and experienced individuals who have knowledge of the institutions because of their years of experience. Furthermore, the retention factors framework for existing employees was developed from and for existing employees (i.e. employees already employed in the organisation). This ensures that the retention factors identified provide a relatable descriptive understanding of what employees' feelings and perception are when it comes to retention strategies.

The above-mentioned characteristics of the theory make the retention factors framework for existing employees very relevant to this study. This study aims to explore and understand what employee retention means within a municipal context and therefore contribute to identifying and discussing the factors influencing employees to stay in municipalities. For this reason, the retention factors framework for existing employees (Figure 3.2.4) is adopted as the theoretical framework for this study. The current study makes use of other literature (including journals and other studies) by expanding on the descriptions of each of the retention factors framework for existing employees' factors and themes, looking at the ways in which employees describe retention could and perceive retention factors. The following section below discusses the retention factors framework for existing employees in detail.

3.3. RETENTION FACTORS

Within the retention factors framework for existing employees, six group of factors are identified by Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009) and Britton, Chadwick and Walker (1999), namely affiliation, direct financial, indirect financial, work–life balance, career and work content. The meaning and interpretation of each group of factors is discussed below.

3.3.1. Affiliation factor

Čudanov and Kirchner (2016) and McClelland (1961) define affiliation as the desire to be liked or accepted within a social group. It is the tendency to seek the company of other people. Generally, employees affiliated to an organisation feel a connection to the place and have a sense of involvement and loyalty towards the organisation (Clark, 2013). Affiliation is largely based on a supportive organisation with a good working environment and/or on working conditions and a progressive management style for its employees (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). Affiliation happens when the employees feel a sense of belonging, admire the organisation and even identify with its values and objectives (Ogamba and Nwuche, 2016). Affiliation is positively related to employee retention; it speaks to the feelings of belonging, connectedness, identification, and overall loyalty that employees have towards their organisations (Čudanov and Kirchner, 2016; Ogamba and Nwuche, 2016; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). The affiliation factor consists of organisational commitment, organisational support, work environment/conditions, organisation citizenship, leading-edge technology, management style and recognition of employees' themes (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009; Britton, Chadwick and Walker, 1999).

3.3.1.1. Organisational commitment

Organisational commitment refers to the bond employees experience with their organisation (Clark, 2013). Commitment normally includes employees having a sense of job involvement, loyalty, and belief in and acceptance of the goals and values of the organisation (Ogamba and Nwuche, 2016). Several authors agree and describe the term "organisational commitment" as the psychological state that characterises an employee's belief in and acceptance of the goals and values of the organisation (identification), the willingness to apply extra effort (involvement) and ultimately the attachment/relation with a particular organisation (loyalty) (Gangai and Agrawal, 2015; Lumley, et al., 2011; Benson and Brown, 2007; Narimawati, 2007). Organisational commitment is the attachment (loyalty) to the organisation, characterised by an intention to remain in it. Generally, employees who are committed to an organisation feel a connection to the place (Čudanov and Kirchner, 2016; Gangai and Agrawal, 2015; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). They feel a sense of belonging, think that they understand the organisation and that their personal aims are aligned to the goals and objectives of the organisation (Mafini and Dlodlo, 2014). Organisational commitment is a multidimensional concept that comprises affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative

commitment (Ogamba and Nwuche, 2016; Clark, 2013; Daneshfard and Ekvaniyan, 2012; Lumley et al., 2011; Slack, Orife, and Anderson, 2010; Dockel, 2003). These three dimensions are discussed in more detail.

- Affective commitment

Affective commitment refers to the employees' emotional attachment, identification with and involvement in the organisation (Döckel, Basson, and Coetzee, 2006). It is typical when employees identify with the organisation's goals and values, feel that they fit into the organisation and/or are satisfied with their work (Daneshfard and Ekvaniyan, 2012; Lumley, et al., 2011). Affective commitment relates to how much an employee wants to stay at the organisation; it is the employees' affection towards their job or organisation. Affective commitment is influenced by the extent to which the individual's needs and expectations about the organisation are matched by their experience. Therefore, employees who are committed to an organisation on an affective basis continue working there because they want to. Some of elements that influence affective commitment are working relationship with colleagues and management, role clarity, job challenge, feedback or personal importance (Ogamba and Nwuche, 2016).

- Continuance commitment

Continuance commitment refers to an instrumental attachment to the organisation, where the individual's association with the organisation is based on an assessment of economic benefits gained (Beck and Wilson, 2000). It relates to how much employees feel the need to stay in the organisation. It is based on the fear of loss, the perceived cost associated with leaving the organisation (Ogamba and Nwuche, 2016; Daneshfard and Ekvaniyan, 2012; Slack, Orife and Anderson, 2010; Döckel, Basson, and Coetzee, 2006). For instance, employees might need to stay in the organisation because of a lack of job alternatives, or because compensation would not improve if they leave the organisation. Therefore, employees who are committed to the organisation on a continuance basis remain because they need to do so (Ogamba and Nwuche, 2016).

- Normative commitment

Normative commitment is the degree to which an employee stays in an organisation out of a sense of obligation (Ogamba and Nwuche, 2016). This form of organisational commitment is built upon a sense of moral duty and the value system of an individual, where the individual is

influenced by their experiences both prior to cultural socialisation and following organisational socialisation entry into the organisation (Lumley, at al., 2011; Döckel, Basson, and Coetzee, 2006). According to Ogamba and Nwuche (2016), normative commitment happens when employees continue their membership of the organisation because they believe it is expected and the right thing to do. This is usually because employees begin to feel that the organisation deserves their continued stay as repayment for investments the organisation has made in them, probably through training and development.

3.3.1.2. Organisational support

Organisational support is the perceived support from the organisation, is the extent to which the organisation is seen to appreciate the efforts and cares about their employee's interests and well-being (Roemer and Harris, 2018). It is the degree to which employees believe their organisation values their contributions and cares about their well-being and fulfils socio-emotional needs (Eisenberger, et al., 1997). Organisational support means that employees feel that the organisation is there for them. Altinoz, et al. (2016) explain it in terms of the perceived methods that organisations use to show their appreciation, and the perception that the organisation takes the employees' well-being and happiness into consideration. According to Roemer and Harris (2018), employees believe that appreciation is expressed through payment, job enrichment, recognition, and other forms of benefits. Organisations also demonstrate their "concern regarding employee well-being through the offer of organisational policies and human resources practices that facilitate meeting and balancing job demands, and demands outside work" (Worley, Fuqua, & Hellman, 2009, p.112). Ultimately, organisational support looks at the structures in place to ensure that employees feel that they are cared for and supported by the employer. It could be expressed as, for instance, support from management, organisational rewards or the human resource practices of the organisation.

3.3.1.3. Work environment/conditions

The work environment is the surrounding conditions in which employees operate, as mentioned in Chapter 2 of this study (Massoudi and Hamdi, 2017; Ajala, 2012; Vischer, 2008; Briner, 2000). Work environment and conditions influence the quality and quantity of the work produced by the employees (Sarode and Shirsath, 2012). Also known as the internal environment, the work environment involves the physical (work) location as well as the immediate surroundings, behavioural procedures, policies, rules, culture, resources, working

relationships, and work location, all of which influence the ways employees perform their work (Jain and Kaur, 2014). Therefore, all internal environment aspects that act and react on the body and mind of the employee are involved in influencing their behaviour (Jain and Kaur, 2014). Work environment strongly influences the organisation's ability to retain talented people (Massoudi and Hamdi, 2017). However, in order for it to be an effective retention factor, the work environment needs to be more than simply the location where employees complete their tasks. The organisation needs to be able to provide a conducive working environment where the working experience for employees is a pleasant one, where adequate resources are provided and where there is some degree of flexibility, such as in work hours (Kagwi, 2018; Massoudi and Hamdi, 2017; Khoso et al., 2016). The work environment and/or working conditions consist of those relevant physical and social factors within the boundaries of the organisation that deal with the interpersonal relations of members and their interactions with each other (Vischer, 2008). Work environment and conditions can be separated into the physical workplace environment (which is the context of the office layout and design) and psychosocial work environment (which are factors including working conditions, role congruity and social support from supervisors) (Kagwi, 2018; Khoso et al., 2016).

- Physical workplace environment

The physical work environment is the architecture of the workplace; it includes components of the tangible workplace environment that involve spatial layout and functionality of the surroundings (Chandrasekar, 2011; Rollsjo, 2008). Elsbach and Pratt (2007) describe the physical workplace environment as all material objects and stimuli that employees interact with in their working lives. Where material objects can be buildings or furnishings and office arrangements, stimuli can be the conditions under which employees work. For instance, stimuli will be the comfort level, ventilation, heating, natural lighting and artificial lighting (Samson, Waiganjo and Koima, 2015). According to Khoso et al. (2016), it is vital to pay attention to the physical work environment if an organisation intends to enhance employee productivity. This form of work environment refers to the employees' ability to physically connect with their office environment (Ajala, 2012). The physical workplace environment has a direct impact on productivity, health and safety, comfort, concentration, job satisfaction and morale of the people within it (Ajala, 2012; Sarode and Shirsath, 2012; Wells and Thelen, 2002). It affects how employees interact and perform tasks (Ajala, 2012). According to Samson, Waiganjo and Koima (2015), the physical work environment encompasses the office layout, whether it is an

open plan or cellular offices, as mentioned by Elsbach and Pratt (2007). The office layout can have an influence on the level and nature of social interaction between co-workers. The design of open plan offices and other aspects of the physical layout may determine the kinds of interactions that take place (Briner, 2000). Wells and Thelen (2002) point out that organisations can offer suitable levels of privacy and sound controls at the workplace and in the process improve the level of motivation and commitment in employees and have an increased ability to satisfy and retain employees.

- Psychosocial work environment

Apart from the job itself, another element that significantly influences how the employee feels about the work is the psychosocial work environment, (Muhimpundu, 2018; Massoudi and Hamdi, 2017). The psychosocial work environment (also known as the behavioural work environment) consists of components that relate to how well the office occupiers connect with each other, and the impact the office environment can have on the behaviour of the individual (Oswald, 2012). It includes, among other things, a set of job factors related to the interaction between people, their work and the organisation (Foldspang, et al., 2014). According to Vischer (2008), the psychosocial work environment refers to the interaction between the environment and working conditions, organisational conditions, functions and content of the work, effort, workers' individual characteristics and those of members of their families. It is a collective term that covers the interaction between people in a workplace, the work of the individual and its impact on the employee, organisational conditions and the culture of the organisation.

3.3.1.4. Organisational citizenship

Organisational citizenship is described as discretionary actions by employees that occur outside their formal job (Campbell and Joy, 2016). According to Xiaoqiu (2015) and Srivastava (2008), organisational citizenship occurs when employee perform duties beyond what is expected of them, to the benefit of the organisations and their co-workers. Employees who show organisational citizenship traits generally exhibit principles of humanity, courtesy, and diligence (Zhang, 2011). According to Campbell and Joy (2016, p.1), "employees who feel organizational citizenship will 'go the extra mile' out of personal motivation – identifying these motivations can lead to increased performance and job satisfaction". Essentially, employees who engage in organisational citizenship find their work more meaningful; helping their co-workers brings them experiences of depth and as a result, these employees may become more

willing to perform their tasks and continue working in the organisation (Campbell and Joy, 2016; Xiaoqiu, 2015; Srivastava 2008).

3.3.1.5. Leading-edge technology

According to Barkman (2018), "leading-edge technology" refers to technological devices used for communication, whose influence on employees is often overlooked. Today's workforce is seeking more than comfortable offices and compensation. Often employees want to stay in organisations that value their contributions, pay for their efforts and demonstrate an appreciation for them. Employees want to stay when they feel connected to the organisation. One way employers can enable employees to feel connected to the organisation, is by effectively communicating with those individuals (Barkman, 2018; Justice, 2017). The use of technology allows the organisation to connect with the outside world and more importantly, with potential and existing employees in an easier way. With tools such as email, the organisation can share key information with employees. The use of technology creates a more effective communicative environment for employees (Barkman, 2018). Depending on the individuals, access to technological advancements not only affects productivity and communication, but it can also be an influencer in recruiting and retaining key employees (Justice, 2017). Through leading-edge technology, employees are better able to understand what is required of them, find it easier to access, and communicate with their colleagues and employers. This allows them to be comfortable in their workplace.

3.3.1.6. Management style

Management style is a prominent employee retention factor in organisations and specifically municipalities (Mello, 2014; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). Almonawer and Ashaye (2017) define it as the principles that underline the methods, abilities and techniques managers use in handling situations and expressing leadership within an organisation. The term is regarded as a synonym for leadership (Amos, et al., 2016; Ng'ethe, 2013; Meyer, 2005). It is the way in which managers align people with expected outcomes of an organisation's vision (Okon and Isong, 2016; Ng'ethe, Iravo and Namusonge, 2012). According to Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt (2003), management style is a method which a manager uses in directing an organisation; it refers to the characteristic ways of making decisions and relating to employees in the workplace. It is a specific practice used by managers to direct the affairs of

an organisation (Okon and Isong, 2016), and is aimed at creating a work environment that will endear the organisation to its employees.

The way in which employees are led and managed has a direct influence on the organisation's ability to maintain its workforce (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). Several authors believe that the relationship employees have with their immediate manager can prolong their stay in the organisation (Okon and Isong, 2016; Wakabi, 2016; Beardwell and Claydon, 2007; Meyer, 2005; Netswera, Rankhumise, and Mavundla, 2005). Managers play a significant role because they act as advocates for employees, gathering and distributing the resources needed by employees for them to do a good job, and providing feedback based on employees' performance (Oswald, 2012; Chandrasekar, 2011). Managers are responsible for communicating policies, goals, objectives and standards and ensuring that employees are aware of and adhere to the organisation's policy. Management's role is important, particularly in relation to management style and level of support. It gives employees direction, support and guidance. Employees are far more loyal, committed and ultimately remain in an organisation when they trust management, feel that they are recognised for their individual contributions, and believe leaders are capable of driving the business to success (Coetzee and Pauw, 2013; Nazia and Begum, 2013; Deloitte, 2012; Dockel, 2003). As a consequence of the diverse nature of today's workforce, various management styles influence employees. These include autocratic, paternalistic, democratic and laissez-faire management styles (Okon and Isong, 2016; Taplin and Winterton, 2007), which are discussed briefly below.

- Autocratic management style

A manager who has an autocratic management style makes all the decisions unilaterally without much regard for the subordinates. Employees are not included in the decision-making process, and open communication and feedback of ideas becomes difficult within the organisation (Okon and Isong, 2016). With this type of management style, employees tend to lack motivation and interest in the organisation.

- Paternalistic management style

The best interests of employees and the organisation are taken into account in a paternalistic management style. Communication is directed downward; feedback from and questioning authority are absent as a form of respect to the superior and to group harmony. This form of management style is similar to that of a parent with a child (Okon and Isong, 2016; Taplin and

Winterton, 2007). According to Okon and Isong (2016), the paternalistic manager keeps control over employees and at the same time allows them to be innovative in the way they do their jobs. The manager also takes care of both the job-related and personal challenges of the employees. In such a style of working, employees feel attached and loyal towards their organisation.

- Democratic management style

According to Okon and Isong (2016), in the democratic management style (which is also known as the participative management style), the manager allows employees to take part in decision-making. Managers take into consideration the opinions of employees and welcome feedback on the plans and ideas of the organisation. This form of management style ensures healthy communication between management and employees.

- Laissez-faire management style

Laissez-faire management style is characterised by style in which "the manager is hands-off and allows group members to make the decisions. Employees are empowered to determine their own objectives, solve their own problem and make their own decision with little or no interference" (Okon and Isong, 2016, p.53). Trust is placed on employees determining their own objectives, solving their own problems, and making their own decisions with little or no interference from management. According to Anbazhagan and Kotur (2014), laissez-faire management style leads to the low productivity among employees. In the end, with laissez-faire management style, there is a likelihood of a lack of role clarity for employees, little involvement from team members and a lack of accountability within the organisation (Barling and Frone, 2017).

Management styles can vary depending on the managers. In the end, managers can play an instrumental role in creating a work environment that neutralises the otherwise problematic aspects of the job and work–family linkages (Taplin and Winterton, 2007). Some employees may prefer to get instructions on what to do and how to do it; others prefer being assisted in discovering solutions to problems, or even management that allows employees to take decisions (Okon and Isong, 2016). Regardless of the kind of management style adopted, managers and leaders can ensure that the employee is influenced positively and stays in the organisation.

3.3.1.7. Recognition of employees

Harrison (2005, p.1) proposes that the "recognition of employees is the timely, informal or formal acknowledgement of a person's or team's behaviour, effort or business result that supports the organisation's goals and values, and which has clearly been beyond normal expectations". Recognition of employees looks at praising employees and their efforts. It is ensuring that employees feel that the organisation is aware of them. Recognition of employees goes beyond giving feedback on work performed; it is a way in which management and the organisation pay attention to the individuals working in the organisation and recognising them as more than just employees. Amoatemaa and Kyeremeh (2016) state that recognition should take the form of continuous communication about the employee's contribution, reflecting not just work performance, but also their personal dedication and engagement. This can be in the form of a pat on the back or public praise.

3.3.2. Direct financial factor

Direct financial factor consists of tangible pay-related elements, which can range from salaries, wages or bonus payments as part of incentive pay. It can be described as what employees receive from the organisation in monetary terms (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). Direct financial refers to the cash and cash substitutes being paid out to employees for work performed (Msengeti and Obwogi, 2015; Nelson, 1994). According to Nel and Werner (2017), the direct financial factor is a defining factor because it has cash value; direct financial elements can satisfy employees' financial and material desires (see section 2.4.1 in this study) and employees can use them as they see fit. People may take a job for more money, but they often stay in organisations for extended periods because of the recognition, developmental opportunities and managers who guide and support them. Khan, et al. (2012) argue that the direct financial factor is a vital retention factor; employees depend on their earnings to sustain themselves and lifestyles (Stoltz, 2015; Mello, 2014; Das and Baruah, 2013; Deloitte, 2012; Milkovich and Newman, 2004; Swanepoel, et al., 2014; Parker and Wright, 2001; Gerhart and Milkovich 1992, cited in Gardner, Van Dyne and Pierce, 2004). According to Warnich, et al. (2015), organisations must make sure that there is equity in terms of compensation in order to retain skilled employees. The direct financial factors consist of the following elements: base salary, incentives, cash recognition, premium pay and the pay process (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009).

3.3.2.1. Base salary

Base salary is the fixed amount an employee receives for work performed. It is salary given based on some predefined rates, for instance, the amount of time spent on the job by the employee such as hourly or weekly rates (Msengeti and Obwogi, 2015). This form of financial reward can be expressed as an annual, weekly or hourly rate. Base salary is seen as the main element used to lure potential professionals (see section 2.4.1) (Muleya, 2017; Amoatemaa and Kyeremeh, 2016; Dockel, 2013; Netswera, Rankhumise and Mavundla, 2005). However, a salary increase, or a pay raise is not a sustainable way of retaining skilled professionals in the long term. Employees are more interested in understanding pay systems and payment equity. This is because fair salary is seen as the foundational element of the implied and contractual bond between employers and employees (Mello, 2014; Rambur, McIntosh, Palumbo and Reinier, 2005; Parker and Wright, 2001). As defined in Chapter 1, base salary is seen as a form of acknowledgement for work completed by the employee (see section 2.4.1). It is the organisation's way of thanking the employee and showing them that they are valued. Nel and Werner (2017) argue that some workers are purely motivated by money. Most people enjoy getting extra spending money, because for most employees, their salary is their main source of income (Rynes, Gerhart and Minette, 2004). The concern with the direct financial factors, especially in the form of salary, is that often employees simply use the money to pay bills and quickly forget the reward aspect (Rynes, Gerhart and Minette, 2004; Nelson, 1994). Retention strategies in the form of money have a very short-term effect, with employees viewing salary as a right rather than a reward (Massoudi and Hamdi, 2017; Chandrasekar, 2011; Rynes, Gerhart and Minette, 2004). A salary is viewed as something that is owed to them for the work performed.

3.3.2.2. Incentives

An incentive is a payment or a way to stimulate employees towards greater output. This can be an object or an item of value to the employee, a desired action or an event that can influence employees to do more of whatever is encouraged by the employer (Makhanu and Makokha, 2017). Incentives are designed to get the maximum performance from employees and help retain the most productive among them (Makhanu and Makokha, 2017). They are a perquisite (i.e. perk), a consequence of good action. There are different forms of incentives, namely compensation incentives (profit-sharing), recognition incentives (thanking, presenting employees with certificate of achievement), reward incentives (gifts, service award presents)

and appreciation incentives (parties and celebrations, company-paid family activity events) (Heathfield, 2018). Olubusayoa, Stephen and Maxwell (2014) define incentives as ways in which organisations compensate and reward employees for performance that goes beyond expectation. Incentives encourage employees to work harder and be more committed to their institution (Olubusayoa, Stephen and Maxwell, 2014), and function together with base salary, in offering financial support to employees.

3.3.2.3. Ownership

Ownership refers to employees owning a part of the organisation, to individuals being given the chance to own shares in the organisation. Although some organisations do not offer their employees part ownership, employees who own stakes in organisations feel a sense of responsibility, power, and are able to influence decisions (Caramelli, 2011). Ownership can also give employees a sense of belonging and pride in the organisation because part of the organisation is theirs (Caramelli, 2011).

3.3.2.4. Cash recognition

When the organisation sees work an employee does and gives the employee feedback in the form of cash for their performance, cash recognition has occurred (Parker and Wright, 2001). It is a way of rewarding the employee for a job well done, for instance, as a 13th cheque given to employees. It shows that the employer is aware of the employee's process and work ethic; it also shows that the employer can engage with the employee and hold them accountable for their performance; management is familiar with employees and their actions (Parker and Wright, 2001).

3.3.2.5. Premium pay

Premium pay is the compensation employees receive from the additional work done outside working hours. For instance, it can be the additional payment for working overtime, standby duty or working on a Sunday (Parker and Wright, 2001).

3.3.2.6. Pay process

The pay process involves the organisation ensuring that employees are compensated timeously. The process needs to be effective, meaning that employees should be satisfied with the way

they are being compensated (Horwitz, Heng and Quazi, 2003; Parker and Wright, 2001). This can refer to bank account deposits, the availability of salary slips online or in paper form.

3.3.3. Indirect financial factor

As already noted, employees tend to stay in organisations when they feel that their capabilities, efforts and performance contributions are recognised and appreciated (Ng'ethe, Iravo and Namusonge, 2012; Ayobami, Wallis and Karodia, 2016). Although money is important to individuals, its impact on intrinsic motivation is limited. According to Silverman (2014), benefits and non-cash recognition are likely to be considerably more memorable than cash reward, which is simply subsumed into employees' salaries. This is where the indirect financial factor comes into play. This factor offers security to individuals and their families in the form of benefits and pensions, and also provides recognition by celebrating and acknowledging extra effort made by employees (Britton, Chadwick and Walker, 1999). According to Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009), it consists of benefits related to security and saving, medical aid funding, pension or provident fund benefits, and other noncash recognition or benefits by way of employee award schemes. Indirect financial factors give employers the opportunity to acknowledge individual work accomplishments that prolong employees' stay with the organisation (Ayobami, Wallis and Karodia, 2016). Being valued and appreciated is a fundamental human need. Employees are more likely to stay in an organisation if they feel valued and appreciated.

3.3.3.1. Benefits

Benefits are a standard part of an employer's offer to employees depending on their positions or job levels within an organisation (Odunlade, 2012). They are guaranteed to employees regardless of their performance. Employee benefits acknowledge the value of employees for the organisation (see section 2.4.1); they are items in the total package offered to employees over and above salary that increases their wealth or well-being at some cost to the employer (Nel and Werner, 2017; Amos, et al., 2016). The combination of benefits is often a significant factor in the employee's initial selection of the organisation (Nelson, 1994). Some benefits are mandatory: government regulates them, and therefore employers are compelled to make these benefits available to their employees (Nel and Werner, 2017). Other benefits are voluntary: the organisation is not compelled by law to offer them (Nel and Werner, 2017; Amos, et al., 2016). Normally, voluntary benefits are used to define the culture of the organisation (i.e. the values

and beliefs that contribute to the unique social and psychological environment of an organisation) (Odunlade, 2012).

- Mandatory benefits

By law, South African organisations, including municipalities need to provide the following mandatory benefits: unemployment insurance, accident insurance, leave (annual leave, paid public holidays, family responsibility leave, sick leave, maternity leave) (Nel and Werner, 2017; Amos et al., 2016). Unemployment insurance is provided for in the Unemployment Insurance Act 63 of 2001. The Act makes provision for the loss of earnings resulting from unemployment due to termination of service, illness or pregnancy (Amos, et al., 2016). Accident insurance is provided for in the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act 130 of 1993. According to Nel and Werner (2017), accident insurance regulates the payment of compensation to employees injured, who contract a disease while doing their job and covers death. Employees are entitled to different forms of leave such as annual leave, sick leave, maternity and family responsibility leave in terms of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997. For instance, maternity leave allows pregnant employees four months' maternity leave, whereas family responsibility leave allows employees to receive full pay for several personal absences such as attending funerals. Leave is primarily aimed at improving employees' health, personal development and morale (Nel and Werner, 2017). Although employees do not remain in organisations solely because of mandatory benefits, these benefits are an indirect form of compensation that assist employees.

- Voluntary benefits

Some organisations may also include voluntary benefits such as health and life insurance, medical aid schemes, pension funds and employee services (Nel and Werner, 2017). According to Nel and Werner (2017), the employer may provide health and life insurance benefits as part of a group life insurance plan which covers employees while they are working for the organisation, whereas, medical aid schemes are medical coverage for both employee and their dependents. Medical aid schemes are highly valued by employees owing to the high costs of medical care (Nel and Werner, 2017). Employee services are the provision of various facilities offered by the employer. They include services such as cafeteria facilities, social and recreational facilitates, financial and legal services, educational facilitates, housing subsidies or allowance, transport benefits or even retirement counselling (Nel and Werner, 2017; Odunlade, 2012; Dessler, 2010). Employee services are thought to have a positive impact on

employee loyalty which may influence organisational commitment (Odunlade, 2012; Dessler, 2010).

3.3.3.2. Non-cash recognition

Non-financial recognition "is a non-cash award given in recognition of a high level of accomplishment or performance such as customer care or support to colleagues" (Silverman, 2014, p.3). Non-cash recognition is dependent on achievement of a predetermined target. It is the timely, informal or formal acknowledgement of an individual's or a team's behaviour. This acknowledgement can be for a business result that supports the organisation's goals and values, and which has clearly been beyond normal expectations (Ng'ethe, Iravo and Namusonge, 2012). Non-cash recognition can be as simple as a special notice or acknowledgement of something done. It is the method of identifying either individual employees or teams for praise or acknowledgement. It is important to note, though, that the concept of non-financial recognition does not necessarily mean that the recognition provided should have no financial value. It simply means that whatever is given should not be just money (Silverman, 2014). There are different ways in which an organisation can show acknowledgement for the employee's efforts. For instance, managers can say thank you or formally write thank-you letters to the employees. Managers can also publicly appreciate the efforts in a team meeting, organisational newsletter, or even declare the individual "employee of the month" or "employee of the year". Alternatively, the employee may be given the chance to enjoy the gift of some kind of getaway from the workplace. This can be a travel or retail voucher, or use of recreational facilities (Silverman, 2014).

3.3.3.3. Perquisites

Perquisites refer to incidental payments, benefits, privileges, or perks provided by an organisation which is attached to a position or office in addition to a salary (Andrews, Linn, and Yi, 2009). According to Perkins and White (2011), perquisites are normally non-cash benefits which involve the organisation reimbursing expenses or paying for obligations incurred by the employee. Perquisites may include free supply of electricity, gas and water, rent-free accommodation or even an amount payable by the organisation directly or indirectly to affect an assurance on the life of the employee (Perkins and White, 2011; Andrews, Linn, and Yi, 2009).

3.3.3.4. Award schemes

Frey (2007, p.6), describes award schemes as "non-material, extrinsic compensation taking the form of orders, medals, decorations and prizes". Traditionally award schemes were used to recognise individuals who were senior or long-term employees. However, in the past 20 years, there has been a rise in award schemes also being created for teams, service units and local authorities in the United Kingdom's public sector (Hartley and Downe, 2007). Hartley and Downe (2007, p.329) argue that award schemes are seen "as a means both of celebrating high performance and also contributing to the dissemination of good practice, with the ultimate aim of improving public services". Award schemes support employee performance, demonstrating that the organisation can recognise good ideas and practices for service improvements (Radnor, 2009). According to Hartley and Downe (2007), award schemes, to a certain extent, are accreditations as well as awards. Organisations may use award schemes to stimulate employees into acting in their best interests by improving performance and remaining with the employer for a longer period (Radnor, 2009; Frey, 2007; Hartley, and Downe, 2007; Rashman, Downe and Hartley, 2005).

3.3.4. Work–life balance

Section 2.4.4 of Chapter 2 describes work–life balance as the fit between the multiple roles in a person's life. Essentially, work–life balance is about creating and maintaining a balance between work and personal responsibilities, thus strengthening employee loyalty (Massoudi and Hamdi, 2017; Samson, Waigon, Koima, 2015; Meenakshi, Subrahmanyam and Ravichandran, 2013). According to Deery (2008), work–life balance involves employees' family commitments, family-related needs and other non-work obligations. It involves non-work roles (e.g. spouse, family, leisure) played outside the organisation. According to Mafini and Dlodlo (2014), work–life balance is a work life that is synchronised with family life such that there is an absence of conflict between these two dimensions. Work–life balance is becoming an increasingly important factor in employee retention, especially for the current generation (generation Y) of professional workers. Today's employees want to have a balance between work and other life domains. Family support in the form of alternative schedules or flexitime within organisations helps with the retention of talented employees. According to Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009), work–life balance addresses the amount of flexibility allowed with work arrangements, the convenience associated with the location of work and

access to family and childcare facilities; namely, flexible work arrangements, location, and access to family and children facilities.

3.3.4.1. Flexible work arrangements

Flexible work arrangements can be described as scheduling variations that accommodate individuals' work times, workloads, responsibilities, and locations. It is the nature of the work schedule, or work hours (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). Flexible work arrangement allows employees to work a certain number of core hours, but to have the freedom to determine start and end times. This can also involve working from home. This flexibility normally occurs when employees have access to laptops or phones to communicate with their employers. According to Sinha (2012), employees who have flexible work arrangements have higher levels of individual commitment, satisfaction, productivity and loyalty towards their organisation.

3.3.4.2. Location, access to family and facilities for children

Work–life balance means creating harmony within the employee's life; therefore, elements such as location of the organisation, and access to family and childcare supports services are interrelated and important for certain employees. Organisations, including municipalities in smaller towns or rural areas, find it difficult to attract, let alone retain employees (Kanyane, 2016; Koelble and LiPuma, 2010; Lawless, 2005). According to McKenzie (2011), the location of the organisation is important to employees, as it speaks to the characteristics of high population centres (from the schooling system and medical care to crime in the area). Location is the geographical place of the organisation; it can have an impact on particular employees depending on what they desire from the location they are working in. For instance, some employees prefer to stay in an organisation because of the access they have to their families and facilities available around the area (Barik and Pandey, 2016; McKenzie, 2011; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009).

3.3.5. Career factor

The career factor is about the long-term opportunities for development and advancement of employees (Bussin and Toerien, 2015). The career factor involves employees being able to visualise their career path developing within the organisation because of the opportunities afforded to them. It relates to the employee's future within the organisation, whether they see

themselves growing, being promoted and developing in the organisation (Sinha, 2012). Institutions (municipalities) should incorporate a culture of learning within its employees in order to improve the level of service delivery (Wessels, 2014). According to Nel and Werner (2017) and Coetzee, Roythorne-Jacobs and Mensele (2016), the career factor refers to the formal approach in which the organisation nurtures its human capital to provide a competitive advantage. It entails an ongoing formalised effort by an organisation that focuses on developing and enriching the organisation's human resources considering both the employees' and organisation's needs (Coetzee, Roythorne-Jacobs and Mensele, 2016). The career factor is marked by managerial interventions and support services, such as opportunities for personal growth, succession planning or formal mentoring and coaching, training, career counselling and guidance (Coetzee, Roythorne-Jacobs and Mensele, 2016; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). These interventions are meant to match employees' abilities and goals with the needs of the organisation. Career development is arguably the joint responsibility of the employer and employees (Lues, 2014). Employees need support and access to opportunities from superiors and their organisation (Gerber, Nel and van Dyk, 1995). In the end, the retention of employees is linked to the perception of their career path within the organisation. This is because career development opportunities can increase an employee's commitment to the organisation (George, 2015; Sinha, 2012; Horwitz, et al. 2003). Employees value personal and professional development. They become loyal to an organisation that gives them regular access to training and opportunities to grow. The career factor involves aspects of advancement, personal growth, training, employment security, interaction with experts, stretch assignments and quality of management. These are discussed below.

3.3.5.1. Advancement

The term "advancement" suggests a career that mainly consists of vertical movements between a sequence of jobs (Nel and Werner, 2017). It involves a change of job and a shift to a higher organisational level with a new job title, possibly more authority and responsibility and in most cases, a higher salary (Nel and Werner, 2017). According to Gerber, Nel and van Dyk (1995), advancement affords the individual an opportunity for personal growth, increased status and compensation. Highly skilled and scarce-skilled individuals prefer working in organisations that provide them with opportunities to be promoted to new and challenging positions.

3.3.5.2. Personal growth

Personal growth in a work context refers to the opportunities of growth given to employees within the organisation. Amos, et al. (2016) and Gerber, Nel and van Dyk (1995) describe personal growth as an organisation-focused process that creates learning opportunities, thus making learning and continuous improvement possible within an organisation. Personal growth is a form of development. It does not necessarily mean that the employee has been given a promotion, but rather has undergone some educational processes. It may be regarded as formal education, job experiences, relationships, and assessments of personality and abilities that help employees prepare for the future (Nel and Werner, 2017). The focus is more on learning to develop the individual and the organisation; it is the organisation providing individuals with the chance to grow in the workplace (Dockel, 2003). For instance, employees need to be given a chance to lead a team project, solve conflict among themselves, represent peers or management and even represent the division or organisation. Personal growth is the long-term process that is aimed at improving employees and the organisation.

3.3.5.3. Training

Maserumule (2014) describes training as the on-the-job acquisition of skills to enhance the capability of workers in their interactions with various organisational tasks. Ongoing training is an important component of an organisation and develops the full effectiveness of the most important resource of the organisation, its people (Wessels, 2014). In today's organisations, the global currency is knowledge. The workforce should be flexible, adaptable, and have the necessary skill set to operate in today's global market. Training is an important function of human capital formation which should be in the hands of both employees and the organisation (Amos, et al., 2016; Ng'ethe, Iravo, and Namusonge, 2012). Over the past few decades, employee training in South Africa has been neglected, which has led to low productivity, older staff members becoming redundant, fear of technological advancement, and higher employee turnover (Wessels, 2014; Erasmus et al., 2013). Training is seen as a systematic process of modifying the knowledge, skills and behaviour of employees in such a way that organisational objectives are achieved and employee commitment is increased (Amos, et al., 2016; Erasmus et al., 2013; Ng'ethe, Iravo, and Namusonge, 2012; Gerber, Nel and van Dyk, 1995). It refers to a specific means of facilitating the learning process and is a planned, short-term attempt to change employees' competencies in and attitudes to the job and adjusting their behaviour in the organisation (Amos, et al., 2016; Erasmus et al., 2013). Training can begin on the very first

day of work. However, some employees prefer it to be ongoing process. It might take place at the workplace or at a training facility. Managers can also provide training in the form of coaching and mentoring. Training is primarily directed at improving an employee's job performance in the short run, according to specific job standards (Nel and Werner, 2017). "The opportunities for training and development are among the most important reasons why employees stay, especially young and highly skilled individuals" (Ng'ethe, Iravo and Namusonge, 2012, p.209). This is because these types of employees who feel stagnant in their positions generally lose interest and do not stay in unfulfilling positions (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). Both personal growth and training are the organisation's way of informing employees that their employers are committed to quality and that they see employees as valuable assets. When offered these opportunities, employees feel that the organisation is investing in them, that they are valued, and that there are opportunities for growth within the organisation, consequently giving meaning to their current job (Dockel, 2003).

3.3.5.4. Employment security

Employment security is defined as a "set of subjective feelings about the future security of an individual's employment situation" (Fullerton and Wallace, 2007, p.202). It occurs when an organisation provides stable employment for employees, for example a permanent position (Burgard, Brand and House, 2009; Virtanen, et al., 2001). Mafini and Dlodlo (2014) argue that employment security exists when an individual remains employed with the same organisation with no demotion in rank or deduction in pay, pension rights and other associated privileges. Security can be influenced by a number of factors, namely education, work experience, work industry and work location, all of which perform an important role in determining the need for an individual's services in the public sector (Mafini and Dlodlo, 2014; Burgard, Brand, and House, 2009).

3.3.5.5. Interaction with experts

Interaction with experts refers to professional or even non-professional engagement an employee will have with experienced members of the organisation (Albaek, 2011). These could be managers, colleagues or subordinate employees. Any organisation needs to have a pool of experts from which employees can draw lessons (Albaek, 2011; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). According to Albaek (2011), interaction with experts is more like mentoring and coaching. It is essentially providing a support structure for employees in human form. The

experts become a source of knowledge that is available when the employees need people to talk to and ask questions (Albaek, 2011). These are people they can learn from and engage with.

3.3.5.6. Stretch assignments

Stretch assignments are rapid developmental activities designed to develop employees' experience and/or expertise outside a comfort zone or regular routine (Davis, 2016). This occurs when employees are required to undertake a project which they do not currently have the ability to complete successfully. Stretch assignments are about new mental challenges for employees that increase their knowledge, skills and abilities. It is deliberately placing employees in unfamiliar and uncomfortable positions or situations for them to learn, grow and develop. Davis (2016) suggests that it is important for the organisation not to overdo the stretch of the assignment. The aim should be to push employees just outside their comfort zone in order to create the ideal conditions for growth, and not to make them doubt their capabilities. Overall, the practical knowledge and new perspective gained from the stretch allows employees to become more adaptive and resilient in both their current and future roles. Employees are challenged to do better, and to become confident and happier in their organisations (Davis, 2016).

3.3.5.7. Quality of managers

Co-worker and supervisor relationships are one of the most important reasons for employees staying in a particular organisation (Wakabi, 2016; George, 2015; Beardwell and Claydon, 2007; Jasper, 2007; Meyer, 2005; Netswera, Rankhumise, and Mavundla, 2005). Beardwell and Claydon (2007) and Meyer (2005) go as far as stating that employees do not usually leave an organisation; they leave a manager. Having a social support system within the organisation is a huge part of the organisation being able to provide a conducive working environment (George, 2015). Managers who lead and influence the institution play a key role in that environment. Employees can grow and develop based on the kind of managers they have access to (Dockel, 2003), therefore the quality of managers (depending on the management style as discussed in section 3.3.1.6) is also important for the career development of individuals.

3.3.6. Work content factor

Some authors argue that job satisfaction is vital and even more effective than financial rewards in the long term (Ely, 2014; Dockel, 2003; Kochanski and Ledford, 2001). Employees normally want to perform tasks that are interesting, with an element of challenge and where they are recognised for a job well done (Ely, 2014). Work content refers to "the satisfaction that comes from the work individuals do" (Kochanski and Ledford, 2001, p.33). According to Dockel (2003), work content refers to the characteristics of the job. It involves having the opportunities to work with a variety of people on different projects, with freedom and chances to solve challenging problems. Britton, Chadwick and Walker (1999) explain that the term refers to challenging and satisfying work, freedom to act, and to employees getting meaningful feedback on performance. Essentially, work content is about having work that excites or has meaning for employees, work that is stimulating and offers employees the opportunity to make decisions. It is the utility employees get from their job. Kochanski and Ledford (2001) argue that highly skilled employees tend to be repelled by repetitive, narrow work experiences where there is no or very little autonomy. In order for work to influence employees' retention decisions positively, the work content needs to be stimulating. If organisations aim to keep their employees for the long run, work cannot be just a task or project that needs to be completed. There needs to be a greater purpose and maybe a challenge in achieving the task in order to inspire employees. Employees should enjoy their work. The work content factor relies on having variety, challenging work, autonomy, meaningfulness and feedback (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009; Britton, Chadwick and Walker, 1999).

3.3.6.1. Variety

According to Dockel (2003), variety is the degree to which a job requires a change of different activities in carrying out the work. It involves the use of several different skills and talents of the person. In other words, variety is making the most of employees' skills by either exposing those employees to different areas of the organisation or allowing them to find new ways of performing their tasks. By working together with the other elements of work content quality (such as challenging work and meaningfulness), variety helps keep employees interested. It mentally stimulates employees so that they can continue to learn and grow on the job (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). Professionals or highly experienced individuals can be easily bored; they prefer to continuously grow and develop in an organisation, which can be

done through being expected to do a variety of tasks. Such employees want to learn new things about the job, or new ways of completing their tasks.

3.3.6.2. Challenging work

Challenging work speaks to employees who want to grow beyond the tasks they are required to perform (Britton, Chadwick and Walker, 1999). Challenging work occurs when the tasks and projects stimulate the mind of the employees; it is interesting and satisfying work that does not bore employees to the point where they feel unrequired in the workplace (Kochanski and Ledford, 2001). According to Ely (2014), challenging work is essential to keep good employees interested, otherwise the organisation finds itself having to pay a lot of money to attract and retain the experienced and skilled individuals. According to a study that looked at retaining Generation Y staff in the Netherlands, job satisfaction (which is interesting work that employees enjoy), scored 76% as a career success indicator. In addition, an element of challenge is more likely to make the work interesting for Generation Y employees (Ely, 2014).

3.3.6.3. Autonomy

Autonomy is the degree to which employees exercise power relative to their jobs. Dockel (2003), describes autonomy as the degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence and discretion to the individual to schedule work and determine the procedures used in carrying it out. It is the ability of employees to set organisational goals and to structure the organisation to maximise professional concerns (Ng'ethe, Iravo, and Namusonge, 2012). Autonomy in an organisation is the freedom employees have while working and it increases feelings of personal responsibility at work.

3.3.6.4. Meaningfulness

"Meaningful work" refers to work that is significant, worthwhile, purposeful and which produces value for the employee (De Crom and Rothmann, 2018; Steger and Dik, 2009; Dockel, 2003). Work is experienced as meaningful normally when it has some form of personal meaning or the employee feels connected to their assigned tasks. Steger, Dik and Duffy (2012) and Britt, Adler and Bartone (2001) recognise meaningful work as something that may lead to a positive psychological state where people feel they make a positive, important and useful contribution to a worthwhile purpose through the execution of their work. Meaningfulness is

an important psychological condition at work, reflected in the extent to which people invest themselves in their job role and tasks (Steger and Dik, 2009). This can be experienced through an identification with the organisation, engagement with colleagues and managers, the opportunity to complete an entire task (task identity), task significance to other people, a sense of calling, challenge, work role identity, work centrality, work values, intrinsic work orientation, spirituality, good pay, and reputation (Albrecht, 2013; Steger, Dik and Duffy, 2012). Essentially, meaningful work involves three core considerations: the degree to which people find their work to have significance and purpose, the contribution work makes to finding broader meaning in life, and the desire and means for one's work to make a positive contribution to the greater good (De Crom and Rothmann, 2018; Steger, Dik and Duffy, 2012). Finding work meaningful is a process whereby individuals reflect on their tasks and make connections and finding meaning and value in them. Therefore, to those individuals, the work has purpose. It is meaningful to them. According to the literature, employees who experience meaningfulness in their work tend to be more satisfied and are therefore more committed to the organisation (De Crom and Rothmann, 2018; Albrecht, 2013; Steger, Dik and Duffy, 2012; Steger and Dik, 2009; Dockel, 2003). Employees who find their work meaningful or purposeful in the organisation they are working in are likely to have a positive attitude towards their job; their performance improves and ultimately they develop a willingness to stay in the organisation due to their sense of purpose (Steger and Dik, 2009). This is because employees prefer jobs that promote helpfulness and purpose, they want to feel that they are contributing to other people's lives.

3.3.6.5. Feedback

Feedback refers to the degree to which the person learns how effective they are at work, which is information that comes from supervisors, co-workers, customers, or the job itself. According to Lunenburg (2011), feedback is the direction and clear information provided about the effectiveness of a person's performance. It can be positive or negative and should occur frequently rather than be delayed. This is because employees can only adjust their performance if they know how they are performing now, not later (Lunenburg, 2011). Dockel (2003) suggests that for employees to feel empowered, they must understand the goals of their work and how their own work can contribute to those goals. Feedback is important, because it looks at the kind of engagement the organisation or employer has with the individuals working there. Feedback is being aware of the current tasks or projects employees are taking on and being

able to provide input and guidance. It involves the employer being able to appreciate good work done and being able to guide the employees in terms of areas that need improvement.

3.4. SUMMARY

This chapter explained why more emphasis needs to be placed on the ability of organisations, and municipalities in particular, to effectively retain existing key employees, rather than to reduce employee turnover. It was important to the researcher to choose a theoretical framework that provided an understanding of employee retention and key influencing retention factors in a municipal context that could provide structure and support to the overall aim and objectives of the study. Chapter 3 discussed four theoretical frameworks and models that assisted in further conceptualising employee retention and identifying key influencing factors (see section 3.2). Essentially, the aim of section 3.2. was to find the best suited framework to the context of the current study. The retention factors framework for existing employees by Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, (2009) was adopted as the theoretical framework by the researcher because it addresses employee retention issues in a municipal context. Chapter 3 concluded with section 3.3 which discussed the adopted theoretical framework retention factors and the related themes.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1. OVERVIEW

Chapters 2 and 3 discussed the nature of employee retention and the theoretical framework used in this study in order to better understand employee retention within the municipal context. In this chapter, the philosophical assumptions, research design and methodology and the approach selected to support the study are discussed. In order to achieve the study's primary aim of understanding employee retention as experienced by employees in the selected municipalities, together with its key influencing factors, interpretivism was adopted as the research paradigm. In achieving its aim, this study not only provides an understanding of employee retention in the selected municipalities, but also provides in-depth descriptions of the respondents' perceptions of existing employee retention factors. This chapter focuses on the definition of research, the common philosophical assumptions supporting the study and the research objectives. This is followed by an interrogation of the research design and methodology, as well as the processes and steps followed in the research methods, data analysis and qualitative quality criteria checks. The chapter concludes with the ethical considerations of the study.

4.2. DEFINITION OF RESEARCH

Research can be defined as a systematic inquiry into nature and society to validate and refine existing knowledge and to generate new knowledge (Naidoo, 2011). It involves careful consideration of study regarding a problem using scientific methods. Collis and Hussey (2014) describe research as a process of investigation undertaken to acquire new knowledge but directed towards a specific aim and objective. Simply put, research is an inquiry that seeks answers to a problem. It is a search for facts, answers to questions and solutions to problems (Creswell, 2013; De Vos et al., 2005). Depending on the adopted philosophical assumptions, research can employ an inductive approach (generally used to analyse the observed phenomenon, and associated with qualitative research), or a deductive research approach (used to verify the observed phenomenon and commonly associated with quantitative research). However, some qualitative research studies may have a deductive orientation (Collis and Hussey, 2014). Ultimately, research is exploring and learning about phenomena, whether through gathering information by exploratory and descriptive methods, or testing theories

through explanatory and predictive methods (Collis and Hussey, 2014). Before conducting and evaluating any research, it is important to identify the underlying philosophical assumptions of the study.

4.3. RESEARCH PARADIGM

According to Babbie (2017) and De Vos et al. (2005), a paradigm is the fundamental model or frame of reference used to organise observations and reasoning. It is a philosophical way of thinking (Merriam, 2009). Research paradigms constitute the abstract beliefs and principles that shape how researchers see the world, and how they interpret and act within that world (Kivunja, and Kuyini, 2017; Collis and Hussey, 2014; Hathaway, 1995). They represent the researchers' worldview. According to Kivunja and Kuyini (2017, p.26), a paradigm is the "conceptual lens through which the researcher examines the methodological aspects of their research project to determine the research methods that will be used and how the data will be analysed". It essentially shapes what researchers see and how they understand it. Research paradigms are assumptions adopted about truth, reality, knowledge, and how knowledge is to be used. These assumptions pertain to the theories, methodologies and data interpretation of the study (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Research paradigms are useful in that they provide a framework for research and enable social scientists to understand phenomena through the associated assumptions pertaining to research (Creswell, 2013).

There are two main research paradigms within social sciences, namely, positivism and interpretivism (Collis and Hussey, 2014). These research paradigms are commonly referred to as quantitative and qualitative approaches (Collis and Hussey, 2014; Creswell, 2014; Hathaway, 1995). Several authors argue that research paradigms exist in a continuum and that research seldom falls within a "pure" form of one of the two extremes, which has resulted in numerous acceptable research assumptions (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017; Collis and Hussey, 2014; Saunders, Lewisand Thornhill, 2000). As illustrated below in Table 4.1, positivism and interpretivism sit on the extreme opposite ends of the continuum of paradigms (Collis and Hussey, 2014). The positivist end of the continuum is often referred to as the objective end where it is assumed that the social world is the same as the physical world (Collis and Hussey, 2014), whereas, the interpretivism end of the continuum is referred to as the subjective end where reality is seen as a projection of human imagination as illustrated in Table 4.1 (Collis and Hussey, 2014).

TABLE 4.1: A CONTINUUM OF PARADIGMS

Positivism ◄———————————————————————► **Interpretivism**					
Ontological assumption					
Reality as a concrete structure	Reality as a concrete process	Reality as a contextual field of information	Reality as a realm of symbolic discourse	Reality as a social construction	Reality as a projection of human imagination
Epistemological stance					
To construct a positivist science	To construct systems, process, change	To map contexts	To understand patterns of symbolic discourse	To understand how social reality is created	To obtain phenomeno-logical insight, revelation
Research methods					
Experiment, surveys	Historical analysis	Interpretive contextual analysis	Symbolic analysis	Hermeneu-tics	Exploration of pure subjectivity

(Source: Collis and Hussey, 2014, p.49)

Research paradigms are not always dichotomous, as the philosophy adopted when undertaking research may be derived from several dominant paradigms such as positivism, interpretivism/constructivism, critical/transformative approaches, or pragmatism (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). Table 4.2 below illustrates that there are major differences in the assumptions – namely, ontology, epistemology, axiology, rhetoric, and methodology – which underlie the positivist and interpretivism research paradigms, and which are important to consider, since the assumptions which are adopted guide the research process (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017; Collis and Hussey, 2014; Creswell, 2014; De Vos, et al., 2005).

TABLE 4.2: POSITIVIST AND INTERPRETIVIST PARADIGM ASSUMPTIONS

Assumption	Question	Positivism	Interpretivism
Ontological	What is the nature of reality?	Reality is objective and singular, apart from the researcher	Reality is subjective and multiple as seen by participants in a study
Epistemological	What is the relationship of the researcher to that being researched?	The researcher is independent from that being researched	Research interacts with that being researched
Axiological	What is the role of values?	Value-free and unbiased	Value-laden and biased
Rhetorical	What is the language of research?	Formal (rule-based)	Informal (context-based)
		Based on set definitions	Evolving decisions
		Impersonal voice	Personal voice
		Use of accepted quantitative words	Use of accepted qualitative words
Methodological	What is the process of research?	Deductive process	Inductive process
		Cause and effect	Mutual simultaneous shaping of factors
		Static design – categories isolated before study	Emerging design-categories identified during the research process
		Context-free	Context-bound
		Generalisations leading to prediction, explanation and understanding	Patterns, theories developed for understanding
		Accurate and reliable through validity and reliability	Accurate and reliable through verification

(Source: Collis and Hussey, 2014, pp.46-47)

These differences in philosophical assumptions as set out in Table 4.2 have resulted in many differences between the types of research produced in positivistic versus interpretivist

paradigms. Table 4.3 below briefly illustrates important features further distinguishing positivism and interpretivism research paradigms.

TABLE 4.3: FEATURES OF POSITIVIST AND INTERPRETIVIST PARADIGMS

Positivistic paradigm	Interpretivist paradigm
Tends to produce quantitative data	Tends to produce qualitative data
Uses large samples	Uses small samples
Concerned with hypothesis testing	Concerned with generating theories
Data is highly specific and precise	Data is rich and subjective
The location is artificial	The location is natural
Reliability is high	Reliability is low
Validity is low	Validity is high
Generalise from sample to population	Generalises from one setting to another

(Source: Collis and Hussey, 2014, p.50)

Although positivistic and interpretivist research paradigms have dominated research, alternative research paradigms have emerged over time, namely hermeneutics, existentialism, critical rationalism, linguistics, and conventionalism (Collis and Hussey, 2014). Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000, p.86) argue that choosing the best research paradigm for each research process "depends on the research questions you are seeking to answer". Therefore, choosing a research paradigm to apply to this study, was a matter of knowing which of the two paradigms described in Tables 4.1 to 4.3 would be the most appropriate to fulfil the purpose of the research. According to Collis and Hussey (2014, p.49), "under the interpretivism assumption, there may be no social world apart from that which is inside the individual's mind". Interpretivism is the best-suited research paradigm when attempting to understand the perceptions of individuals or gaining insight into their experiences of a phenomena. Consequently, interpretivism was deemed to be the more appropriate paradigm for this study. The appropriateness of interpretivism paradigm for the purposes of this study is further discussed in subsection 4.3.1 below.

4.3.1. Interpretivist paradigm

An interpretivist research paradigm is an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed

views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting (Collis and Hussey, 2014; Creswell, 2013). According to Collis and Hussey (2014), interpretivism has been described as utilising the phenomenological or qualitative approaches to research, which are concerned with understanding social phenomena and their meanings. It is an attempt to understand problems, ideas and situations from the perspective of common understanding and experience of individuals (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017; Hammarberg, Kirkman, and De Lacey, 2016). According to Merriam (2009), the interpretivist paradigm seeks to understand the essence and the underlying structure of the phenomenon under study. It looks at what respondents' perceptions, perspectives and understandings are of a particular situation (or phenomenon). Essentially, an interpretivist paradigm refers to how individuals interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds and what meaning they attribute to their experiences (Bengtsson, 2016). It is a rich, diverse and complex field aimed at giving a voice to a group of individuals concerning an issue and providing a detailed description of experiences and perceptions of those individuals (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009).

Within an interpretivism research paradigm, the aim is to direct investigation and description of phenomena as consciously experienced, which involves an inductive process with a view to providing interpretivist understanding of social phenomena within a particular context (Collis and Hussey, 2014). The researcher is able to explore the individuals' feelings, thoughts and experiences and ultimately bring out the meaning underlying how people behave (Creswell, 2013, Merriam, 2009). Ultimately, various techniques and procedures such as interviews, conversations, respondents' observations, analysis of diaries and other personal texts (e.g. field notes) can be used in order to produce rich and subjective qualitative data within an interpretivist research paradigm (Iphofen and Tolich, 2018; Collis and Hussey, 2014). In the present study, by adopting the interpretivist paradigm, the researcher gains an understanding of employee retention in a municipal context, they are able to provide an in-depth description of the respondents' perceptions (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017; Collis and Hussey, 2014; Creswell, 2013; Fellows and Liu, 2008).

In order to guide the discussion on the appropriate research methodology for the current research, the primary aim and objectives of the research as mentioned in section 1.2 of Chapter 1 are briefly restated below in section 4.4.

4.4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary research aim of this study is to gain an in-depth understanding of employee retention, as experienced by employees in selected local municipalities in the Sarah Baartman District Municipality.

In order to achieve this research aim, the following objectives are examined.

1. To identify the current employee retention factors evident in municipalities.

2. To ascertain the perceptions of employees regarding the current employee retention factors.

3. To recommend ways to effectively retain employees.

This study is descriptive, in that it aims to give an indication of the key factors influencing retention, generate the meanings and perceptions, as experienced by employees within the context of municipalities, of employee retention. Essentially, this study intends to contribute to a better understanding of the meaning of the key factors influencing retention, as experienced by employees in the selected municipalities in the Sarah Baartman District Municipality. Descriptive research collects information without manipulating the environment; this allows the researcher to provide information about the behaviour, attitudes and other characteristics of a particular group (Merriam, 2009). According to Collis and Hussey (2014), descriptive research goes further in examining a problem than does exploratory research, it is undertaken to ascertain and describe the characteristics of the pertinent issues. It seeks to understand the meaning behind descriptions. This involves the researcher interacting with respondents via surveys or interviews as a means of collecting information about the subject being studied.

4.5. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research design and methodology represents the "mode of inquiry" of the research process. It addresses the strategies, techniques, procedures used to collect and analyse the data. A research design refers to the choices made in terms of the methodology and methods used to address the research questions (Collis and Hussey, 2014). It is the plan for conducting a study. According to Creswell (2014, p.12), "research designs are types of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches that provide specific direction for procedures in a research

design". The two main research methodology categories according to Collis and Hussey (2014) are quantitative and qualitative methodology. The subsections below briefly discuss the methodological approaches adopted in this study in order to achieve the research objectives.

4.5.1. Qualitative and quantitative research methodology

Qualitative research methodologies are commonly associated with the interpretivist research paradigm. However, it is considered appropriate to conduct research with a positivist philosophy but a qualitative methodology, and vice versa (Collis and Hussey, 2014). Table 4.4 below highlights the main differences between qualitative and quantitative research approaches.

TABLE 4.4: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE APPROACHES

Description	Qualitative approach	Quantitative approach
Purpose	To gain an understanding of underlying reasons and motivations. To uncover prevalent trends in thought and opinion.	To quantify data and generalise results from a sample to the population of interest. To measure the incidence of various views and opinions in a chosen sample.
Sample	Small number of respondents	Larger number of cases representing the population of interest
Data collection	Qualitative data such as open-ended responses, interviews, observations and filed notes	Quantitative data based on precise measurements using structured validated data collection instruments
Data analysis	Identify patterns, features, themes	Identify statistical relationships
Outcome	Narrative report with contextual description and direct quotations from respondents	Statistical report with correlation, comparisons of means and statistical significance of findings

 (Sources: Adapted from Collis and Hussey, 2014; Creswell, 2014)

As mentioned in sections 4.3 and 4.4, the primary research aim of this study is to gain an in-depth understanding of employee retention, as experienced by employees in the selected local municipalities in the Sarah Baartman District Municipality. This study is found within an interpretivism research paradigm. This study deemed the qualitative approach as an appropriate research approach considering the primary research aim, objectives and research paradigm.

According to Collis and Hussey (2014), a qualitative research approach produces rich and subjective data. This is essential to providing "thick" descriptions of the social situation – detailed descriptions that place the social phenomena in the contexts given by insiders or research respondents (Babbie, 2017), as stated within the primary research aim. By using a qualitative research approach, this study fulfils the aim of adequately identifying, describing and understanding the observed social phenomenon of employee retention within a municipal context.

Table 4.5 illustrates the research methodologies often associated with positivisim and interpretivism research paradigms (Collis and Hussey, 2014).

TABLE 4.5: METHODOLOGIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE MAIN PARADIGMS

Positivism ◄─────────────────►	Interpretivism
Associated methodologies	*Associated methodologies*
Experimental studies	Hermeneutics
Surveys (using primary and secondary data)	Ethnography
Cross-sectional studies	Participative inquiry
Longitudinal studies	Action research
	Case studies
	Grounded theory

(Source: Collis and Hussey, 2014, p.60)

As mentioned in section 4.4, the primary research aim is descriptive in nature. It essentially seeks to understand and draw the meaning of retention from existing employees within their place of employment (i.e. in a municipal context). In addition, existing theory is used to understand and explain employee retention within the municipal context (see Chapter 3 for detailed discussion). The case study methodology, which falls under an interpretivism paradigm as illustrated in Table 4.5, is deemed the most appropriate research method to allow the phenomenon to be studied in its natural setting, where the most can be learnt. Given the importance of context and the focus being employees have lived experience of the phenomenon (i.e. employees who have been retained by the selected municipalities for five years or longer), this research is well suited to a case study methodology for data collection (Collis and Hussey, 2014). Subsection 4.5.2 discusses the appropriateness of the case study methodology.

4.5.2. Case study research methodology

According to Collis and Hussey (2014, p.68), "a case study is a methodology used to explore a single phenomenon in a natural setting using a variety of methods to obtain in-depth knowledge". The focus may be on a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases), but not the whole population (Yin, 2018). Case study is a detailed investigation of individuals, groups, institutions or other social units within the real-life context (Creswell, 2013; Stjelja, 2013; Baxter and Jack, 2008). It is a mode of inquiry in that it allows researchers to not only examine real-life situations, but also to develop theory, evaluate programmes and develop suitable interventions (Yin, 2018). The case is often an organisation – for instance, the two selected municipalities in this study – while real-life phenomena such as employee retention and its influencing factors, are usually the focus of case study methodology, as can be seen in this study. Yin (2018) and Collis and Hussey (2014) argue that the context of the case is a key defining feature of case study research, as contextualisation enhances the process of understanding and interpreting the meaning provided by the thick descriptions of the phenomena. Qualitative data needs to be understood within context (Iphofen, and Tolich, 2018; Collis and Hussey, 2014). Accordingly, this study began by obtaining background information about the selected municipalities (contextualising the case). Contextualisation involves giving a detailed description of the case's social context and environment (Yin, 2018). According to Collis and Hussey (2014, p.130), the establishment of the context can be achieved through providing background information on the case in terms of "time, location, or legal, social, political and economics influences". In this regard, Chapter 1 provides a context for the research pertaining to municipalities in South Africa. The literature review is also useful for contextualisation (Collis and Hussey, 2014), and Chapters 2 and 3 add to the research context by providing theoretical discussions on the nature of employee retention.

Case studies provide in-depth holistic understanding of the phenomenon being studied, since the research strategy allows the inquiry to occur in natural settings (Yin, 2018; Creswell, 2013; Baxter and Jack, 2008). According to Collis and Hussey (2014), case studies can be seen to be descriptive, illustrative, experimental or explanatory in nature. Descriptive case studies are useful only for providing thick descriptions of the current phenomena as the "research objectives are restricted to describing current practices" (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p.68). On the other hand, explanatory case studies are seen to further enable "the understanding and explanations of phenomena as they relate to existing theory" (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p.69).

Babbie (2017) explains that qualitative research is not only descriptive, but also seeks to understand the meaning behind those descriptions. The case study approach applied in this study is descriptive and explanatory in nature. This study aims to contribute to a better understanding of the meaning of the key factors influencing retention, as experienced by employees in the selected municipalities in the Sarah Baartman District Municipality. It specifically aims to identify the current employee retention factors in selected municipalities and ascertain the perceptions regarding the employee retention factors. In addition, existing theory discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 is used to guide the analysis of the collected interview data and make sense of the employee retention factors in the selected municipalities as discussed in Chapters 5 and 6. The following subsection discusses the appropriateness of using existing theory to evaluate the data; this is done through a theoretical framework.

4.5.3. Theoretical framework

Collins and Stockton (2018, p.2), describe a theoretical framework as "the use of a theory (or theories) in a study that simultaneously conveys the deepest values of the researcher and provides a clearly articulated signpost or lens for how the study will process new knowledge". The theoretical framework guides research by relying on a formal theory which is the framework constructed by using an established, coherent explanation of certain phenomena and relationships (Grant and Osanloo, 2014). A theoretical framework not only serves as a structure, but it also supports the rationale for the study, the problem statement, the aim, its significance and the research objectives (Collins and Stockton, 2018; Grant and Osanloo, 2014; Merriam, 2009). It is the blueprint of the research inquiry (Grant and Osanloo, 2014). According to Collins and Stockton (2018), a theoretical framework is at the intersection of existing knowledge and previously formed ideas about complex phenomena, the researcher's epistemological dispositions, and is a lens and a methodically analytical approach (Collins and Stockton, 2018). It provides the grounding base for the literature review, and more importantly, the methods and analysis approach (Collins and Stockton, 2018). Essentially, a theoretical framework provides focus and organisation to the study, exposes and constructs meanings and connects the study to existing scholarship and terms. Collins and Stockton (2018, p.5) state that "a theoretical framework is able to provide four dimensions of insight for qualitative research". According to Collins and Stockton (2018, p.5), theoretical frameworks "provide focus and organization to the study, expose and obstruct meaning, connects the study to existing scholarship and terms, and identify strengths and weaknesses". In qualitative research, the case

study methodology is flexible, once the boundaries are defined, the techniques are broad, hence the value of the theory is key (Collins and Stockton, 2018; Grant and Osanloo, 2014). The theoretical framework informs and enriches the data and provides not only a sense of the uniqueness of the case, but also what is of relevance and of general interest (Grant and Osanloo, 2014). Rich and thick descriptions are essential in qualitative research. A theoretical framework plays a key role in highly contextualised cases that allow the research to be transferable to other similar settings.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the retention factors framework for existing employees by Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009) deals with skilled and experienced employees who had been in the organisation for several years. The theoretical framework focuses not only on retention but also on retaining skilled and experienced individuals who have the knowledge about municipalities as institutions because of their years of experience. This ensures that the retention factors identified provide a relatable descriptive understanding of what employees' feelings and perception are when it comes to retention factors. For these reasons, it was considered an appropriate theoretical framework to use in this study, to examine and compare data in order to gain a better understanding of employee retention within the municipal context. Several studies have been conducted on employee retention factors (Mafini and Dlodlo, 2014; Das and Baruah, 2013; Deery, 2008); however, the Munsamy and Bosch-Venter's (2009) study is done within a municipal context (see section 3.2.4 on the appropriateness of this specific theoretical framework for the context of the study). This study is descriptive and explanatory in nature; it essentially aims to contribute to a better understanding of the meaning of the factors that influence the retaining of existing employees in the selected municipalities. This study relies on employee retention theory as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 to provide clarity on the phenomena. More specifically, the established, coherent explanations of employee retention factors and themes deduced from the retention factors framework for existing employees in section 3.2.4 provide focus and meaning to the study.

4.6. RESEARCH METHODS

According to Creswell (2014), research methods involve the forms of data collection, analysis and interpretation that are used in a study. Ultimately, the chosen data collection and analysis, similar to the research methodology, also needs to be aligned with the overall research paradigm which was chosen (Collis and Hussey, 2014). This section will therefore discuss the data collection pertaining to the interpretivist research paradigm as it applies to the case study methodology. The sampling and applied sampling procedure are discussed first, followed by a discussion of the interview process.

4.6.1. Sample and sampling procedure

According to Collis and Hussey (2014), sampling is a procedure used to select a small number of items from a bigger population. In addition, the sampling process needs to be appropriate for the research objectives. Selecting a sample under an interpretivist paradigm involves narrowing the scope of the study to a particular location or selecting a specific organisation.

4.6.1.1. Selecting a case and gaining access

According to Collis and Hussey (2014), the data collection process in an interpretivist study requires a researcher to first identify a sample or case(s) of particular interest because they offer critical, unusual or extreme case. As limited research has been done at a municipal level in the area of employee retention (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009), this research examines the case of two selected municipalities in the Sarah Baartman District Municipality's area of jurisdiction. In order to select a case to research, the researcher had to consider that, because of the interpretivist nature of the study, the case and sample needed to be municipalities and individuals who have lived experiences of the phenomena (Creswell, 2013). With the phenomena being employee retention, the researcher had to identify potential respondents (sample set) from skilled and experienced employees who had been employed in the selected municipalities for an extended period of time, and as result, had been retained (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). Data is useful and contributes to understanding a phenomenon when it is drawn from individuals who have experienced the phenomenon and are able to articulate that lived experience (Collis and Hussey, 2014). Thus, the case of the study was the selected municipalities located within the Sarah Baartman District Municipality as the area of jurisdiction. Two municipalities were selected as the unit of analysis of the phenomenon. This was based the municipalities having similar employee numbers, with 677 and 509 people

employed respectively (Statistics South Africa, 2017), their proximity to each other (both are located in the same district) and their ease of access to the researcher.

Collis and Hussey (2014) suggests that considerable time may need to be spent trying to gain access to an organisation where research may be conducted. An important part of being able to gain access to and collect data from any organisation is establishing a good rapport (Creswell, 2013). In the current study, the researcher did this by first establishing a relationship with the executive secretaries of the mayors and/or municipal managers of the selected municipalities. Approval was obtained from the mayors and/or municipal managers in order to gain access to the respective municipalities and conduct the study. Initial contact with the selected municipalities was established through telephone calls and emails. Subsequently, letters were used as formal invitations for the municipalities to participate in the research. Letters included a brief overview and objectives of the research and contact details of the researcher (see Appendix B). Upon receiving written consent from the selected municipalities, the researcher requested their assistance in identifying potential respondents who had been with the institutions for extended period (longer than five years).

4.6.1.2. Sampling procedures

After formal consent was granted by the selected municipalities in the Sarah Baartman District Municipality, the next step in the process was to decide on the units of observation by means of sampling. According to Collis and Hussey (2014) and Creswell (2014), sampling is selecting a subset of items from the population; it is necessary in the research process due to time and budget constraints (Collis and Hussey, 2014). The researcher had to sample research respondents at a municipal level who would be interviewed.

Two basic sampling techniques exist; these are probability and nonprobability sampling (Merriam, 2009). Creswell (2013) mentions that sampling for qualitative research uses nonprobability sampling. In addition, for case study methodology, nonprobability sampling methods are more frequently used (Collis and Hussey, 2014). According to Creswell (2013, p.156), nonprobability sampling (commonly known as purposive or purposeful sampling), allows the researcher "to select individuals for a study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and are central phenomena in the study". This essentially meant sampling in a deliberate manner in order to be inclusive, with the specific purpose of gaining an understanding of employee retention from existing employees who have

been retained within the selected municipalities. Therefore, in further alignment with the interpretivist paradigm that follows a qualitative research approach, purposive sampling was adopted as the sampling technique.

Because of the study's purpose of wanting to understand and gain insight into employee retention, the researcher needed to select a sample from which the most could be learnt (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). This meant selecting a sample of municipal employees who had been retained for certain period. As a result, the researcher focused on a group (employees) in which all the sample members were similar and shared characteristics or a set of characteristics (Creswell, 2013). Patton (2002, p.235) describes this as homogenous sampling where the goal is being able to understand and describe the group's perceptions in depth. With the assistance of the retention factors framework for existing employees (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009), the researcher developed an eligibility criterion (list of conditions) that assisted in identifying respondents from whom a better understanding of the meaning of the key factors influencing retention in selected municipalities could be gained. Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009) propose that specific attention should be given to employees and managers who have remained for five years or longer in the employment of local government as they are able to identify key factors influencing retention. Thus, potential respondents were identified based on the length of service employed within their municipalities (longer than five years), whether they had worked in divisions or departments struggling to retain employees (Finance or Infrastructure and Technical Services Divisions) and those who possessed scarce skills/human capital (individuals with formal qualifications, a spread of functions, or a level of seniority).

The researcher initially contacted potential respondents who met the criteria (list of conditions) via telephone and email. The human resources managers and directors of the identified divisions within the municipalities assisted the researcher with the contact details of potential respondents. Subsequently, letters were sent as formal invitations for each potential respondent to participate in the research. These letters included a brief overview of the study and objectives of the research and contact details of the researcher (see Appendix C). The researcher deemed 16 interviews to be a sufficient number owing to data saturation. Collis and Hussey (2014, p.182) define data saturation as the point "when the inclusion of new data does not add to the knowledge of the phenomenon under study". After 13 interviews, additional interviews with respondents were found to reveal only marginally different information. The researcher noticed that respondents were more or less giving similar perceptions and thoughts, especially

pertaining to employee retention and influencing factors. According to Creswell (2014,), researchers can stop collecting data when categories (or themes) are saturated and gathering fresh data no longer sparks new insights or reveals new properties.

In total, 16 interviews were conducted with the length of time ranging between 30 and 120 minutes. In summary, the sample included: four top managers, one from Finance and three from the Infrastructure and Technical Service Division. Four middle managers, two from the Finance and two from Infrastructure and Technical Services. Eight employees, one from Human Resources, three from Finance and four from Infrastructure and Technical Services divisions (see Figures 5.1 to 5.5 for further details). Table 4.6 below presents details of interviewees' age, gender, generation, education, employment, length of service in years and division in which they had worked.

TABLE 4.6: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF RESPONDENTS

Code number	Age	Gender	Generation	Education	Employment code	Length of service (years)	Division code
1NF	35	F	X	BCom	MM	11	FI
2NF	43	F	X	CMA	E	14	FI
3NM	56	M	BB	PGH	TM	10	FI
4NM	36	M	X	DCE	E	5	ITS
5NM	33	M	X	BTech	MM	12	ITS
6NF	38	F	X	BCom	MM	12	FI
7NF	29	F	Y	BTech	E	7	ITS
8NF	41	F	X	PGM	TM	23	ITS
9NF	34	F	X	DCE	E	8	ITS
10NM	43	M	X	BCom	TM	15	ITS
11MM	46	M	X	DHR	E	10	HR
12MF	36	F	X	D	E	7	FI
13MM	38	M	X	PGH	TM	11	ITS
14MM	39	M	X	DMA	E	8	FI
15MM	57	M	BB	BCom	E	24	ITS
16MM	55	M	BB	BCom	MM	17	ITS

F = Female; M = Male; BB = Baby boomers, X = Generation X and Y = Generation Y; BCom = Bachelor of commerce degree; BTech = Technical degree; CMA = Certified management accountant; D = Diploma; DCE = Diploma in civil engineering; DHR = Diploma in human resources; DMA = Diploma in management accounting; PGH = Postgraduate Honours degree and PGM = Postgraduate Masters' degree; FI = Finance division; HR = Human resources; ITS = Infrastructure and Technical Service; E = Employee, MM = Middle manager and TM = Top manager.

The selected municipalities were assigned code letters M and N respectively to ensure anonymity. Code numbers were also assigned to the respondents, which indicated the ascending order in which the interviews were conducted (1–16), whether the respondents were from municipality M or N and whether the respondents were male (M) or female (F).

4.6.2. Data collection methods

Qualitative research requires the use of qualitative data collection methods. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000), interviews and observations are the two data collection methods within a qualitative research approach. Under an interpretivist paradigm, interviews are the primary data method (Collis and Hussey, 2014). "Interviews are concerned with exploring data on understandings, opinions, what people remember doing, attitudes" (Collis and Hussey; 2014, p.133). The researcher chose to use interviews to gain in-depth understanding of employee retention and the influencing factors, as experienced by the research respondents.

4.6.2.1. Interviews

Collis and Hussey (2014, p.133), describes interviews as a "method for collecting data in which selected respondents are asked questions to find out what they do, think, or feel". Interviews are a formal data collection technique in which the researcher and respondents engage in a conversation focus on questions related to the research study (Merriam, 2009). According to Kvale (2007), data from interviews seek to describe the meaning of the central themes in the life world of the subjects. Under the interpretivist paradigm, an interview's goal is to understand the meaning of what the respondents are saying. Interviews may be structured, semi-structured or unstructured and most qualitative research makes use of semi-structured or unstructured interviews (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2000).

Structured interview questions are a set of predetermined questions with no variation and no scope for follow-up questions to responses that warrant further elaboration (Edwards and Holland, 2013; Merriam, 2009). Alternatively, unstructured interviews are based on open-ended questions, and they do not reflect any preconceived theories or ideas, are time-consuming and are generally used when conducting long-term fieldwork, allowing respondents to express themselves in their own ways and pace, with minimal constraint on respondents' responses (Creswell, 2014; Edwards and Holland, 2013). This research made use of semi-

structured interviews to gain in-depth perspectives of respondents. Semi-structured interviews are made up of pre-set questions that allow the researcher to follow up answers given by respondents by asking further probing questions (Edwards and Holland, 2013). In general, researchers use semi-structured interviews in order to gain a detailed picture of a respondent's belief about, or perceptions of a phenomenon (Merriam, 2009; De Vos et al., 2005). This form of data collection is more flexible for both researchers and respondents. Semi-structured interviews were deemed the appropriate data collection tool as the researcher was able to probe respondents' perceptions and the meaning they attached to the phenomenon, employee retention. Semi-structured interviews enabled the researcher to conduct in-depth interviews that offered the opportunity to capture rich, descriptive data about respondents' attitudes and perceptions, and unfolding complex processes (Creswell, 2014; Merriam, 2009) regarding employee retention and the influencing factors.

As discussed in section 4.5.3, the retention factor framework for existing employees provided the grounding base for the literature review, and more importantly, assisted in the research methods (construction of interview questions) and analysis approach (segmenting and coding data). The chosen theoretical framework informed a set of questions asked during the interviews (see Appendix A for further detail). One interview guide was used for all interviews conducted in the selected municipalities (see Appendix A). The interview guide comprised four sections: A: five biographical questions for all respondents, B: eight employee retention questions, C: fourteen employee retention factors questions and D: two closing questions. Although interview questions were focused, they were also open-ended so that the maximum relevant and useful data was obtained.

During each interview the process was explained, which included the researcher introducing herself, explaining why the respondent had been identified, and the purpose of the study. Each respondent was asked if they understood the process, were given Appendix C and D to read over and sign, thereby establishing informed consent (Aurini, Heath and Howells, 2016). Respondents participated voluntarily and were informed of their right to withdraw at any time during the study both verbally and in writing (see Appendix D). Thirteen interviews were conducted in English; however, three interviews were conducted in isiXhosa as research respondents were more comfortable communicating in isiXhosa. The researcher was able to translate the interviews conducted in isiXhosa because isiXhosa is the home language of the researcher. Respondents were informed that the researcher would make notes, and they were

asked whether the interviews could be audio-recorded as well. Permission was granted by all respondents to record interviews. Recording the interviews made it easier for the researcher to focus on the interview content and the verbal prompts and thus enabled the transcriptionist to generate a verbatim transcript of the interview (Jamshed, 2014). Interviews commenced with respondents being asked about their working experience in municipalities. The question aimed to ease and calm the interviewee into being open to the process of being interviewed (Aurini, Heath and Howells, 2016). Respondents had an opportunity to talk about themselves, which enabled a form of openness and trust to be built between researcher and respondents, as respondents were reassured that the researcher was interested in their experiences (Aurini, Heath and Howells, 2016; Kvale, 2007).

Eight open-ended questions followed as the second part of the interview process, which focused on respondents' experience of retention. Respondents were asked about what they understood employee retention to mean, what they valued and appreciated most as employees, why they chose to stay, and what they thought were challenges facing municipalities with regard to retention. Section C focused on fourteen open-ended questions on employee retention factors that were informed by the theoretical framework. These questions also assisted in clarifying and refining data found in section B. Section D provided an opportunity for respondents to make any closing remarks on the interview, whether a comment, question or suggestion for further research. In addition, the researcher was able to express gratitude to respondents for their time and access to their experiences. Interviews ranged between 30 and 120 minutes in length.

- Field issues

Accessing the selected municipalities presented challenges. One municipality did not have a permanent municipal manager. As a result, it was difficult to gain institutional permission to conduct the study within that municipality. The researcher spent approximately three to four months establishing contact with municipal authorities (municipal managers, mayors and/or directors) in order to gain this permission. After acquiring permission to conduct the study, and with the assistance of directors, human resource managers and the criteria to identify potential respondents, the researcher scheduled the interviews. An additional three weeks was used to conduct these interviews owing to the availability of respondents.

- Data storage

The researcher backed up copies of all interviews and protected the anonymity of the respondents by concealing their names and any other information that might identify them or the municipalities in the data. The recorded interviews were saved in order to for the researcher to refer to during the data analysis process. The ethical research requirements, as outlined by the Rhodes University Department of Management Ethics Committee, were adhered to in this study. Participation of the respondents in the selected municipalities was on a voluntary basis (see Appendix D). All respondents' identities were kept confidential and recorded anonymously using code numbers.

4.7. DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to a mass of collected data (Creswell, 2014; Hofstee, 2006). It is aimed at organising and interrogating data in ways that allow researchers to see patterns, identify themes, discover relationships, develop explanations, make interpretations, mount critiques, or generate theories (Bailey, 2018; Theron, 2015). Data analysis can be messy, ambiguous and time-consuming; the process can work together with other parts of developing the qualitative study, namely data collection and writing up findings (Creswell, 2014; Merriam, 2009). Babbie (2017) argues that data analysis within case study research involves developing conceptual categories of the qualitative data collected from interviews. The researcher needed to apply some form of logic when seeking to answer the research objectives detailed in section 4.4. As a result, a transcription process was required in order to convert the audio data recorded during the interviews held with the respondents into text (Davidson, 2009) that could be developed into categories for further analysis. Once data was converted into text, it was ready for the qualitative content analysis. The subsections below discuss the two aspects of the qualitative data analysis process followed in this study, transcription and content analysis.

4.7.1. Transcription process

Audio data recorded during interviews should be first converted into written text before it can be further analysed (Creswell, 2013). The transcription process involves converting raw audio data into information (text) that can be made sense of, organising the data and ensuring that the researcher is fully immersed and engaged with the data in order to be familiar with all the information collected (Erlingsson and Brysiewicz, 2017; Creswell, 2014). "Transcription is

understood to reflect theory and to shape it as researchers reflexively document and affirm theoretical positions" (Davidson, 2009, p.37). The process is central to qualitative research; it can enhance the trustworthiness of qualitative research and as a result, should not be ignored in the research report (Davidson, 2009, p.45). This section briefly outlines how the transcription process for all of the interviews was carried out in the current study.

It is not possible to record all elements of the interview recordings, so researchers need to select what to include in the transcription of interviews (Davidson, 2009). The transcription of interviews carried out at the municipal offices only recorded the verbal responses of respondents, capturing verbatim responses. This selection of data considered as significant for transcription reflects assumptions about what the researcher believes to be relevant for the study (Bailey, 2018). As mentioned in section 4.6.2.1., three interviews were conducted in isiXhosa and as a result, the researcher translated those interviews into English for analysis purposes. Recorded interviews were manually transcribed into separate Word documents. These interviews were transcribed verbatim, due to the descriptive and explanatory nature of the study, every word, pause, repetition of words was captured, and the essence of the interviews was kept (Aurini, Heath and Howells, 2016). The verbatim transcripts assisted the researcher in understanding the emotional state and thought processes of the respondents and ultimately enabled a better understanding of the research phenomenon (employee retention) through experiences expressed by the respondents (Aurini, Heath and Howells, 2016; Creswell, 2014). Initial ideas and field notes were incorporated as comments in the interviews. All interviews were checked for accuracy against taped recordings. Data was also checked for reliability and validity so as to ensure quality findings and conclusions (see section 4.8). The researcher then used the written data for content analysis after the verbal responses of all respondents had been converted into verbatim text.

4.7.2. Content analysis

Content analysis is used to systematically transform a large amount of text into an organised and concise summary of key results (Erlingsson and Brysiewicz, 2017; Schilling, 2006). According to Krippendorff (2004), content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use. It can organise text in a meaningful way. By analysing explicit or inferred communication, content analysis brings meaning and understanding of the phenomena (Bengtsson, 2016; Schilling, 2006). Zhang and Wildemuth (2009) contend that qualitative content analysis goes

beyond merely counting words or extracting objective content from texts to examine meanings, themes and patterns that may be manifest or latent in a particular text. "Qualitative content analysis is a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005, p.1278). Essentially, with content analysis, the researcher was able to focus on the development of knowledge and understanding of the study phenomenon, employee retention. Content analysis has three distinct approaches used to interpret meaning from the content of text data as illustrated in Table 4.7.

TABLE 4.7: MAJOR CODING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THREE APPROACHES TO CONTENT ANALYSIS

Type of content analysis	Study starts with	Timing of defining codes of keywords	Source of codes keywords
Conventional content analysis	Observation	Codes are defined during data analysis	Codes are derived from data
Directed content analysis	Theory	Codes are defined before and during data analysis	Codes are derived from theory or relevant research findings
Summative content analysis	Keywords	Keywords are identified before and during data analysis	Keywords are derived from the interest of researchers or review of the literature

(Source: Hsieh and Shannon, 2005, p.1286)

As illustrated above in Table 4.7, conventional (inductive) content analysis looks at codes derived inductively without a predetermined coding frame. Directed (deductive) content analysis involves deriving codes deductively from theory and frameworks. Summative content analysis involves counting and comparison, usually of keywords or content, followed by the interpretation of the underlying context (Assarroudi, et al., 2018; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). Directed content analysis was deemed the most appropriate research technique to analyse the qualitative data in this study. The researcher made use of the existing theory, the retention factors framework for existing employees (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009) to help focus this study in terms of literature and analysis. In terms of data analysis, the theoretical

framework was used to develop the coding sheet (see Appendix E) in order to determine the initial coding scheme and relationships between themes. In this regard, Assarroudi et al. (2018) and Hsieh and Shannon (2005) suggest a process of direct content analysis that enables researchers to analyse qualitative data using content analysis which is detailed below. Once researchers have immersed themselves in data during the transcription process, they can proceed to the organisation and report phases of direct content analysis which are detailed below (Assarroudi et al., 2018; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005).

Organisation phase

1. Deciding on a level of analysis – the researcher uses existing theory or prior research and begins by identifying key concepts or variables as initial coding categories (Assarroudi et al., 2018; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). This initial step involves reading textual data and highlighting those parts of the text that, on first impression, appear to be related to the predetermined codes dictated by a theory or prior research findings (Assarroudi et al., 2018, p.46). According to Assarroudi et al. (2018) and Hsieh and Shannon (2005), this level of analysis may be a word, a phrase, a sentence or a passage that the researcher finds emerges in the data and relates to or exactly matches existing concepts in the theory. New concepts arising from the data may also be deemed to be important by the researcher and may also be included in the analysis (Assarroudi et al., 2018).

2. Coding – this step involves the operational definitions for each category being determined (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). The researcher highlights texts that would be coded using the predetermined codes from existing theory or prior research. These emerging instances, which would be key words, phrases, sentences or passages, from the text data are then labelled with meaningful key codes. Related codes are grouped together, and the resultant groups of different codes are formed into different themes (Assarroudi et al., 2018; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). "Data that cannot be coded are identified and analyzed later to determine if they represent a new category or a subcategory of an existing code" (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005, p.1282).

3. Reading and re-reading – This third step allows the researcher to better identify the codes and themes arising from the data in order to provide meaningful interpretations. Subsequently, themes may be found to be interrelated and then be abstracted into a new

level of themes which will get new labels (Assarroudi et al., 2018; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005).

Report phases

1. This last phase involves reporting all steps of directed content analysis process and findings. According to Assarroudi et al. (2018) and Hsieh and Shannon (2005), the reporting phase includes a detailed description of the data analysis process and of the findings. The researcher must present the findings in a systematic way that clearly outlines the association between the raw data and categorisation matrix (Assarroudi et al., 2018). Assarroudi et al. (2018), commented to say that a detailed description of the sampling process, data collection, analysis methods and respondents' characteristics should be presented in this last phase. In addition, the researcher should outline the steps followed to achieve the trustworthiness criteria followed in the study to ensure the truthfulness of the findings (Assarroudi et al., 2018; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005).

Taking into consideration the suggestions by Assarroudi et al. (2018) and Hsieh and Shannon (2005), the subsection below explains how the researcher used directed content analysis to achieve the research objectives.

4.7.2.1. Description of the direct content analysis process

In applying the process of direct content analysis recommended by Assarroudi et al. (2018) and Hsieh and Shannon (2005), the researcher designed an individual participant coding sheet (see Appendix E). The coding sheet was divided into biographical information and existing theory. Table 4.8 is an example of the biographical information of the research sample as it was analysed. Essentially, each quotation is accompanied by the biographical data of the respondents within the findings of Chapters 5 and 6 to gain meaning in context.

TABLE 4.8: EXAMPLE OF BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Code number	Age	Gender	Generation	Education	Employment code	Length of service (years)	Division code
6NF	38	F	X	Ba	MM	12	FI

In terms of the existing theory by Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009), the researcher organised the data analysis according to categories which can be seen in Appendix E. The first category was employee retention. This is where the researcher focused on respondents own understanding and meaning of retention, what respondents valued the most as employees and challenges respondents thought municipalities faced when it came to retaining them. The following categories were divided according to the six retention factors determined by the retention factors framework for existing employees (affiliation, direct financial, indirect financial, work–life balance, career and work content). Finally, the researcher added miscellaneous themes in order to also be able to collect any employee retention data outside the existing theory if it emerged (see Appendix E). Direct content analysis was achieved by analysing the data according to segment quotes under each factor. Segmented (cluster) quotes are quotes (speech marks) the researcher has separated and categorized (grouped) according to the six retention factors determined by the retention factors framework for existing employees and miscellaneous grouping. The researcher then decided to use instances of words, phrases, sentences and passages as the different levels of direct content analysis which are illustrated in Table 4.9. Data was analysed using the coding sheet (Appendix E). Segmented quotes (also known as cluster quotes) were grouped according to the different factors of the retention factors framework for existing employees. Segmented quotes that fell outside the scope of the theoretical framework were grouped under "miscellaneous" which was later termed "external forces" factors as illustrated in Table 4.9 below.

TABLE 4.9: ILLUSTRATION OF DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS

FACTORS	SEGMENTED QUOTES	PHRASES OR KEYS WORDS	THEMES IDENTIFIED BY RESPONDENTS	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK THEMES
Work content	*"[I need]to serve and to make people happy about the service I am rendering. If I do that, I feel like I have done my job. I value the chance to make an impact on bringing about change. I honestly want to make a change and to improve the lives of other people."* *"I knew nothing from school. The municipality trusted me with managing this division, they did not give me the job of being a clerk; they said that you are going to manage this section and I value that."*	Value, the chance to make impact Make a change and improve lives	"Job aligned with personal meaning/passion"	Meaningfulness
		Trusted with managing the division	"Authority or autonomy"	Autonomy
External forces	*"There is interference, although you might not see it with your naked eye whereby things will be done behind closed doors and that is also affecting a lot of people from staying or even coming to work* [name of the municipality] … *your ideas or views will be overturned and even the implementation of some of these policies and ideas will not be implemented if you support a different political party".*	There is interference Your ideas or views will be overturned if you support a different political party".	"Political influence"	Emerging theme outside theoretical framework

(Source: Researcher's own construction)

Meanings emerging from the responses of the 16 participants were drawn from words, phrases, sentences and passages in the transcribed text as illustrated in Table 4.9. For instance, the first quotation shown in Table 4.9 was given meaning by the phrases "value, the chance to make impact" and "make a change and improve lives". These phrases were grouped together based on their meaning. The researcher then labelled the different groupings of phrases or words and termed them "themes identified by respondents" (see Table 4.9). Essentially these were themes deduced from the responses of the participants. Twenty-eight themes emerged from the meaningful phrases. For instance, phrases like "value, the chance to make impact" and "make a change and improve lives" were grouped under the theme "job aligned with personal meaning/passion". The 28 themes identified by the respondents were the reasons they gave for staying employed in their municipalities. The frequency of each theme occurring was noted. Frequency indicates the number of quotations to which a theme applied or to which it was linked. In this instance, frequency serves to distinguish the most influential themes highlighted by research respondents.

Because the researcher used existing theory to segment the quotes, assign meaningful phrases and words, and to ultimately identify themes, the 28 identified themes were grouped according to those existing theoretical framework factors. Thus, the researcher was able to generate thick descriptions of the employee retention factors and associated themes; these are discussed in the finding's chapters (Chapters 5 and 6). An understanding of the respondents' experiences and perception of the employee retention factors within the municipal environment was gained through this process. The findings discussed in Chapter 5 and 6 were interrogated and substantiated using quotes and literature. Data reduction was done throughout the data analysis process. This meant that the researcher reread and highlighted all relevant data in order to ensure that nothing was missed.

After gaining an understanding of respondents' experiences and perceptions of the employee retention factors, the researcher drew up a summary table which consisted of the Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009) theoretical framework factors and themes, the themes deduced from the responses of respondents within the theoretical framework and the emerging themes from respondents outside the scope of the theoretical framework. The table illustrated which influencing themes and factors were relevant to this study and thus determining the focal point on which recommendations could be drawn from. After considering the limitations and contributions the study made, recommendations on how to retain experienced and skilled employees within a municipal context were discussed.

4.8. QUALITATIVE QUALITY CRITERIA

It has been argued that qualitative research is of a poor standard, a non-scientific form of research compared to quantitative research (Collis and Hussey, 2014; Creswell, 2014). However, quantifying phenomena does not ensure quality research. There needs to be a clearly defined set of quality criteria available, whether the research methods are qualitative or quantitative, in order for the research to be considered trustworthy (Collis and Hussey, 2014; Creswell, 2014). This study followed the qualitative quality criteria set by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and supported by Korstjens and Moser (2018), Collis and Hussey (2014), Creswell (2014) and several others (Assarroudi et al., 2018; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). Lincoln and Guba (1985) refined the concept of trustworthiness by introducing the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability to parallel the conventional quantitative assessment criteria of validity and reliability (Korstjens and Moser, 2018; Collis and Hussey,

2014; Creswell, 2014). Section 4.8 discusses the trustworthiness criteria followed in this study to ensure the truthfulness of the findings presented in Chapters 5 and 6.

4.8.1. Credibility

Credibility refers to the confidence placed in the truth of the research findings (Korstjens and Moser, 2018). It is the compatibility between the constructed realities that exist in the minds of the respondents and those that are attributed to them (Babbie, 2017; Collis and Hussey, 2014). So, credibility is concerned with whether the findings represent the plausible information drawn from the respondents' original data and are a correct interpretation of the respondents' original views (Collis and Hussey 2014; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In this study, definitions of employee retention and employee retention factors were obtained to ensure alignment between the way respondents and the researcher perceived the research phenomena. The researcher was immersed in the data, having conducted all interviews in the respective municipal divisions as well as manually conducting the data analysis. In addition, the researcher spent time engaging with municipal employees through the interview process. The researcher based the interview guide and the subsequent frame of analysis on a theoretical framework, namely the retention factors framework for existing employees by Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009). This theoretical framework had been used in a local government context, adapted from Britton et al. (1999), and was reviewed by the researcher against other frameworks.

The researcher used open-ended questions to check respondents' responses against the theory. Respondents' actual words were used in the findings. Probing questions were also used, where necessary, to ensure that the answers from respondents were clear, meaningful and on the topic (Creswell, 2014; Edwards and Holland, 2013). Where appropriate, the researcher articulated her personal views and insight about the phenomena being explored at the onset of the interview. The researcher specified the criteria built into the study's thinking (rational) such as the theoretical framework and research design chosen, the criteria employed to choose respondents, outlining the research scope and the description of how literature related to each factor and theme that emerged through the findings. Transcribed interviews and field notes (see section 4.6.4.1) were all checked to aid in the accuracy of the analysis. In addition, findings were based on persistent observations (high frequency of occurrence) and on "thick" descriptions.

4.8.2. Transferability

Transferability is the extent to which the findings can be transferred to other contexts or settings with other respondents (Babbie, 2017; Anney, 2014; Collis and Hussey, 2014), and is often referred to as generalisability. In the present study, transferability was established through a detailed description of the design and methodology in both theoretical and practical terms. This allows for accurate interpretation and replication of findings. In addition, the findings of the study were limited to municipalities in which the unit of analysis was limited to employees who had worked for longer than five years in the finance or infrastructure and technical services divisions. Although the findings provide valuable in-depth insights, these findings are not generalisable to private organisations. The findings might, however, be transferable to similar-sized municipalities in South Africa.

4.8.3. Dependability and confirmability

"Dependability is described as research processes that are systematic, rigorous and well documented" (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p.172). Dependability refers to evidence that if the research process were to be repeated with a similar context, the findings would be similar (Babbie, 2017; Anney, 2014). "Confirmability refers to research processes being described fully so as to assess whether the findings flow from the data" (Collis and Hussey, 2014, p.172). It refers to whether the findings can be corroborated by others. With confirmability, the findings have to be the product of the focus of inquiry and not the biases of the researcher. Generally, both dependability and confirmability focus on the researcher describing the research steps taken from the start of the study to the development and reporting of the findings (Korstjens and Moser, 2018; Collis and Hussey, 2014; Creswell, 2013). The detailed methodology presented in this chapter therefore describes a detailed design and methodology, and aids in the verification of findings. Researcher bias was reduced throughout the data collection and content analysis process, to provide an honest representation of theory and provide accurate findings (Collis and Hussey, 2014). Confirmability was also achieved in part through respondents being unknown to the researcher, and the researcher immersing in the theory and data to ensure clear conceptualisation of research constructs and the reality of the social context of the case study.

4.9. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Collis and Hussey (2014), research ethics refer to the way research is conducted and how findings are reported. There are several guidelines for researchers to consider (Bell and Bryman, 2007). These include: do no harm to participants, ensuring participants' dignity, getting informed consent, ensuring the privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of respondents, truthfulness and accuracy in interpreting and reporting data, declaring affiliation or possible conflict of interests, building rapport based on honesty and transparency, and ensuring reciprocity (Bell and Bryman, 2007). Collis and Hussey (2014) assert that respecting the rights of respondents is a vital ethical consideration which relates to informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, and transparency. All these ethical considerations were observed by the researcher, who gained informed consent from the participating municipalities and interview respondents.

Before the data collection process, the researcher obtained ethical approval from the Department of Management of Rhodes University; this can be seen in Appendix F. This involved a process where the Department of Management ethics sub-committee was presented with the researcher's proposal and interview guide in order to ensure that the ethical standards of the department and university were met, before the researcher could proceed with collecting data. In addition, the researcher obtained written permission from the selected municipalities (municipal manager and/or mayors) and individual respondents. Templates of the requested permission can be seen in Appendices B and C respectively. Anonymity was assured by removing all names and assigning code letters to the respective municipalities' and respondents' identification keys (code numbers). In addition, any identification variables that could be used to identify respondents (for example, job position) were listed separately in field notes. This rendered the list useless to identify respondents. The anonymity of the municipalities and respondents was protected. Accuracy and truthfulness were ensured throughout the study. The researcher discussed the purpose of the study with all respondents and explained what the data would be used for. Thereafter, all questions were answered to ensure transparency, informed consent and rapport. The data was prepared, analysed and interpreted in an ethically aware manner, attempting to always uphold the qualitative quality criterion. Respondents' requests within reason were considered, for example, respondents 2NF, 12MF and 16MM wished to have their interviews conducted in isiXhosa.

4.10. SUMMARY

Chapter 4 discussed philosophical assumptions that form the basis for any valid research. Also discussed was the research design and methodology, and the approaches underpinning this study. Overall, Chapter 4 examined the definition and nature of research in section 4.2, the philosophical assumptions associated with the adopted research paradigm (i.e. interpretivism) were reviewed and presented in section 4.3, and the research objectives discussed in section 4.4. In addition, section 4.5 focused on the research design and methodologies. The qualitative research approach of this study adopted a case study methodology and also used the retention factors framework for existing employees by Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009) as the supporting theoretical structure. The research methods discussed in section 4.6, looked at sampling and sampling procedures and data collection methods. Section 4.7 focused on data analysis processes. The reasons for regarding this research as trustworthy were discussed (section 4.8), and the ethical considerations of the study were also explored (section 4.9).

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF THE RETENTION FACTORS AND EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS OF AFFILIATION, CAREER AND WORK CONTENT

5.1. OVERVIEW

Chapters 5 and 6 together present and discuss the findings related to employee retention in selected municipalities. The aim of these chapters is to contribute to a better understanding of the meaning of the key factors influencing retention, as experienced by employees in the selected municipalities. Chapter 5 focuses on the first and second research objectives of the study, namely, to identify the current employee retention factors, and to ascertain the perceptions of employees regarding these retention factors. Chapter 6 is a continuation of the second research objective. This additional chapter was required due to the extensive, thick descriptions achieved through the interpretivism research paradigm.

Chapter 5 begins with an overview of the biographical indicators of the sample to contextualise the overall findings. This chapter also presents the findings relevant to the first research objective, by discussing the employee retention factors (with their associated themes) identified by respondents. Chapter 5 only discusses the descriptions and perceptions of the three most influential retention factors, namely, affiliation, career and work content and their associated themes. To conclude, a brief summary of the chapter is offered.

Findings are substantiated with literature and quotations from interviews. Quotations presented in italics are verbatim from the respondents, while square brackets illustrate text added to improve understanding and coherence. Biographical data will accompany each quotation for meaning in context, according to the categories as shown below in an extract from Table 4.6.

EXTRACT OF TABLE 4.6: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA ACCOMPANYING QUOTATIONS

Code number	Age	Gender	Generation	Education	Employment code	Length of service (years)	Division code

5.2. BIOGRAPHICAL DATA INDICATORS OF THE RESPONDENTS

This section presents descriptive statistics of biographical data indicators. The detailed data pertaining to this biographical information is found in Chapter 4 (see Table 4.6).

5.2.1. Distribution of age

The average age was 41.19 years (n=16). Within the research sample, 6% (n=1) of respondents were between the ages of 19 and 29, 75% (n=12) between the ages of 30 and 49, and 19% (n=3) between the ages of 50 and 69. This distribution (as seen in Figure 5.1) is skewed towards the age category 30 to 49.

FIGURE 5.1: DISTRIBUTION OF AGE
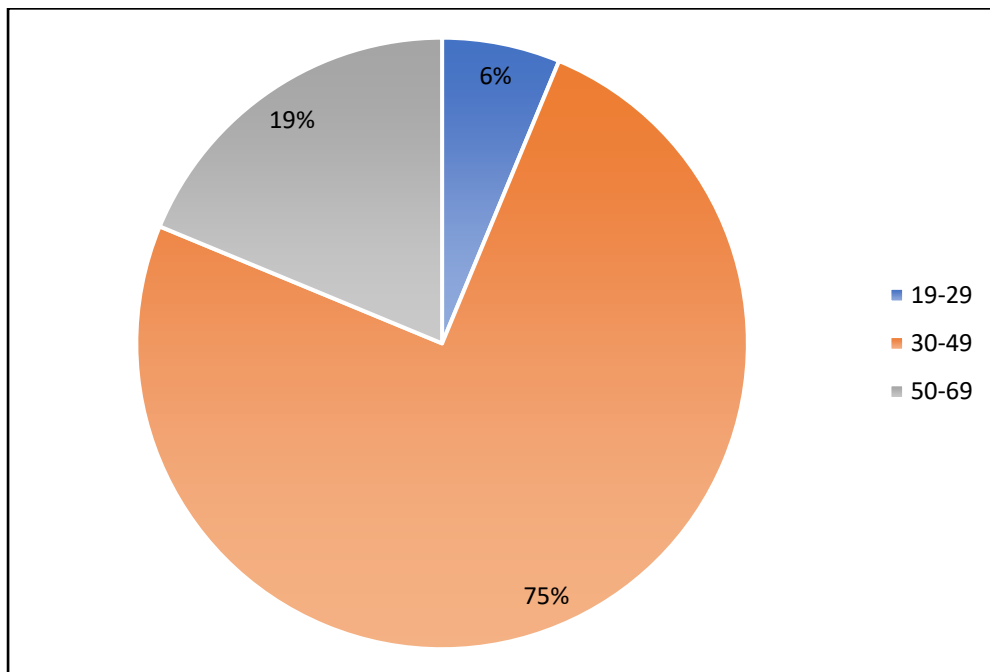
5.2.2. Distribution of generations

Today's workforce is diverse in nature; some organisations find themselves with up to four generations (Mohanty and Mohanty, 2016). Within the research sample, 6% (n=1) were Generation Y, 19% (n=3) were Baby boomers and 75% (n=12) were Generation X. There were no respondents from Generation Z (individuals born between 2001 and 2020) or veterans (individuals born between 1930 and 1949). This distribution (as seen in Figure 5.2) is skewed towards the Generation X category, namely 30 to 49 years of age. This makes the findings more relevant as Yow (2013) argues that Generation X are the most difficult to retain. This is because generation X are the human capital repositories of knowledge, skills and expertise in most organisations (Jonck, Van der Walt and Sobayeni, 2017; Van der Walt, Jonck and Sobayeni, 2016).

FIGURE 5.2: DISTRIBUTION OF GENERATIONS
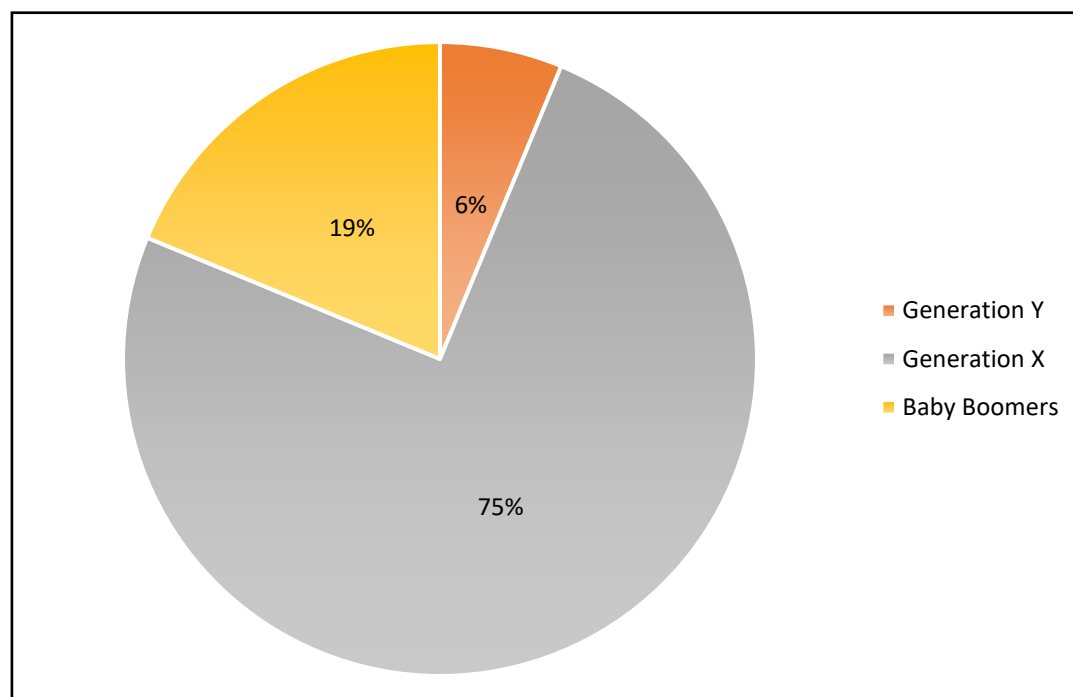
5.2.3. Distribution of gender

The research sample was 44% (n=7) female and 56% (n=9) male for the distribution of gender (as seen in Figure 5.3).

FIGURE 5.3: DISTRIBUTION OF GENDER
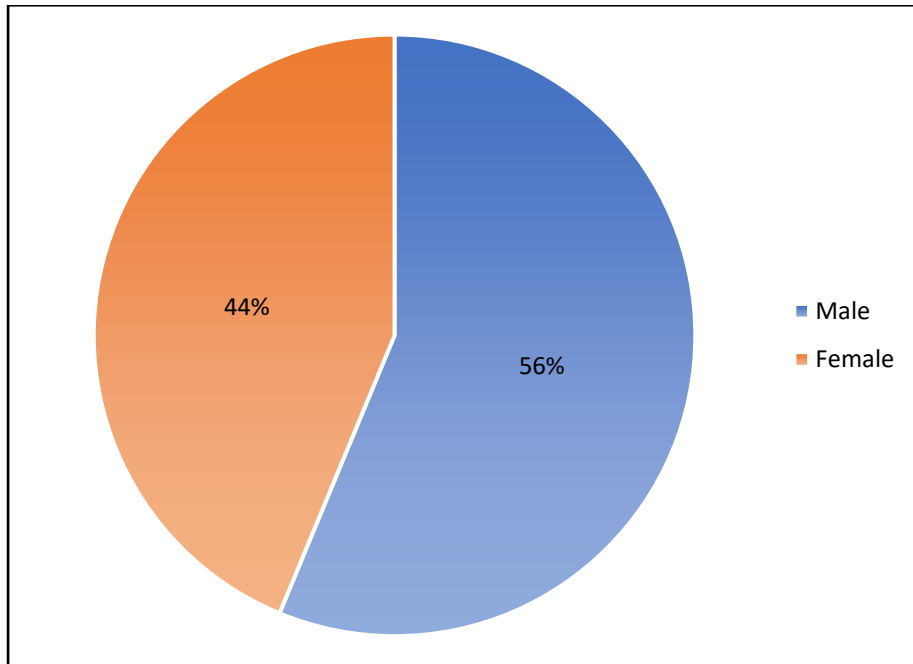
5.2.4. Distribution of education

The sample can be described as a well-educated group, with all respondents (n=16) possessing a form of formal education (i.e. certificate, diploma, degree or postgraduate degree as their highest level of education). This was expected, given that all the respondents were identified as experienced and skilled employees. In this study, 6% (n=1) had a certificate in management accountancy, 31% (n=5) had diplomas (D) in civil engineering (DCE), human resource management (DHR) and management accounting (DMA), 31% (n=5) had a bachelor's degree (BA), 13% (n=2) had technical degrees (BTech) and 19% (n=3) had a postgraduate honours (PGH) or masters' degree (PGM) (see Figure 5.4).

FIGURE 5.4: DISTRIBUTION OF EDUCATION
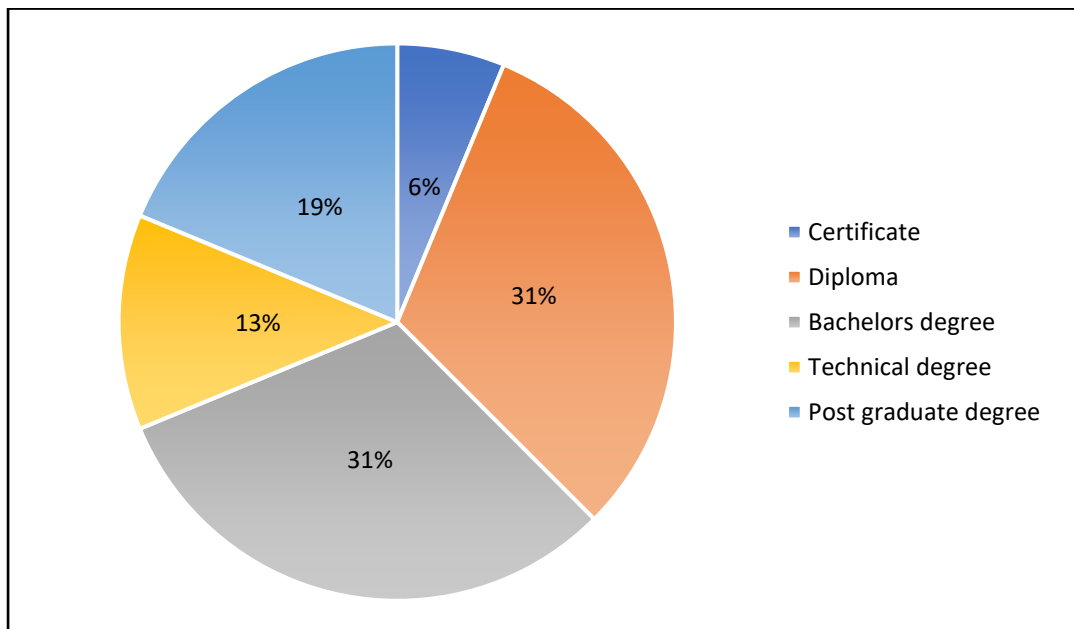
5.2.5. Distribution of municipal division

The divisions were distributed as follows; 38% (n=6) of the respondents were in the municipality's finance division, 6% (n=1) were in the human resource division and 56% (n=9) were in the infrastructure and technical services division.

FIGURE 5.5: DISTRIBUTION OF DIVISIONS
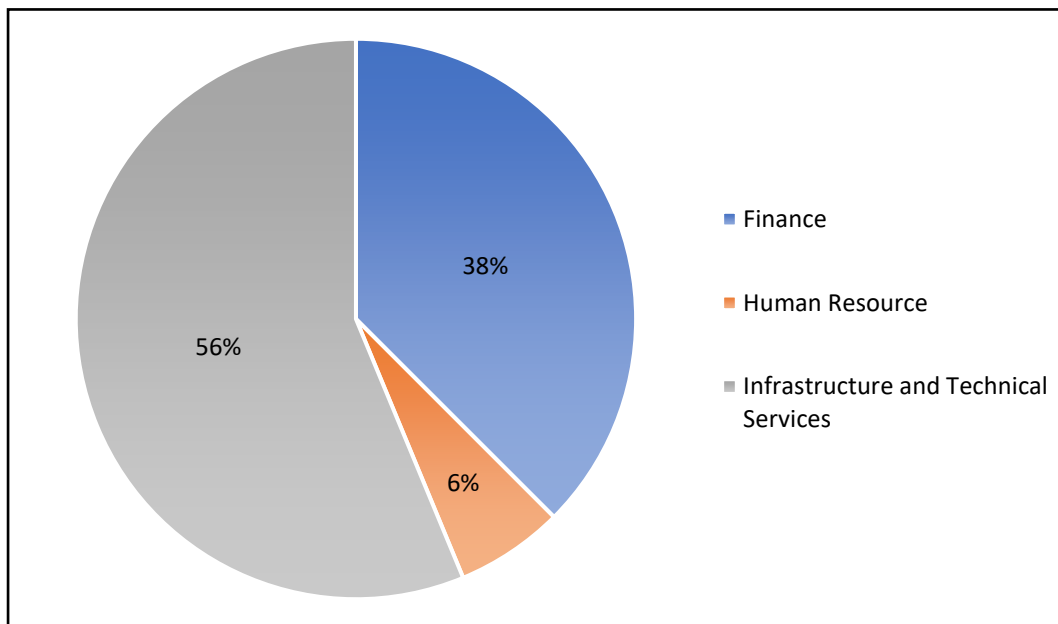
5.2.6. Distribution of position in the municipalities and employment levels

The job designations of the research respondents have been separated from the respondents' data to ensure that respondents remain anonymous. Positions are listed alphabetically: budget and treasury managers, chief financial officer, creditor control clerk, deputy director of electricity services, deputy director of engineering and infrastructure services, deputy director of land use, director of engineering and infrastructure services, director of infrastructure development, human resource manager, project technician, senior accountants credit control, superintendent in road maintenance, town planning manager, and town planner.

The employment levels of these positions, as indicated by employment codes in Table 4.6 of the previous chapter, were distributed as follows; employee 50% (n=8), middle managers 25% (n=4) and top managers 25% (n=4) (see Figure 5.6).

FIGURE 5.6: DISTRIBUTION OF POSITIONS IN THE MUNICIPALITIES
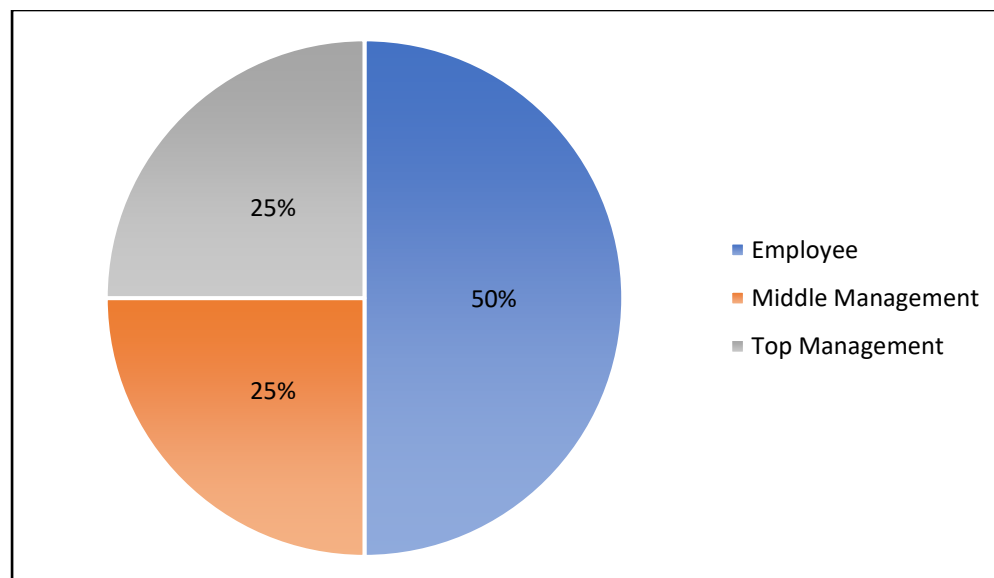
5.2.7. Distribution of length of service

The average length of service in the municipalities was 12.13 years (n=16). The distribution of years of service categories were as follows: 6% (n=1) have worked for 5 years, 31% (n=5) between 5 and 10 years, 44% (n=7) between 10 and 15 years, 6% (n=1) between 15 and 20 years and 13% (n=2) for more than 20 years (Figure 5.7).

FIGURE 5.7: DISTRIBUTION OF LENGTH OF SERVICE
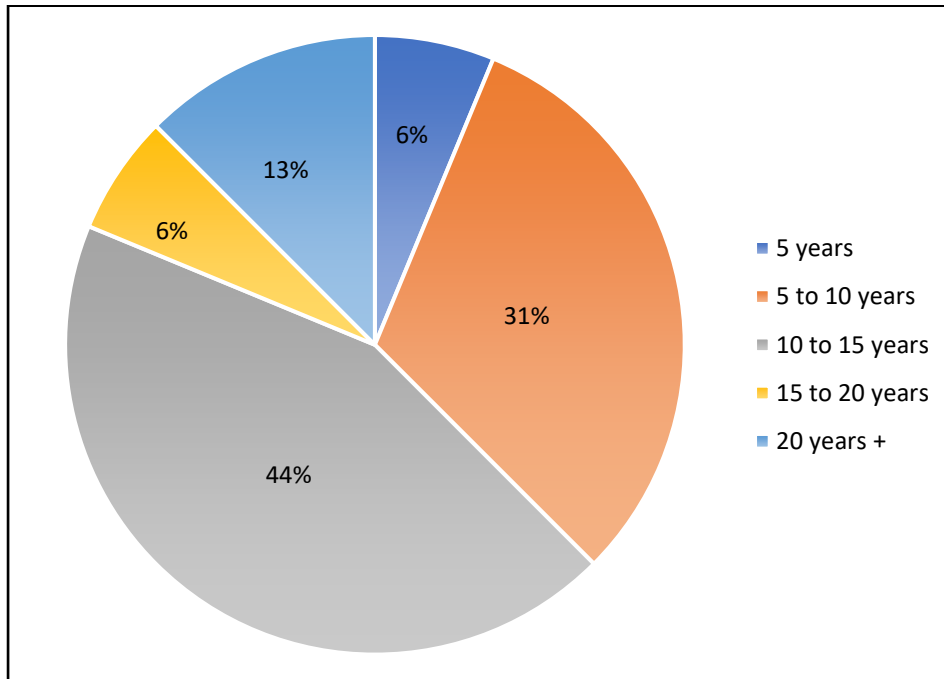
5.3. IDENTIFIED EMPLOYEE RETENTION FACTORS AND THEMES

The responses obtained through the 16 semi-structured interviews are illustrated in Table 5.1 in the order of the most frequent themes for retaining employees in a municipal context. As explained in section 4.7.2, frequency in the Table 5.1 below indicates the number of quotations to which a theme was applied, which is the number of occurrences, or the number of quotations linked to a specific theme. In this instance, frequency serves to clearly distinguish the key themes highlighted by research respondents.

TABLE 5.1: THEMES ARISING FROM THE RESPONSES OF RESEARCH RESPONDENTS

Themes	*Frequency of theme emerging*
1. Management style	85
2. Compensation	84
3. Training	80
4. Opportunities for development/Personal growth	77
5. Work environment/conditions	67
6. Job aligned with personal meaning/passion	57
7. Organisation commitment	57
8. Teamwork/relationship and interaction between employees and managers	43
9. Challenging work	38
10. Incentives	35
11.Promotion	29
12. Benefits	29
13. Recognition of employees	27
14. Political influence/climate	25
15. Autonomy	18
16. Municipal category	18

17. Feedback	17
18. Organisational/Municipal structure	16
19. Job security	15
20. Job evaluation	15
21. Flexible work arrangements	14
22. Access to family	14
23. Organisation support	8
24. Variety	7
25. Organisation reputation	4
26. Wellness officer	4
27. Location	3
28. Strength assignment	1

Table 5.1 illustrates the 28 themes identified from the participants' responses. These themes emerged from meaningful phrases and words the researcher extracted from segmented quotes. This is illustrated in Table 4.9 and explained in Chapter 4 where the deductive content analysis process was followed in order to carry out the first research objective (see section 4.7.2.1 for further details). These themes emanated as the reason's respondents gave for remaining in the employment of the selected municipalities. Respondents used phrases and words to identify and describe employee retention factors and associated themes. The deductive content analysis process allowed the researcher to identify the current employee retention factors (and their associated themes) and gain an understanding of respondents' experiences and perception of the retention factors within the selected municipalities.

It can be deduced from Table 5.1 that respondents did not present only one main theme that outweighed all the other themes. Seven themes had a frequency of over 55, with management style, compensation and training as the top three influential themes for employees in the selected municipalities. The theme management style is mentioned by all 16 respondents and

has a frequency of 85 times. The following respondents' statements illustrate an example of management style.

According to respondent 6NF, the type of person who managed and supervised them had a big influence on them staying at the municipality for 12 years.

"My previous CFO was the person who made me to be what I am today. He played a very huge role in the early stages of my career here. He changed our lives here at the municipality" [respondent tells the story of how their first manager (chief financial officer) instilled a sense of responsibility and gave them the opportunity to grow].

6NF	38	F	X	BA	MM	12	FI

Respondent 3NM echoed these sentiments:

"I think it helps having an open-minded somebody, who makes you understand what is expected of you so that you can craft your way, your achievement in ensuring that goals … a person who opens the opportunity for you to exercise the authority that is given unto you."

3NM	56	M	BB	PGH	TM	10	FI

Respondents 1NF–16MM indicated that one of the reasons they remained working in the selected municipalities was the management style they were exposed to in the early stages (the first two to three years) of their careers. The way they were supervised, together with the guidance and support from the management, supervisors, and sometimes colleagues, played a key role in their decision to stay employed in their respective municipalities (1NF–16MM). An emerging theme linked to management style was teamwork/relationship between employees and managers. Irrespective of whether respondents 1NF–16MM preferred a manager who demonstrated autocratic, paternalistic, or democratic management style, having a manager present and involved greatly influenced their experience and perception of the municipal environment. It is important that there is a professional relationship between employees, management and the organisation as the attitude and behaviour towards staying employed in a

particular environment continues to be influenced by management style and relationship with employees (Okon and Isong, 2016; Taplin and Winterton, 2007).

The second most frequent theme was compensation, which appeared 84 times and was mentioned by all 16 respondents (see Table 5.1). Compensation, which is sometimes referred to as salary or remuneration, was another key reason to remain with the selected municipalities (1NF–16MM). Respondents 1NF–16MM indicated that compensation allowed them to have access to and satisfy their physiological needs (i.e. shelter, food, clothing). Respondent 2NF commented:

"You know compensation helps because as a person you have to do certain things. You have children that need to go to school, children that need to be fed; you need to be clothed when you come to work. What do you come to work with? Transport needs to be paid so getting compensation at the end is very helpful although it is small."

2NF	43	F	X	CMA	E	14	FI

According to respondent 4NM,

"The main thing is salary … as I have indicated before; the employer needs to look at ensuring the salary for employee to ensure the employer keep the employee in the organisation."

4NM	36	M	X	DCE	E	5	ITS

Several authors agree that compensation is an important retention factor; employees depend on their earnings to sustain themselves and lifestyles (Stoltz, 2015; Swanepoel, et al., 2014; Das and Baruah, 2013; Deloitte, 2012; Milkovich and Newman, 2004; Gerhart and Milkovich 1992, cited in Gardner, Van Dyne and Pierce, 2004).

Training, and opportunities for development/personal growth appeared as the third and fourth themes from respondents 1NF, 2NF, 4NM to 8NF, and 10NM to 16MM mentioning training 80 times, and respondents 1NF to 6NF, and 8NF to 16MM mentioning opportunities for development/personal growth 77 times (see Table 5.1). Both themes were spoken of as being

reasons respondents remained at their selected municipalities. Examples of training and opportunities for development/personal growth are illustrated in the following statements:

"I stayed here for growth ... I'm growing as an individual because you meet a lot of things there."

9NF	34	F	X	DCE	E	8	ITS

For this respondent, personal growth and exposure both play a key role in retaining her. Respondent 4NM commented that

"People must be given a chance to grow, skills need to improve, prepare those people for higher position because it doesn't help the organisation to fill the position with someone who is not capable".

4NM	36	M	X	DCE	E	5	ITS

In the end, access to opportunities to grow and develop within a municipality allow individuals to visualise a future within their current working environment. Employees can see a career path for themselves (Nel and Werner, 2017; Bussin and Toerien, 2015; Wessels, 2014; Sinha, 2012) hence the importance of training and access to development opportunities in local government.

The fifth most frequent theme was work environment/conditions, which appeared 67 times and was mentioned by 11 respondents (1NF–5NM, 10NM–14MM, and 16MM) (see Table 5.1). The theme is about the importance of employees having a conducive working environment, a place where they are able to engage with each other and be comfortable in their working space in order to perform their tasks effectively (Massoudi and Hamdi, 2017; Ajala, 2012; Briner, 2000).

According to respondent 11MM,

"People need have the necessary equipment, tools of trade, protective clothing...all those kinds of things which are basic needs for any employee to be performing what is required of them"

11MM	46	M	X	DHR	E	10	HR

Ultimately, the work environment and working conditions encourage employees to feel positive about the space they are working in, to be more productive and remain in their municipality (Massoudi, 2017).

The last two themes with a frequency of above 55 times were job aligned with personal meaning/passion and organisational commitment. Respondents 1NF–3NM, 5NM–11MM, and 13MM–16MM mentioned job aligned with personal meaning/passion 57 times (see Table 5.1). These respondents felt that it was important to have a genuine interest in or perform meaningful work and tasks with a clearly understood purpose. Organisational commitment appeared 57 times as well (see Table 5.1). According to respondents 1NF–8NF, 10NM–14MM, and 16MM, they were influenced to stay because of their attachment to the selected municipalities and/or community area. This included feelings such as obligation, fear of the unknown and/or desire (loyalty) to want to stay (Ogamba and Nwuche, 2016), which will be discussed in more detail in section 5.4.1.3.

The seven themes discussed above, namely management style, compensation, training, opportunities for development/personal growth, work environment/conditions, and a job aligned with personal meaning/passion, highlight some of the key areas that influenced respondents into remaining employed in the selected municipalities. These key areas range from the support and guidance from managers, training and development opportunities, and being in a conducive work environment, to alignment with personal meaning and passion or genuine interest in the work, and the bond or attachment they felt to their municipality and/or community area. These seven themes also support the statement that employees appreciate a more holistic approach when it comes to retention strategies as it is able to cater to a diverse group (Nel and Werner, 2017; Knox, 2013; Snelgar, Renard and Venter, 2013; Mokoka, Oosthuizen and Ehlers, 2010; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009; Corporate and Leadership Council, 2002).

The above analyses specifically discuss the top seven most frequent themes; however, Table 5.1 includes 21 additional themes. These themes appear in the following order in terms of frequencies: teamwork/relationship and interaction between employees and manager at 43 times, challenging work at 38, incentive at 35, promotion at 29, benefits at 29, recognition of

employees at 27, political influence/climate at 25, autonomy at 18, municipal category at 18, feedback at 17, organisational/municipal structure at 16, job security at 15, job evaluation at 15, flexible work arrangements at 14, access to family at 14, organisation support at 8, variety at 7, organisation reputation at 4, wellness officer at 4, location at 3 and strength assignment at 1 (see Table 5.1). The 21 themes continue to support the need for the selected municipalities to be more inclusive when it comes to identifying ways to retain employees. Themes of teamwork/relationship between employees and managers, challenging work and incentives are part of the top ten themes, with teamwork/relationship between employees and managers, challenging work and incentive all appearing more than 35 times in the interviews (see Table 5.1). They highlight the importance of having retention strategies that also promote good working relationships between employers and employees (which is linked to management style), having work that challenges employees and some form of incentive that complements compensation. Promotion, recognition of employees, and political influence/climate were themes mentioned by at least 10 research respondents (as illustrated in Tables 5.4, 5.3 and 6.2).

The least-frequently mentioned themes are wellness officer, location and strength assignment. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the first research objective only requires the researcher to identify current employee retention factors (and, by extension, their associated themes). This is illustrated in Table 5.1 and in the previous paragraphs. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, only the top seven frequent themes were discussed in section 5.3. The 21 other themes are briefly mentioned and will be further discussed in the following section and in section 6.2 of the next chapter, which will look into the descriptions and perceptions of all employee retention factors and associated themes. Overall, no single theme can be the reason for retaining all employees within the selected municipalities. As stated in Chapter 2, organisations and municipalities need to focus on the different needs and values of employees, which can vary (Maholo, Louw and Amos, 2018; Nel and Werner, 2017; Mello, 2014; Herholdt, 2012; Brown, 2001). Whether in the form of career development, compensation, conditions of the working environment, or management style, research respondents felt that support in various forms was crucial in retaining them. It appears that the 28 themes go a long way in accounting for the reasons why the respondents were comfortable in the municipalities they were working in and had a desire to remain there.

5.4. DESCRIPTION AND PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYEE RETENTION FACTORS

Table 5.1 illustrates the 28 themes identified by respondents; these themes are essentially the reasons for remaining employed in the selected municipalities. As discussed in Chapter 4, the deductive content analysis process was followed in terms of data analysis. The retention factors framework for existing employees by Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009) was used to segment the quotes, assign meaningful phrases and words and ultimately to produce themes. As a result, the 28 identified themes were grouped according to the retention factors framework for existing employees; however, several themes fell outside the scope of the theoretical framework (see Table 5.2 for further details). In Chapter 3, this theoretical framework analyses six grouping factors that influence professional and management employees to remain employed in their municipal jobs. These six factors are as follows: affiliation, direct financial, indirect financial, work/life balance, career and work content (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009).

From the 16 interviews conducted, all six employee retention factors are presented with their total frequencies based on the sum of their associated themes (see Table 5.2). The factor frequencies are as follows: the affiliation factor is mentioned 300 times (with management style and teamwork/relationship between employees and managers at 128, work environment/conditions at 67 and organisation commitment at 57, recognition of employees at 27 and organisation support at 8 mentions). Career factor is mentioned 202 times (with training at 80, personal growth at 77, advancement at 29, employment security at 15 and stretch assignment mentioned only once). Work content is mentioned 137 times (with meaningfulness at 57, challenging at 38, autonomy at 18, feedback at 17 and variety at 7 mentions). Direct financial was mentioned 119 times (with base salary at 84 and incentives at 35 mentions). Work–life balance is mentioned 39 times (with flexible work arrangements at 14, access to family at 14, childcare facilities at 4, wellness officer at 4 and location at 3 mentions). Indirect financial is mentioned 29 times, with benefits appearing 29 times. In addition, the "external force" factor emerged from the findings outside the scope of the theoretical framework with a frequency of 78 mentions (with political influence/climate at 25, municipal category at 18, organisational structure at 16, job evaluation at 15 and organisational reputation at 4 mentions) (see the following Table 5.2). The "external force" factor and its associated themes refer to the influences outside the control of municipalities which also play a role in the retention of employees. This factor is discussed in section 6.2.2 of Chapter 6.

TABLE 5.2: THEMES IDENTIFIED IN THIS RESEARCH ACCORDING TO FACTORS

Themes deduced from respondents	Themes	1. Management style	2. Compensation	3. Training	4. Opportunities for development/personal growth	5. Work environment/conditions	6. Job aligned with personal meaning/passion	7. Organisation commitment	8. Teamwork/relationship between employees and managers	9. Challenging work	10. Incentives	11. Promotion and transfers	12. Benefits	13. Recognition of employees	14. Political influence/climate	15. Autonomy	16. Municipal category	17. Feedback	18. Organisational/Municipal structure	19. Job security	20. Job evaluation	21. Flexible work arrangements	22. Access to family	23. Organisation support	24. Variety	25. Organisation reputation	26. Wellness officer	2.7 Location	28. Strength assignment	Total frequencies for each theme
	F	85	84	80	77	67	57	57	56	38	35	29	29	27	25	18	18	17	16	15	15	14	14	8	7	4	4	3	1	
Theoretical framework factors	A	X				X		X	X					X										X						300
	DF		X								X																			119
	IF												X																	29
	WLB																					X	X				X	X		39
	C			X	X							X									X									202
	WC						X			X						X		X							X				X	137
Additional themes	EF														X		X		X	X						X				78

F=Frequencies; A=Affiliation; DF=Direct financial; IF=Indirect financial; WLB=Work/life balance; C=Career; WC=Work content and EF=External force.

In addition, several themes within the retention factors framework for existing employees did not appear in the findings. These themes were as follows: organisation citizenship and leading-edge technology (under the affiliation theme), interaction with experts and quality of managers (under career), ownership, cash recognition, premium pay and pay process (under direct financial and non-cash recognition), and perquisites and awards schemes (under the indirect financial theme). Some of the themes are closely linked. Although they are presented separately in terms of frequencies, they are discussed together to better understand the influence they have had on the respondents.

Findings relating to the meaning of employee retention factors of affiliation, career and work content (with their associated themes) within a municipal context are discussed below in the order of those most frequently identified by respondents. The subsections below, as well as Chapter 6, address the second research objective, the perceptions of the employee retention factors. The remaining factors (direct financial, external factors, work–life balance and indirect financial) are discussed in Chapter 6 (see section 6.2).

5.4.1. Affiliation

This section discusses findings relating to the affiliation factor, with Table 5.3 illustrating the themes associated with the factor and words used to give meaning to the various themes.

TABLE 5.3: AFFILIATION FACTOR

Theme	Codes/words	f
Management style		**85**
1NF, 11MM, 14MM	Coaching and mentoring/supportive	4
1NF, 2NF, 4NM, 5NM, 6NF, 7NF, 8NF, 9NF, 10NM, 11MM, 12MF, 14MM, 15MM, 16MM	Appropriate, approachable, respectable, trustworthy and transparent	33
2NF, 11MM, 12MF, 14MM	Flexible and adaptive	4
1NF, 2NF, 3NM, 4NM, 5NM, 6NF, 8NF, 10NM, 11MM, 12MF, 13MM, 14MM, 15MM, 16MM	Present manager, setting clear job expectations, monitoring, controlling and accountability	44
Work environment/conditions		**67**
3NM, 4NM, 5NM, 10NM, 11MM, 12MF, 13MM, 14MM, 16MM	Adequate resources/tools of trade	27
1NF, 2NF, 5NM, 11MM, 12MF, 13MM, 14MM, 16MM	Own space/office, office furniture	21
12MF, 14MM	Clean offices and restrooms	7
2NF, 11MM, 12MF, 13MM, 14MM, 16MM	Walls, temperature and lights in offices	12
Organisation commitment		**57**
1NF, 2NF, 3NM, 4NM, 6NF, 7NF, 8NF, 10NM, 11MM, 13MM, 16MM	Loyalty to community (area) and obligation towards municipality	22
1NF, 6NF, 8NF, 11MM, 13MM	Sense of belonging	7
1NF, 2NF, 4NM, 6NF, 7NF, 12MF	Fear of the unknown/no alternative jobs/comfort	12
2NF, 4NM, 7NF, 8NF,10NM, 11MM, 13MM	Identify with municipal objectives/ alignment with institutional goals	12
12MF, 14MM	Responsible for a family	5
Teamwork/relationship between employees and managers		**56**

113

1NF, 2NF, 3NM, 4MN, 5NM, 7NF, 8NF, 9NF, 11MM, 12MF, 13MM, 14MM, 15MM, 16MM	Teamwork/working relationship among colleagues and managers	56
Recognition of employees		**27**
1NF, 2NF, 3NM, 4NM, 8NF, 9NF, 12MF, 13MM, 14MM, 15MM	Appreciation from community area	21
2NF2, 9NF	Employee of the month	3
12MF	Social activities/gatherings	3
Organisation support		**8**
1NF, 5NM, 7NF	Support from organisation	8

All 16 respondents shared their opinions regarding affiliation. For the affiliation factor, the following were the emerging themes:

- Management style (including teamwork/relationship between employees and managers)

- Work environment/conditions

- Organisational commitment

- Recognition of employees

- Organisational support

From the 16 interviews conducted, the affiliation factor was mentioned 300 times, with management style and teamwork/relationship between employees and managers at 128 mentions, work environment and conditions at 67 and organisational commitment at 57, recognition of employees at 27 and organisation support at 8 mentions (see Table 5.3). Generally, respondents described affiliation as the need to be liked and being comfortable in the work environment. They see it as the desire to stay within the municipality because of shared values and vision (1NF–16MM). According to Clark (2013), affiliation is feeling a sense of belonging and/or involvement in the organisation. Essentially, affiliation concerns the affection (feelings) individuals have towards their organisation. When staff are affiliated, they share the same values as the organisation and identify themselves with the organisation (Clark, 2013; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). According to Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009, p.7), affiliation is largely based on being a part of a supportive organisation, with a good

working environment and/or working conditions that also include a progressive management style that recognises staff contributions. Employees want to feel supported and seen; they want their municipalities to be aware of them and to demonstrate that municipalities have the employee's best interests at heart (1NF–9NF, 12MF–15MM). Employees are more likely to become attached and committed if they feel a connection with the municipality or community area (1NF–4NM, 6NF–8NF, 10NM, 11MM, 13MM). According to respondent 5NM, affiliation is feeling a sense of loyalty to the municipality:

"I think any institution must also be loyal to its employees and the other way around … that is to retain people they need to avail resources, ensure that staff get the best support from the institution, they get the best resource."

5NM	33	M	X	BTech	MM	12	ITS

5.4.1.1. Management style (including teamwork/relationship between employees and managers)

One of the most important aspects of being affiliated to an organisation is the influence management has on its employees. Management style has a direct influence on the organisation's ability to maintain its workforce (Wakabi, 2016; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009; Netswera, Rankhumise, and Mavundla, 2005). According to Taplin and Winterton (2007, p.6), management style can play an instrumental role in creating a work environment that neutralises the otherwise problematic aspects of the job and work/family linkages. Senior officials such as mayors, municipal managers, and/or supervisors are responsible for providing a conducive environment for employees to work in. Through effective leadership in the form of support and guidance, senior officials are likely to influence employees' behaviour (Kings et al., 2015; Nengwekhulu, 2009). It is evident from the responses of respondents 1NF to 16MM, that management style is important and influences the way in which the municipality can provide a supportive environment where employees want to remain. With a frequency of 85 mentions (see Table 5.3), respondents used words and phrases such as *"present manager" "setting clear job expectations" "monitoring controlling and accountability"*, *"appropriate, approachable, respectable, trustworthy and transparent"* and *"coaching and mentoring" supportive"* to explain their understanding of the theme. Respondents further described their ideal manager as a person who is approachable, interactive and able to engage with employees,

someone who is aware of others, trustworthy and transparent (1NF, 2NF, 4NM–16MM). Respondent 2NF shared her view of the ideal manager as someone who is relatable and approachable:

"When you are a supervisor, you must be someone who can understand the way a person works; someone who is down to earth, someone whom you can communicate with ... someone who can reach out and can relate to so that people are not scared to come to you".

2NF	43	F	X	CMA	E	14	FI

According to Meyer (2005), employees do not usually leave the organisation; they leave their managers. This is due to the expectation's employees have of their supervisors and the kind of environment provided. Respondents 1NF to 5NM, 7NF to 9NF, and 11MM to 16MM preferred a management style that encourages good working relationships, teamwork and being included in decisions for the municipality. According to respondent 2NF, good working relationships with colleagues add value:

"As a working person, good relationships with colleagues is very important because you work as a group most of the time, you spend most of your hours here ... sometimes there are things you do not understand and then some of your colleague will know and then they will assist in you solving whatever needs to solved at the time."

Respondents 1NF to 5NM, 7NF to 9NF, and 11MM to 16MM commented that good working relationships and teamwork speak to how managers run municipalities daily. Employees may be influenced to stay in an organisation because of the working relationship they have with fellow colleagues and more specifically with their manager. Respondent 6NF credits her positive working relationship with her manager since she started, as the reason she stayed:

"My previous CFO [chief financial officer] *is the one who made me to be what I am today. He played a very huge role my dear. He came in and said we must write reports of what we had been doing for the past couple of months ... he really understood the internship programmes ... his intention was to build us that is why I am saying he really influenced me ... he changed our lives. We immediately saw the changes after we gave him the reports. Interns were then*

assigned to different offices; we were finally working and the work we are doing now is the work we learnt to a large extent because of that programme."

6NF	38	F	X	Ba	MM	12	FI

Respondent 6NF reported that she and her colleagues were not given training or opportunities to learn about their job or municipality when they began their internship. Instead, their supervisors and managers would have them run errands. This changed when her previous CFO joined the municipality, communicated and asked for feedback, based on that feedback, opportunities for growth and development were provided. For respondents 1NF to 16MM, communication, direction and support from management and immediate supervisors play a key role. According to Taplin and Winterton (2007, p.7), "high commitment management practices are characterised by the use of information dissemination, minimal status differentials, job flexibility, team working, coupled with conception of employees as resources to be developed rather than as disposable factors of production". Employees become far more loyal and committed to an organisation when they trust management, are included, feel that they are recognised for their individual contributions and believe that their leaders are capable of driving the business to success (Coetzee and Pauw, 2013; Nazia and Begum, 2013; Dockel, 2003).

If managers share information and include employees in the decision-making process, it creates a sense of ownership among employees and ultimately high commitment. It can therefore be deduced that respondents 1NF to 5NM, 7NF to 9NF, and 11MM to 16MM were positively influenced by paternalistic management style (where communication and feedback are highly valued, and employees' needs are met) and democratic management style (managers allows employees to take part in the decision-making process) (Okon and Isong, 2016). According to respondents 1NF, 2NF, 4NM, and 6NF, municipalities need to have managers who engage with and give feedback to employees while also taking their plans or ideas into careful consideration. This creates a healthy relationship between management and employees (Okon and Isong, 2016). It is important for managers to act as advocates for employees and provide feedback based on employees' performance (Chandrasekar, 2011). An area of concern for research respondents 11MM to 16MM was the lack of supervision and support in their workplace. Employee 16MM stated:

"Our municipality has been unfortunate in that we haven't had a permanent municipal manager for a long time, so we do not have someone who is championing the corporate image of the municipality ... one key activity from that office of municipal manger is some form of direction for the municipality. To have your vision in place and then to have your staff speaking and working towards that vision so each department aligns its vision with the main vision of the municipality. So, if the head of the municipality is non-existent, or keeps being changed every three months, then what is happening to the whole body?"

16MM	55	M	BB	Ba	MM	17	ITS

Respondents 1NF to 16MM said that a good management style involves being present, setting clear job expectations, monitoring, controlling and ensuring that employees are accountable for their actions. According to literature, the presence of management in any organisation is crucial, as managers are responsible for communicating the policies, goals, objectives and standards and also ensuring that employees are aware of and adhere to these standards in the organisation, (Wakabi, 2016; George, 2015; Nazia and Begum, 2013). Management gives direction, support and guidance to the employees (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). As the respondents (11MM to 16MM) pointed out, it is difficult to retain employees for the long term without consistent leadership and management.

5.4.1.2. Work environment and conditions

The second theme identified under the affiliation factor is work environment and conditions. This theme addresses the feelings and thoughts employees have towards their place of work and the effect it might have on their decision to stay in an organisation. Work environment and conditions refers to the surrounding conditions the employees operate in (Massoudi and Hamdi, 2017; Ajala, 2012; Briner, 2000). With a frequency of 67 mentions (see Table 5.3), respondents viewed their work environment and conditions as the state of the workplace (1NF–5NM, 10NM–14MM, and 16MM). The theme was mentioned by 11 respondents who made use of words such as *"adequate resources and tools of trade", "own space/office"* and *"office furniture", "condition of walls, temperature and lighting"* and *"clean offices and restrooms"* to describe their understanding of their environment (1NF–5NM, 10NM–14MM, and 16MM). According to respondents 3NM to 5NM, 10NM to 14MM, and 16MM, the work environment

is a place or location (office) where adequate resources such as safety equipment like gloves or masks are made available for employees to perform tasks.

Respondent 11MM observed that:

"We require conducive environment with the necessary equipment, tools of trade, protective clothing ... all those kind of things which are basic needs for any employee to be performing what is required of them .... Most for the things are necessities and if you do not have them you become stuck ... things like internet through 3G cards for laptops to research".

11MM	46	M	X	DHR	E	10	HR

Adequate resources in the workplace play an important role for employees (3NM–5NM, 10NM–14MM, and 16MM). Sections 2.4.2 and 3.3.1.3 discuss how organisations need to be able to provide a conducive working environment where the working experience is a pleasant one and adequate resources are accessible to employees (Kagwi, 2018; Massoudi and Hamdi, 2017; Khoso et al., 2016). Adequate resources within the working environment not only ensure employees are able to perform their tasks, but they influence, to a great extent, their error rate levels, efficiency and innovativeness, collaboration with other employees, absenteeism and, ultimately, their retention (Chandrasekar, 2011). Respondents 1NF, 2NF, 5NM, 11MM to 14MM, and 16MM felt that the work environment also included own office space for privacy and quiet, where employees could comfortably perform their tasks.

Respondent 2NF commented that

"You cannot hear where I am working. I am sure everyone who is working with me in the cubicles is saying the same thing, they probably wish we could have a place where it is just two people per office and not an open place plan like this ... for it not to be like a call centre. It can be disrupting sometimes."

2NF	43	F	X	CMA	E	14	FI

Aspects of the physical workplace environment, namely office furniture, lights, appeal of the work area (for example, conditions of the walls and ceiling), adequate ventilation (mentioned by 2NF, 11MM–14MM, and 16MM) and clean rest areas (12MF and 14MM) were also referred to as necessities of the work environment that cater to the comfort levels of employees. Although material objects (office arrangement and furniture), stimulus (lights, walls and heating or air conditioner) and clean rest areas may seem unimportant, these physical aspects of the working environment influence employees' attitudes towards the organisation (Khoso et al., 2016). According to Ajala (2012), a conducive workspace allows employees to physically connect with their office environment. They become more comfortable in occupying that place. Respondent 2NF explained that their comfort involved

"Us having access to things like air-conditioners, you see. If we could have access to these things because my group, we sit and work there the whole day, we are going into summer and it is going to be so hot there, whereas some offices have air-conditioners."

Employees are content when they feel that their immediate environment, both physical sensations and emotional states, are in tandem with their obligations (Kagwi, 2018; Samson, Waiganjo and Koima, 2015). By providing adequate access to resources such as safety equipment (gloves or masks), computers and internet access, and ensuring basic hygienic needs are met (by providing clean rest areas like bathrooms, kitchen, and toilets), selected municipalities were showing to respondents 1NF to 5NM, 10NM to 14MM, and 16MM that they care. This demonstrates that the selected municipalities are aware of and have a genuine interest in ensuring that a workplace that is comfortable and upholds specific hygiene standards to assist in the well-being of the employees. Like organisational commitment, the theme of work environment and conditions is multifaceted and includes a wide range of different aspects that act and react on the body and mind of employees (Jain and Kaur, 2014). Therefore, things such as office layout, adequate availability of resources, and physical appearance of selected municipalities influenced, to a certain extent, how respondents 1NF to 5NM, 10NM to 14MM, and 16MM felt about their working environment. Although none of the respondents said they would stay solely because of the work environment and conditions, it was evident that a conducive working environment plays an important role in ensuring employees are happy where they work (1NF–5NM, 10NM–14MM, and 16MM). Thus, it can be deduced that the working environment and conditions influence the behaviour of employees and their decision to remain with the selected municipalities.

5.4.1.3. Organisation commitment

Organisation commitment is another important part of affiliation as it speaks to the loyalty and commitment individuals have towards their organisation (Clark, 2013). With a frequency of 57, the theme was mentioned by 14 respondents (1NF–8NF, 10NM–14MM, and 16MM) who used words such as *"loyal to community (area)" "obligation towards municipality", "sense of belonging",* "*identify with municipal objectives", "alignment of institutional goals", "fear of the unknown", "no alternative job"* and *"responsible for family"* to describe their understanding of organisation commitment. Generally, organisational commitment refers to the bond employees experience with their organisation that normally includes a sense of job involvement, loyalty and belief in the values of the organisation (Ogamba and Nwuche, 2016; Gangai and Agrawal, 2015). The theme is also described as the psychological state that characterises an employee's identification with, involvement in and ultimate relation with an organisation (Lumley, et al., 2011). According to respondents 2NF to 8NF, 10NM, 11MM, 13MM, and 16MM, commitment involves experiencing a bond with the municipality, which sometimes includes feeling a sense of belonging, job involvement, loyalty towards the municipality and/or community and even belief in the values and objectives of the municipality (such as providing service delivery). Respondent 4NM said he is committed and stays in the municipality because of loyalty and dedication to the community:

"The municipality is there to ensure that people are getting services. So, I am always willing to ensure that we uplift the standard of our people. I think that is one of the reasons I am still here ... we must ensure that we change those lives and I think is one of the reasons...my calling is to ensure that people are getting services"

4NM	36	M	X	DCE	E	5	ITS

Like 2NF, 7NF, 8NF, 10NM, and 11MM, respondents 4NM and 13MM identified with the municipal objectives of being able to provide adequate service delivery, which is also a form of job involvement. Respondent 13MM explained that assisting in the provision of service delivery is "his life":

"It's the opportunity that this place has given us to provide basic services to the people of [name of the town] *... it gives me joy to know that people have water, people have electricity,*

people are able to use water-borne sewerage ... bringing services to people is my life, so in my own way, this is my social responsibility ... it gives me joy, so it is a motivating factor for me".

13MM	38	M	X	PGH	TM	11	ITS

Respondents 2NF, 4NM, 7NF, 8NF, 10NM, 11MM, and 13MM see themselves as being a part of their municipalities; they have a desire to make changes in their communities which are aligned to the municipal objective of providing adequate service delivery to all. They are passionate about this and identify themselves as a part of the municipality. Respondent 8NF reported that she chose to stay with the municipality as her personal belief is and continues to be aligned with the municipal's objective of service delivery:

"For me to work in the municipality, mostly you deal with the people. I am a person who likes to deliver services to people. It makes me happy hence, working with the municipality rather than maybe the province or national. For me, it is my choice to work here because I work closely with people ... I am a very loyal person. That's my nature ... I am not a person that likes to hit and run."

8NF	41	F	X	PGM	TM	23	ITS

Organisational commitment can vary. Individuals can feel a sense of duty and obligation, have a connection (a sense of belonging) with and a general affection for the municipality and/or community – or there can be a need beyond the employees' control that requires them to keep working in the institution (e.g. financial responsibilities) (Ogamba and Nwuche, 2016). Respondents 2NF to 8NF, 10NM, 11MM, 13MM, and 16MM felt a sense of commitment and loyalty towards both municipality and community; they expressed their desire to make a change in the community areas. Respondents 2NF to 8NF, 10NM, 11MM, 13MM, and 16MM identified themselves with the municipal objectives and chose to stay (Ogamba and Nwuche, 2016; Döckel, Basson, and Coetzee, 2006). This is known as affective commitment, where employees have emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organisation (Ogamba and Nwuche, 2016). Although respondent 1NF had affective commitment to the municipality, this respondent also mentioned that having a sense of

obligation to stay because of the training and development she received earlier on from the municipality and that there is a fear of the environment or organisational culture elsewhere. Respondent 1NF explained that:

"I am what I am today because of them…they assisted me with training and allowed me to lead, and I was guided. If I leave them then what will happen? I have been here for over ten years. I think along the way I got comfortable, I do not see myself starting all over again…maybe it is the fear…with municipalities it is better the devil you know, than the one you don't."

1NF	35	F	X	Ba	MM	11	FI

This comment demonstrates that individuals can be committed to an organisation for various reasons. Respondent 1NF has a combination of affective, normative and continuance commitment towards her municipality. Like respondents 4NM and 6NF, 1NF is not solely committed to her municipality because of the attachment she feels. 1NF feels a sense of duty towards the municipality because of the opportunities she received at the beginning stages of her career. Respondents 1NF and 6NF indicated that they chose to remain committed to the organisation because of the development and practical training they received in the early stages of their careers. They felt obligated to stay and pass on what they learnt because their managers at the time trusted them, and they gained practical experience as compared to their college experience. This is known as normative commitment (Ogamba and Nwuche, 2016). This form of organisational commitment links up with several other themes in affiliation, namely management style, organisational support, and training and development in the career. In the end, the respondents felt a sense of attachment to their municipalities because the municipalities demonstrated a sense of nurture and caring in various ways. This led the respondents to want to remain in their jobs for at least foreseeable future.

Respondents 1NF, 4NM, and 12MF are committed in response to fear of the unknown, no alternative jobs in the area and a sense of family responsibility. This form of commitment is referred to as continuance commitment, which is based on the costs the respondents associate with leaving the municipalities. As such, the fewer viable alternatives employees have, the stronger will be their continuance commitment to their current employer (Döckel, Basson, and

Coetzee, 2006). These respondents are committed to the municipalities based on fear and the economic benefits they are receiving by staying (Ogamba and Nwuche, 2016). Respondents 4NM and 12MF indicated that their loyalty is largely due to the security their salary brought them; their continuance commitment is linked to the compensation theme that is discussed under direct financial factors (see section 6.2.1). Both respondents 4NM and 12MF have diplomas as their highest qualifications. An alternative way to retain these respondents could be giving them access to opportunities such as career development (study assistance, training or promotion) to show that they are valued, and for them to see a future in their municipalities.

5.4.1.4. Recognition of employees

Recognition of employees had a frequency of 27 and was mentioned in 10 interviews (1NF–4NM, 8NF, 9NF, and 12MF–15MM). Harrison (2005) describes the theme as a form of acknowledgement of an employee's effort, which may have gone beyond normal expectations. Recognition is about acknowledging and appreciating the effort employees have put into performing their tasks and it demonstrates to employees that their organisation is aware of them and the effort they have made in their work performance. This can be illustrated through feedback and organisational support (Amoatemaa and Kyeremeh, 2016). Respondents used words such as *"appreciation from community area"*, *"employee of the month"* and *"social activities and gatherings"* to describe the theme (1NF–4NM, 8NF, 9NF, and 12MF–15MM). Although it appears that the theme is not a key influencer of employees' loyalty and attachment to the organisation, recognition of employees is linked with themes such as management style, organisational support and feedback. According to respondents 1NF to 4NM, 8NF, 9NF, and 12MF to 15MM, recognition can be as simple as saying "thank you" for work performed well. Respondent 2NF describes recognition of employees as appreciation from the community citizens or the municipality for a job well done:

"At least they [the municipality] *appreciate it when a huge amount is paid back into the banking account.* [Respondent 2NF had managed to get a client to pay an outstanding debt] *They* [supervisor or management] *will call to thank you and tell you to keep up the good work you see … also at the end of the year they will give the overall record of what happened and then be thankful to a department that performed well."*

2NF	43	F	X	CMA	E	14	FI

Recognition plays a role in how employees affiliate themselves to the organisation. Section 3.3.1.7 of Chapter 3 discusses employees' need to feel valued and appreciated by the organisation. Whether in the form of inclusion and opinions being valued, respect and admiration, or general support from management and the organisation, employees want to be recognised. Amoatemaa and Kyeremeh (2016) as well as Harrison (2005) emphasise that recognition needs to be continuous for it to have an influence on employees. Amoatemaa and Kyeremeh (2016) argue that recognition should be continuous feedback on the contribution employees are making. The selected municipalities (managers and supervisor) in this study are encouraged to reflect not only work performance, but also the personal dedication of employees (e.g. public praising). Such actions may even motivate and positively influence other employees.

5.4.1.5. Organisational support

Organisational support is the degree to which employees believe their organisation values their contributions, cares about their well-being, and fulfils socio-emotional needs (Eisenberger, et al., 1997). Generally, it refers to a support system provided by the selected municipalities (1NF, 5NM, 7NF). Mention of organisational support was made eight times, with three respondents (1NF, 5NM, 7NF) referring to the theme as "*support from the organisation*". Although organisational support had the lowest frequency in the affiliation factor, the theme was closely linked with management style, work environment and conditions, and recognition of employees. Respondent 7NF said that a support system enabled her to engage more, learn and work in the municipality:

"You wanted to learn and work, you were excited and there was a support system...now I am here alone to do things, not that I like to be led, but there were people there who knew their jobs. There were town planners, about six of us beside our manager and our director whom were also town planners."

7NF	29	F	X	BTech	E	7	ITS

Organisational support is a way for respondents to feel their municipalities are there for them (1NF, 5NM, and 7NF). For instance, respondent 7NF suggested that organisational support can be demonstrated by having managers, supervisors and co-workers who have expertise and an

understanding of the tasks she is required to perform, in order for her to learn, engage with and grow from. Altinoz, et al. (2016) refer to organisational support as the methods that organisations use to show their appreciation and consider employees' happiness. Whether in the form of supportive management, leadership style and teamwork, conducive working environment and conditions, or organisational rewards and recognition, organisational support looks at structures in place to ensure that employees feel that they are cared for and supported by their employer.

The overall decision of respondents to remain with selected municipalities is highly influenced by their affiliation (management style, good working environment and organisational commitment, recognition of employees and organisation support). It can be deduced from the findings that respondents' behaviour and perceptions about the municipality, relationship with colleagues and the environment is largely based on the employer–employee relationship, which is influenced by management style. It is clear from the findings that respondents 1NF to 5NM, 7NF to 9NF, and 11MM to 16MM value a combination of paternalistic and democratic management style. Respondents want to be engaged and given feedback and have their plans or ideas considered when decisions are being taken by management. Essentially, municipalities need managers who are present, supportive and provide guidance in order for employees to trust management and remain in the institution (1NF–16MM).

In addition, respondents 2NF to 8NF, 10NM, 11MM, 13MM, and 16MM see themselves as a part of the municipality owing to their emotional attachment (i.e. respondents are attached and have a bond with their municipalities). They identify themselves with the municipal objectives because they desire to make an impact in society through service delivery, therefore these respondents chose to stay. However, some employees (1NF, 4NM, and 6NF) also chose to remain because of a sense of duty and obligation towards the municipality (normative commitment) and others (1NF, 4NM, and 12MF) because of the economic benefits associated with the job (continuance commitment). Like organisational commitment, work environment and conditions include a range of different aspects. It can be deduced from the findings that a conducive working environment that is physically appealing, has a degree of privacy and serenity, and offers adequate resources for tasks to be performed, has a positive influence on the behaviour of employees and their decision to remain in the selected municipalities (1NF–5NM, 10NM–14MM, and 16MM). Essentially, having a work environment where the working

conditions are favourable enables employees to feel appreciated and to want to continue working for their institution.

5.4.2. Career

Subsection 5.4.2 discusses findings relating to the career factor with Table 5.4 illustrating the themes associated with the factor, and the words used to give meaning to the various themes.

TABLE 5.4: CAREER FACTOR

Theme	Codes/words	*f*
Training		**80**
1NF, 2NF, 4NM, 5NM, 6NF, 7NF, 8NF, 10NM, 11MM, 12MF, 13MM, 14MM, 15MM, 16MM	Training/getting practical experience	80
Personal growth		**77**
1NF, 2NF, 3NM, 4NM, 5NM,6NF, 8NF, 9NF, 10NM, 11MM, 12MF, 13MM, 14MM, 15MM, 16MM	Study assistance/funds	47
1NF, 3NM, 5NM, 6NF, 8NF, 9NF, 10NM, 11MM, 12MF, 14MM, 15MM, 16MM	Attendance of courses/workshops	24
2NF, 3NM, 11MM, 12MF, 14MM	Being an understudy/ succession plan	6
Advancement		**29**
1NF, 2NF, 4NM, 5NM, 6NF, 7NF, 8NF, 11MM, 12MF, 14MM, 15MM, 16MM	Higher position/Promotion	27
2NF, 5NM	Placement or transfer	2
Employment security		**15**
1NF, 2NF, 3NM, 4NM, 5NM, 7NF, 10NM, 12MF	Job security/ permanent job/secure job	15
Stretch assignment		**1**
5NM		1

All 16 respondents shared their opinions regarding career. For the career factor, the following were the emerging themes:

- Training

- Personal growth

- Advancement

- Employment security

- Stretch assignment

As the second most frequently cited employee retention factor, career emerged with a total frequency of 202 mentions, with *training* at 80, *personal growth* at 77, *advancement* at 29, *employment security* at 15 and *stretch assignment* with a single mention, as the emerging themes (see Table 5.4). Overall, the career factor refers to the long-term opportunities for development and advancement for employees within an organisation (Bussin and Toerien, 2015). Respondents 1NF to 16MM described the career factor as the exposure and access to opportunities to learn something new about their municipalities, which could be in the form of practical experience or training, and the development towards their career paths (e.g. promotions). Literature also describes the career factor as a formal process in which the organisation nurtures its key employees (Nel and Werner, 2017; Coetzee, Roythorne-Jacobs and Mensele, 2016). This could be implemented in the form of managerial interventions and support services such as opportunities for personal growth, succession planning or formal mentoring and coaching, training, career counselling and guidance (Coetzee, Roythorne-Jacobs and Mensele, 2016; Bussin and Toerien, 2015; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009) (see Section 3.5.5). According to Gerber, Nel and van Dyk (1995), this process is done by matching employees' needs, abilities and goals with the current or future needs of the organisation. For instance, employees need to be familiar with the organisation, its objectives and daily tasks. This need could be fulfilled by continuous training and development through workshop attendance for example. According to respondent 4NM, career path is the exposure and access to opportunities, for instance training or promotion:

"I will say it is better to get a position that will expose you to those different areas of engineering. From there you can see that I need this training so that I can be able to do A B C ... you need to get to a position, then you get exposed to that, then you swim around it and see

the direction, then you can also indicate this is the course that I am looking for that they can send you based on that".

4NM	36	M	X	DCE	E	5	ITS

From respondents like 4NM, it can be deduced that the career factor is aimed at developing employees. Career is an intervention aimed at matching employees' needs, taking into consideration their abilities and goals with the needs of the organisation. Although it is the joint responsibility of the organisation and employees (Lues, 2014; Gerber, Nel and van Dyk, 1995), employees need support and access to these opportunities from supervisors and from their municipalities.

5.4.2.1. Training

Training emerged as the third highest theme from 14 respondents. Respondents 1NF to 2NF, 4NM to 8NF, and 10NM to 16MM used words like "*practical experience"* and *"training"* to describe the theme. These respondents believed that training is another way in which municipalities demonstrate that they value their employees. It is a chance for growth, as the municipality teaches them, in a practical way, how to perform tasks beyond what they have learnt at school or in previous jobs (1NF, 2NF, 4NM–8NF, and 10NM). According to several authors, training is a process whereby the knowledge, skills and behaviour of employees is modified (Amos, et al., 2016; Erasmus et al., 2013; Ng'ethe, Iravo, and Namusonge, 2012; Gerber, Nel and van Dyk, 1995). Training is initiated with the purpose of achieving organisational objectives, and importantly, improving employees' commitment to the organisation. Respondents 1NF, 2NF, 4NM to 8NF, and 10NM indicated that training it is a learning process, it can change their competencies, feelings towards the job and their behaviour towards staying in the municipality. Respondent 6NF supported this by observing that:

"They spent resources and time developing me, therefore they cannot lose me … I think training and developing me was the best way they retained me because from varsity I knew nothing. Yes, I had the theory, but I needed the practical experience."

6NF	38	F	X	Ba	MM	12	FI

According to respondents 1NF, 2NF, 4NM to 8NF, and 10NM, training is a form of human capital investment which allows them to better perform their tasks. Training involves on-the-job acquisition of skills to enhance the capability of workers in their interactions with various organisational tasks (Maserumule, 2014). The public sector should instil a culture of learning within the public servants to improve the level of service delivery and their commitment to the institutions they work in (Wessels, 2014). Respondent 16MM commented:

"If you expose people and then they see that there is a chance of growing in whatever area they are doing and training, they will stay. If these chances are not there and people do not see themselves growing in the different areas of the life, obviously they will be discouraged."

16MM	55	M	BB	Ba	MM	17	ITS

By training employees continuously and enhancing their capabilities, organisations create a sense of loyalty (Maserumule, 2014; Ng'ethe, Iravo, and Namusonge, 2012). If done correctly, access to practical experience encourages employees to feel that their municipality values them. Employees are therefore able to see growth opportunities within the municipality, which gives meaning to their current job (1NF, 6NF, and 16MM).

5.4.2.2. Personal growth

Personal growth and training are closely linked as they both address the development of individuals. They are both forms of advancement opportunities (Nel and Werner, 2017; Ng'ethe, Iravo and Namusonge, 2012; Dockel 2003). Fifteen respondents (1NF–6NF, 8NF–16MM) described personal growth using three phrases such as *"study assistance fund"*, *"attendance of course and workshops"* and '*being an understudy "succession plan".* As the fifth highest theme arising from the respondents' responses, personal growth was mentioned 77 times. Respondents understood that personal growth was offered in the opportunities made available to them and that this was the municipality's way of improving and developing them in the long run (1NF–6NF, and 8NF–10NM). Personal growth is a form of developmental progress for employees; it does not necessarily mean that an employee has been given a promotion, but rather has been given access to informal and formal educational programmes, job experience, relationships, and assessments of personality and abilities that in the end help employees prepare for the future (Nel and Werner, 2017). Personal growth is long term; it is

focused on learning and providing the chance to grow in and out of the workplace. Respondent 1NF stated:

"There is a need for development here. The development I am talking about (is not like we don't have workshops; we update, you know), I mean a person being able to do a course, like a course that is one year or three years that will focus on the areas we need consultants for. For instance, I have a B. Com; maybe the development could be an Honours degree."

1NF	35	F	X	Ba	MM	11	FI

Like 1NF, respondents 2NF to 6NF, and 8NF to 16MM indicated that they wanted to grow and develop. These respondents want to study further in order to better themselves; respondents 5NM, 12MF, and 16MM even believe that it is the municipality's responsibility to provide access to, for instance, funds for education. Respondents 1NF to 6NF, and 8NF to 16MM felt that this action demonstrates a level of commitment the employer and municipalities have towards them, showing that these employees' interests were a priority. Respondent 5NM said:

"Look, obviously they must make sure that we get more training, bursary for education. I am not done when it comes to education; I believe that we should not stop developing ourselves and developing our portfolios by learning. They must provide educational opportunities ... they have got responsibility to support us when we want to study."

5NM	33	M	X	BTech	MM	12	ITS

Like 5NM, the respondents 1NF to 6NF, and 8NF to 16MM all wish to further their studies regardless of their age and stage in their career. For instance, respondent 5NM is a 33-year-old middle manager with 12 years' experience within a municipal context and would like to complete a postgraduate degree or a course to enhance his work performance capabilities. Career development in the form of personal growth and training allows for learning and continuous improvement in the municipality to take place for employees. According to respondents 1NF to 6NF, and 8NF to 16MM, personal growth can also be described as opportunities to attend workshops and courses and becoming understudies, which was not

currently happening in the selected municipalities (11MM–16MM). Respondents 1NF, 3NM, 5NM, 6NF, 8NF, 9NF to 12MF, and 14MM to 16MM want to update their skills outside the municipalities through attending courses and workshops. Five respondents (2NF, 3NM, 11MM, 12MF, and 14MM) mentioned succession planning. According to respondent 11MM, getting the opportunity to become a deputy is something that is currently not happening in his municipality:

"Also we do not have this kind of approach, you know if you are a Director you must have a deputy, even if you are manager it is good to have that deputy so that you invest in those people, in a way you are also motiving them. The lower level workers will see this happening and they will be motivated…"

11MM	46	M	X	DHR	E	10	HR

Being a deputy or temporary stand-in not only gives a better understanding of management's roles and responsibilities, it allows employees to visualise their career path growing and developing within the municipality (2NF, 3NM, 11MM, 12MF, and 14MM). Respondents 12MF, 14MM, and 15MM desired an opportunity to be deputies or stand-ins in a managerial position, since advancement (i.e. promotion to a higher position) was not possible within their municipalities because of the limitations in the hierarchical structure of smaller municipalities.

5.4.2.3. Advancement

Advancement was mentioned 29 times, with 12 respondents (1NF, 2NF, 4NM–8NF, 11MM, 12MF, and 14MM–16MM) referring to the theme as *"promotion"*, *"higher position"*, *"transfer"*, and *"placement"*. According to Nel and Werner (2017), advancement means changing jobs or shifting to a higher organisational level with a new job title, possibly more authority and responsibility. Generally, the findings describe the theme in a similar way: according to respondents 1NF, 2NF, 4NM to 8NF, 11MM, 12MF, and 14MM to 16MM, advancement is moving up the levels of municipalities or the possibility of being transferred to another division to better suit their capabilities.

Respondent 8NF commented that advancement is difficult in smaller municipalities:

"In an area like this where there is a small municipality, you don't have much chance to go up the ladder."

8NF	41	F	Y	PGM	TM	23	ITS

Often in smaller municipalities, there is limited room for advancement in the form of promotions. Employees eventually leave their municipality to find better developmental opportunities elsewhere. Some of the respondents (1NF, 12MF, 14MM, 15MM, and 16MM) indicated that they found themselves compromising their possible advancements by staying employed in the municipalities, and that improving developmental opportunities such as training would influence them and many younger employees positively.

5.4.2.4. Employment security

Employment security emerged 15 times in the interviews, with respondents 1NF to 5NM, 7NF, 10NM, and 12MF using phrases such as *"permanent job", "secure job"* and even *"job security"* to describe the theme. Respondents generally referred to employment security as the stability of municipalities and their positions within local government institutions (1NF–5NM, 7NF, 10NM, and 12MF). Fullerton and Wallace (2007) define employment security as a set of subjective feelings about the future security of an individual's employment situation. Essentially, for respondents 1NF to 5NM, 7NF, 10NM, and 12MF, this meant the assurance that they would be able to hold onto their jobs for as long as they were willing to work within their stipulated conditions of services. Several respondents (1NF, 2NF, 4NM, 7NF, and 12MF) indicated that employment security was a concern for them, even though they were permanently employed in their municipalities (apart from the directors who are political appointees). These respondents closely linked their feelings about employment security with the political climate of their municipalities (further discussed in section 6.2.2.1). Although employees viewed employment security as an important theme, they realised that owing to the political nature of municipalities, it becomes difficult for them to move into and between municipalities, whether it is for a promotion or training within another municipality. Respondent 1NF even described municipalities as political environments where politicians' battle lines are always drawn:

"With municipalities, its better the devil you know than the one you don't. There is a lot of political influence when it comes to municipalities."

1NF	35	F	X	Ba	MM	11	FI

Various respondents said that municipalities are highly politicised; it would therefore be unwise to take up a contract position in this environment, as they could never be certain of a contract renewal (1NF–5NM, 7NF, 10NM, 12MF). According to respondent 5NM, employment security – especially employees' feelings about the stability of the institution – becomes an issue because of the political climate in municipalities. It can be concluded that the political climate in municipalities influences employees' views of employment security.

5.4.2.5. Stretch assignment

Stretch assignment was the only theme mentioned once in the category of career factors by respondent 5NM. According to Davis (2016), "stretch assignments" are rapid developmental activities designed to develop employees' experience and expertise outside a comfort zone or regular routine (David, 2016). Respondents 5NM commented to say that he is influenced to continue working in the municipality because of the division he is managing. He feels that the assignments allocated to him allow him to push beyond his current capabilities and grow.

"In my previous municipality, I was managing one section of housing which is social rental housing … I moved and stay because I am managing all the categories of housing, the rental, RDP, and other categories of housing."

5NM	33	M	X	BTech	MM	12	ITS

Stretch assignments usually occur when employees undertake tasks which require them to go beyond their regular routine or outside their expertise for growth and development purposes. Although the reasoning of respondent 5NM is related to his job, he continues to be given tasks that require him to go beyond what he knows. He is being stretched in order to grow and develop.

Ultimately, the degree to which all respondents perceive their chances to grow, develop and being promoted within their municipalities plays a crucial role in their commitment and retention. Training and personal growth are closely linked as both address the development of employees. Career themes such as training, personal growth and advancement positively influence employees' attitude towards staying in their jobs. Employees view career development as an investment to both their employers (municipalities) and themselves (1NF–16MM); municipal objectives are achieved because of the improvement in knowledge of employees. Although promotion in smaller municipalities is limited, any assistance offered through training, resources to complete courses, workshops and especially university, allowed employees to visualise a future in the municipality (1NF–16MM).

5.4.3. Work content

This subsection discusses findings relating to the work content factor with Table 5.5 illustrating the themes associated with the factor and words used to give meaning to the various themes.

TABLE 5.5: WORK CONTENT FACTOR

Theme	Codes/words	f
Meaningfulness		**57**
1NF,2NF, 3NM, 5NM, 6NF, 7NF, 8NF, 9NF, 10NM, 11MM, 13MM, 14MM, 15MM, 16MM	Job aligned with personal meaning/passion	36
1NF, 2NF, 5NM, 7NF, 8NF, 9NF, 13MM, 16MM	Loyalty to the profession/work or project	17
8NF, 10NM, 13MM, 16MM	Sense of ownership of the work	4
Challenge		**38**
1NF, 3NM, 5NM, 6NF, 8NF, 9NF, 10NM, 13MM, 15MM	Challenging and interesting work	28
1NF, 3NM, 5NM, 10NM, 15MM	Solving problems	10
Autonomy		**18**
1NF, 3NM, 8NF, 13MM	Trusted with division/representing institution	6
3NM, 5NM, 8NF, 13MM	Power to make decisions	6
1NF, 4NM, 5NM, 8NF	Left alone to work/Independent	6
Feedback		**17**
1NF, 4NM, 7NF, 9NF, 11MM, 12MF, 14MM	Comments from community members or supervisors	17
Variety		**7**
3NM, 5NM, 8NF, 9NF	Variety of tasks/Exposure to different tasks	7

All 16 respondents shared their opinions regarding work content. For the work content factor, the following themes were identified:

- Meaningfulness

- Challenge

- Autonomy

- Feedback

- Variety

Work content emerged as the third most frequent employee retention factor with a total frequency of 137 mentions, where meaningfulness was at 57, challenge at 38, autonomy at 18, feedback at 17 and variety at 7 mentions (see Table 5.5). Respondents 1NF to 16MM all described work content as the satisfaction and meaning they get from doing the job. According to literature, work content factor are job-related elements that encourage employees to stay in the organisation; they involve the stimulation received from the tasks assigned to employees (Ely, 2014; Dockel, 2003). The work content factor refers to job characteristics such as variety of work, freedom and the opportunities employees must solve challenging problems. Essentially, the work content factor addresses the actual job and the kind of influence it has on employees staying in the municipality. According to respondent 5NM, there is purpose in the work he is doing; he can assist, make a difference and be part of the solution:

"Now, there was a housing crisis in this municipality, one of the things that motivated me to come is because I want to be part of the solution. Because they were burning cars and tires in [location of the municipality] *... I wanted to come and assist. I believe I can make a difference."*

5NM	33	M	X	BTech	MM	12	ITS

Kochanski and Ledford (2001) point out that skilled and experienced employees prefer work that is stimulating and purposeful. For respondents who have formal qualifications and years of experience, like respondent 5NM (with a degree and 12 years of working experience in a municipal context), the work needs to be encouraging and stimulating (2NF, 6NF, 8NF, 10NM, 15MM, and 16MM). Work cannot just be tasks that need to be completed: there needs to be a purpose, meaning and something interesting about successfully completing the task in order to

mentally stimulate employees and inspire others to do the same (Kochanski and Ledford, 2001).

5.4.3.1. Meaningfulness

With a frequency of 57, respondents 1NF to 3NM, 5NM to 11MM, and 13MM to 16MM used the words *"job aligned with personal meaning or passion", "loyalty to the profession or project"* and *"sense of ownership of the work"* to describe meaningfulness. As mentioned in section 3.5.6.4, meaningfulness refers to people feeling worthwhile, useful, and valuable, that they make a difference, and are not taken for granted in their work-related activities and experience (De Crom and Rothmann, 2018; Albrecht, 2013; Steger, Dik and Duffy, 2012). This is an important theme that speaks to the feelings and connection respondents have with their job or aspects of their job. Essentially, it is the psychological condition at work, reflected in the extent to which employees invest themselves in their job role and tasks. For respondents 1NF to 3NM, 5NM to 11MM, and 13MM to 16MM, the work bears significance and allows them to perform normal organisational tasks for a greater purpose. These particular respondents said that meaningfulness is the connection and passion they feel for their work, and that their jobs were aligned with personal meaning, which is service. Respondent 7NF explained that she has a connection with her job. One of the municipal goals is aligned to something she is passionate about, namely re-addressing the issues caused by the apartheid regime through adequate service delivery:

"We are serving people. For me I think my vision is to see black people get into the direction that we want them to. Considering that I am in town planning, I would want to see spatial change in our communities because we know what apartheid did, people were segregated. So those are the goals of the municipality which are in line with my goals".

7NF	29	F	Y	BTech	E	7	ITS

These aforementioned 14 respondents indicated that their jobs have a deeper meaning because they can serve their communities. Among the goals of municipalities is addressing the ills brought about by the apartheid regime, through the provision of housing, water, sanitation and electricity to residents. Municipalities aim to offer access to basic services to all, and this goal has a personal meaning to the 14 respondents because they are therefore able to serve their

communities. The same respondents (1NF–3NM, 5NM–11MM, and 13MM–16MM) argued that their jobs have a greater purpose due to the nature of what municipalities are attempting to achieve in providing service delivery to communities that have previously not had no access. Respondent 5NM commented:

"What motivates me is giving people security of tenure, giving people houses. You know, when a person enters their house, that really makes me very happy. I am happy to see a person happy by owing a property. Remember we are coming from a past that was very difficult, where [the] *majority of black people were displaced.[1]It is very important that I make the difference in peoples' lives and tangible difference .... With me you can see the difference if you move from a shack to a formal structure. That's what makes me wake up every morning."*

5NM	33	M	X	BTech	MM	12	ITS

Meaningful work can also come from employees' loyalty towards their profession, concerning a project (1NF, 2NF, 5NM, 7NF–9NF, 13MM, and 16MM), or a sense of ownership of a work project (8NF, 10NM, 13MM, and 16MM). For instance, some employees might choose to stay in a municipality because they started a long-term project (e.g. building thousands of RDP houses[2] or restructuring a town hall) and want to complete that project. Respondents 5NM and 7NF, for instance, are involved in town planning and want to achieve something greater for their division. They are passionate about ensuring adequate shelter (housing) for their community areas, want to make a difference in the lives of the community area they are serving and have chosen to stay until the completion of their RDP house project. These respondents believe that their work is meaningful and will continue to remain committed to their municipalities if they believe there is purpose in their work (De Crom and Rothmann, 2018; Albrecht, 2013; Steger, Dik and Duffy, 2012; Dockel, 2003).

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[1] Respondent 5NM explains the Land Act of 1913 and spatial segregation through land dispossession, municipalities' role in addressing that ill and his passion to make a difference to ensure that previously disadvantaged citizens have shelter.

[2] RDP (reconstruction and development programme) houses are part of a government-funded social housing project in South Africa. They are classified as government property, with no beneficiaries attached. The houses are allocated to homeless families, low-income families, and people with disabilities (Dugard, et al., 2017).

5.4.3.2. Challenge

Another way in which respondents receive satisfaction from their jobs is by performing work that they find interesting and engaging. In the interviews conducted, with a frequency of 38, nine respondents (1NF, 3NM, 5NM, 6NF, 8NF–10NM, 13MM, and 15MM) mentioned wanting or enjoying challenging work. Challenging work can be described as work that stimulates the minds of employees. According to Ely (2014), this theme refers to interesting and satisfying work that does not bore employees to the point where they feel unrequired in the workplace. Respondents 1NF, 3NM, 5NM, 6NF, 8NF to 10NM, 13MM, and 15MM felt this way. For them, challenging work entails performing tasks that are dynamic and enjoyable. Respondent 3NM explained that he liked challenging work:

"I am always confronted with new challenges because I am in the forefront. I deal with people and wherever there are people, there are always dynamics, yes ... I have always seen challenges within the job and that has always kept me going.

3NM	56	M	BB	PGH	TM	10	FI

For these nine respondents, their work interests and stimulates them; they can find solutions to challenging tasks and there is a sense of purpose in their efforts. Challenging work is closely linked to the theme of variety (see section 5.4.3.5 for further discussion).

5.4.3.3. Autonomy

Six respondents (1NF, 3NM–5NM, 8NF and 13MM) described autonomy in terms of the position of trust and power the municipality has placed them in; it is sometimes associated with a form of authority over a division. Dockel (2003) describes the theme as an individual having substantial freedom, independence and discretion to schedule work and determine the procedures used in carrying it out. It is the capacity to make informed decisions. Respondents 1NF, 3NM to 5NM, 8NF, and 13MM used words like being *"trusted with division", "representing institution"*, *"authority to make decisions"* and *"left alone to work"* to describe what autonomy means to them. They felt that autonomy was being trusted with a division and possibly representing the institution. For respondents 1NF, 3NM, and 5NM, autonomy presented a chance for them to represent the municipality at provincial meetings and to be

entrusted with a relevantly new division. Respondent 1NF commented to say that being given the authority over a division positively influenced their feelings regarding their municipality:

"I would say trusting me as employee. Remember that this was a new section, but they trusted me enough to know that I could do this. So, they trusted me with managing this section."

1NF	35	F	X	Ba	MM	11	FI

Having power to make decisions and being trusted to perform tasks are important aspects of autonomy. According to respondent 3NM, being trusted with the authority to make decisions showed him that the municipality relied on and valued him, which gave meaning to his work:

"Being given an opportunity to make decisions, I would say I am valued .... If I were to look at the position that I am in, as a director I have the authority to make decisions ... it shows an element of trust from the side of the municipality but in a different way."

3NM	56	M	BB	PGH	TM	10	FI

For respondents like 3NM, working in an environment where one is a part of an organisation that trusts you, where one has authority, demonstrates being valued. Respondents 1NF, 4NM 5NM, and 8NF also named being *"left alone to work"*, and not being continuously watched while performing their tasks, as a form of independence.

5.4.3.4. Feedback

Feedback occurs when an organisation is communicating to its employees based on their work performance (Lunenburg, 2011). Feedback was mentioned 17 times in the interviews by seven respondents (1NF, 4NM, 7NF, 9NF, 11MM, 12MF, and 14MM) talking about the importance of having feedback from their municipalities and supervisors as a form of engagement. Respondents used the phrase *"comments from community members or supervisors"* to describe their understanding of the theme. For respondents 1NF, 4NM, 7NF, 9NF, 11MM, 12MF, and 14MM, feedback comes from the community they are serving and directly from their municipalities. According to respondent 4NM,

"you not only get feedback from the municipality, you get feedback from the people outside because people can see what we are doing ... looking at the positive results that are coming from people outside ... they write to the municipality saying thank you for the work you have done on certain areas."

4NM	36	M	X	DCE	E	5	ITS

According to Lunenburg (2011), feedback is the direction and information provided by the organisation about the effectiveness of a person's performance. It is the organisation's way of speaking to employees about how they are progressing and how they can possibly improve. The respondents mentioned above indicated that feedback is linked to management style and communication within the municipalities. Managers can engage with employees through feedback; they are aware of the projects that employees are taking on and provide input and guidance (Dockel, 2003). Through effective feedback, municipalities can engage with and communicate with their employees; they are able to offer direction, and support, and demonstrate appreciation for the work performed.

5.4.3.5. Variety

Respondents 3NM, 5NM, 8NF, and 9NF described the theme of variety as job descriptions or work tasks that are diverse in nature. Seven times, respondents used phrases such as *"variety of tasks"* and *"exposure to different tasks"* to describe variety in their own words. Skilled and experienced employees often find repetitive work not challenging enough; they prefer tasks that stimulate them in order to remain in an organisation (Kochanski and Ledford, 2001). Respondent 3NM commented on what exposure to different tasks meant to him:

"I must say, the variety of tasks of what I have been doing, that is what has kept me going ... there is always constant change."

3NM	56	M	BB	PGH	TM	10	FI

For professionals, mental stimulation is vital to how they feel about the work they are doing. This is evident from the respondents 3NM, 5NM, 8NF, and 9NF who had between 8 to 23

years of working experience in municipalities. Like 3NM, respondents 5NM, 8NF, and 9NF explained that they could easily get bored and prefer to be challenged by the complexity of their tasks. They had already been exposed to several issues within the municipal context and wanted to feel that they were still learning something new, hence the need for tasks that challenge, stimulate and have variety.

In conclusion, it is stimulating and interesting aspects of the job that influence skilled and experienced employees to remain with the selected municipalities (De Crom and Rothmann, 2018; Albrecht, 2013; Steger, Dik and Duffy, 2012). Respondents 1NF to 3NM, 5NM to 11MM, and 13MM to 16MM found meaningfulness an important element of their work. By performing meaningful work, these employees felt useful, valuable, and that they were making a difference. In the end, meaningfulness ensured that respondents saw purpose in their work, and that there was an alignment between the municipalities' goal of adequate service delivery and their own passion to serve, or their loyalty towards projects. In addition, for skilled and experienced individuals (1NF–3NM, 5NM–11MM, and 13MM–16MM), work needs to be challenging, varied, and provide some form of feedback.

5.5. SUMMARY

This chapter partially presents and discusses the findings related to employee retention in selected municipalities. Chapter 5 began with an overview of the biographical indicators of the sample to contextualise the overall findings (section 5.2). The results were presented and discussed relevant to the research objectives in sections 5.3 and 5.4. Section 5.3 focused on the first research objective. Current employee retention factors were identified through a process of grouping the associated themes, as illustrated in Tables 5.1 and 5.2. Affiliation appeared to be the most influential factor, with six of its associated themes appearing a total of 300 times. Subsequently, career, work content, direct financial, external force, work–life balance and indirect financial factors were presented in terms of significance. Both career and work content factors have five associated themes each, direct financial with two associated themes, work–life balance with five associated themes, external factor with six associated themes and an indirect financial factor with one theme. Some themes were closely linked and therefore discussed together to better understand the influence they had on respondents. Chapter 5 concluded with section 5.4 which focused on the second research objective. The descriptions and perceptions of the three most influential employee retention factors and their associated themes were discussed. These factors were affiliation (emotional attachment to

municipalities and community area), career (desire to develop a career path) and work content (job characteristics). The remaining four retention factors are discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF THE EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS OF DIRECT FINANCIAL, EXTERNAL FORCES, WORK–LIFE BALANCE AND INDIRECT FINANCIAL

6.1. OVERVIEW

Chapter 6 discusses the remaining findings of the study related to employee retention in selected municipalities. This chapter is a continuation of the employee retention factors identified by research respondents in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 focuses on the second research objective, which is to ascertain the perceptions of employees regarding the employee existing retention factors. This chapter presents descriptions and perceptions of the remaining employee retention factors (and associated themes), as identified in the previous chapter, namely direct financial, external forces, work–life balance and indirect financial factors. To conclude, a brief summary of the chapter is provided.

6.2. DESCRIPTION AND PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYEE RETENTION FACTORS

Affiliation, career and work content factors were identified as the three most influential retention factors, discussed in the previous chapter. As discussed in Chapter 4, this study uses the directed (deductive) content analysis process which involves finding words, phrases and sentences from the data, and matching and relating them to existing concepts in the theoretical framework (the retention factors framework for existing employees by Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009) (Assarroudi et al., 2018; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). Themes arising from the interviews which fell outside the theoretical framework when using the inductive approach have been grouped under external forces and are discussed under section 6.2.2.

The subsections which follow explore the meaning and perceptions of direct and indirect financial factors, work–life balance, and external forces (with their associated themes) within a municipal context in relation to employee retention. Some of the themes were closely linked and, although they are presented separately in terms of frequencies, they are discussed together to better understand the influence they had on the respondents.

6.2.1. Direct financial

This subsection discusses findings relating to the direct financial factor with Table 6.1 illustrating the themes associated with the factor and words used to give meaning to the various themes.

TABLE 6.1: DIRECT FINANCIAL FACTOR

Theme	Codes/words	f
Base Salary		**84**
1NF, 2NF, 3NM, 4NM, 5NM, 6NF, 7NF, 8NF, 9NF, 10NM, 11MM, 12MF, 13MM, 14MM, 15MM, 16MM	Compensation/salary/ remuneration	84
Incentives		**35**
5NM, 7NF, 8NF	Scare skills allowance	6
1NF, 3NM, 4NM, 5NM, 7NF, 8NF, 11MM, 14MM, 15MM, 16MM	Car allowance/vehicle locomotion	20
3NM, 5NM, 7NF, 10NM, 14MM	Phone allowance	8
1NF	Uniform assistance	1

All 16 respondents shared their opinions regarding the direct financial factor, for which the following were the emerging themes:

- Base salary

- Incentives

In the 16 interviews conducted, the direct financial factor was mentioned 119 times. Only two themes, namely base salary at a frequency of 84 mentions and incentives at 35 mentions, emerged in comparison to the six themes discussed under the retention factors framework for existing employees by Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009) in Chapter 3. The direct financial factor was the third most frequent factor (refer to Table 5.2 and Table 6.1), with respondents 1NF to 16MM describing it as what their municipalities compensate them for work performed, essentially the financial support they receive or desire. According to Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009), the direct financial factor is a tangible pay-related factor that can be in the form of a salary, overtime pay or even incentives. This is usually an exchange for employees'

services, whether in cash or item value, and is therefore able to satisfy most employees' basic needs (Nel and Werner, 2017; Nazia and Begum, 2013). The base salary component (see Table 6.1) of this factor appears to be an important reason why respondents remain in their respective municipalities.

6.2.1.1. Base salary

At the second highest frequency, base salary was mentioned 84 times, with all 16 respondents discussing the theme's importance to them (see Table 6.1). Respondents 1NF to 16MM described the theme using words such as "compensation", "salary" and "remuneration". Generally, base salary represents what municipalities compensate employees for work performed, it allows them to support their families and themselves (1NF–16MM). According to literature, base salary is vital; employees depend on their earnings to sustain themselves and their lifestyles (Stoltz, 2015; Das and Baruah, 2013; Khan, et al., 2012). They are able fulfil their financial and material desires because of their salaries (Swanepoel, et al., 2014; Das and Baruah, 2013; Deloitte, 2012; Milkovich and Newman, 2004). With their salaries, respondents indicated that they could acquire things of value, maintain their lifestyle, and support their families (1NF–16MM). Respondent 15MM said:

"Getting paid is important. Definitely, because there is a certain lifestyle that you have to maintain …. If I cannot maintain the lifestyle, then I would leave – I would be forced to leave."

15MM	57	M	BB	Ba	E	24	ITS

Respondents 1NF to 14MM, and 16MM agreed with 15MM, that one can do very little without a stable form of income. A salary ensures the economic survival of its employees (Maserumule, 2014, p.72). Respondent 2NF mentioned that:

"You have children that need to be fed and go to school; you need to be clothed when you come to work. What do you come to work with? Transport … and transport needs to be paid, so getting compensation at the end is very helpful although it is small."

2NF	43	F	X	CMA	E	14	FI

Respondent 4NM commented to say, one can do nothing without a salary:

"As I have indicated before, the employer needs to look at ensuring the salary of the employee because you cannot do anything without your salary ... I need to be able to cover my standard of living that I want and be able to provide for my family."

4NM	36	M	X	DCE	E	5	ITS

Employees need their salaries because of the role income plays in their ability to provide for themselves and others in their care. According to respondents 1NF to 16MM, one's basic salary can assist in the provision of basic needs such as food, shelter and transportation. Employees are thus able to maintain their quality of life; they can provide a level of protection and financial stability for themselves and their families (Nel and Werner, 2017; Odunlade, 2012). Being paid fairly for the work performed was another important element of base salary that respondents 1NF to 16MM felt strongly about. According to respondent 12MF, her salary was low considering the workload she was expected to carry.

"I am sure others will agree with me, the salaries here are low. You do so much work here for so little pay ... ten per cent feel happy – ninety per cent unhappy."

12MF	36	F	X	D	E	7	FI

Fair compensation is believed to be the foundation element of the implied and contractual bond between employers and employees (Parker and Wright, 2001). According to Rambur, et al. (2005), the degree to which employees perceive that they are paid fairly for what they contribute to the organisation is identified as a key job dimension related to the retention of professionals in the public sector. Therefore, a significant feature of compensation in relation to retention could be the perception that decisions relating to pay are transparent and that salaries are fair and based on performance and effort (George, 2015).

Although the direct financial factor plays an important role in satisfying the needs of employees (Stoltz, 2015), salary increases or bonuses for performance, in many instances, have a very limited short-term effect. Respondents 3NM, 5NM, 6NF, and 16MM felt that the influence salaries have on retention can be temporary owing to employees wanting more. Respondents also questioned whether this (salary increases or bonuses for performance) was sustainable from a municipal point of view. As stated by respondent 6NF, money is something one can never get enough of and will always want more of:

"Money has never been enough for anyone; I don't mind if they increase it every six months."

6NF	38	F	X	Ba	MM	12	FI

Mohanty and Mohanty (2016) and Netswera, Rankhumise and Mavundla (2005) believe that money is used to lure potential employees to organisations; however, employees do not stay unless the organisation can continue providing financial support in the form of a salary. Employees regard increases in salaries or bonuses as their right; they view their income as a form of entitlement, instead of a way to encourage them to stay (Chandrasekar, 2011). Respondent 16MM argued that the retention of employees who are experienced and skilled (like him) involves more than earning a salary:

"Remember, with employment, it is not only money that talks. The way you treat your staff talks more than money. As an employer, you must look beyond remuneration in terms of retaining staff. For instance, if you expose people and then they see that there is a chance of growing in whatever area they are doing and training, they will stay. If these chances are not there and people do not see themselves developing and growing in the different areas of the life, obviously, they will be discouraged. As well as having adequate resources to delivery services, that is what I can simply put as tools of trade. Although you can have your staff, if you do not provide tools of trade, your staff will not be able to perform and that can translate or end up with frustrated staff."

16MM	55	M	BB	Ba	MM	17	ITS

Salaries play an essential role in the initial relationship between the employer and employee; the theme of salaries connects the two parties together (Mohanty and Mohanty; 2016; Netswera, Rankhumise and Mavundla, 2005). Employees gain a form of utility from salaries; however, money alone cannot retain employees. Key employees with special skills and experience remain with their employers mainly because of intrinsic aspects evident in the organisation (Ayobami, Wallis and Karodia, 2016; Kossivi, Xu and Kalgora, 2016; Mohanty and Mohanty, 2016; George, 2015; Nazia and Begum, 2013; Ng'ethe, Iravo and Namusonge, 2012; Dockel, 2003). These could range from developmental opportunities (career), the working relationship between managers and employees (affiliation), characteristics of the job (work content) to other themes mentioned in section 5.4 of this study (Das and Baruah, 2013; Knox, 2013; Snelgar, Renard and Venter, 2013; Mokoka, Oosthuizen and Ehlers, 2010; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). Ultimately, money is a necessity, but not a primary factor in retaining employees.

6.2.1.2. Incentives

Incentives are an important part of the direct financial factor, this is due to financial benefits mattering more to employees in the public sector than money does (Maserumule, 2014). Incentives are a payment or a way to stimulate employees towards a greater output. It emerged as the tenth theme deduced from respondents 1NF, 3NM to 5NM, 7NF, 8NF, 10NM, 11MM, and 14MM to 16MM. With a frequency of 35, respondents used phrases such as "car or vehicle allowance", "phone allowance" "scarce skills allowance" and "uniform assistance" to describe examples of the incentives theme. Overall, the respondents described incentives as additional financial supportive elements that municipalities offer in order to encourage a change or improvement in how employees approach their work (1NF, 3NM–5NM, 7NF, 8NF, 10NM, 11MM, and 14MM–16MM). Incentives take the form of performance-related pay and are linked to targets. They encourage employees to work harder and be more committed to their institution (Olubusayoa, Stephen and Maxwell, 2014). Incentives are a system of rewarding success; they are an effort in the workplace through formal and informal structures for the behaviour or for work performed (Makhanu and Makokha, 2017). Respondent 5NM believes that incentives encourage employees to stay:

"There must be incentives that you give to your employees; people cannot be expected to achieve the objectives of departments if they don't have incentives and best support from the institution. There should be additional supports because your salary can only go so far."

5NM	33	M	X	BTech	MM	12	ITS

Incentives and salaries work hand in hand, as both offer financial support to employees. Some respondents (2NF, 5NM–7NF, 11MM, 12MF, and 14MM) felt that their salary was insufficient, especially considering their workload. Incentives such as a car or cell phone allowance make the job much easier. However, owing to the varied nature of their workloads, not all respondents in the study received the same incentives from municipalities. Respondents 2NF, 4NM, 7NF, 9NF, 11MM, and 12MF could not speak about incentives such as vehicle or cell phone allowances, as they did not have access to them. Respondent 12MF commented to say that, some incentives are limited to particular tasks or grades:

"Only top management gets car allowance or cell phone allowance."

12MF	36	F	X	D	E	7	FI

Incentives are often offered depending on the performance or position of the employees. There was an expectation from respondents 2NF, 4NM, 7NF, 9NF, 11MM, and 12MF that they should also receive certain incentives from their municipalities. This may have been because respondents wanted additional support from municipalities, whether in the form of training and development opportunities, conducive work environment, or supportive managers. Ultimately, top managers such as directors are accountable for divisions and other employees: more responsibility is required from them and therefore additional support in the form of incentives is offered. Municipalities need to look into creating an environment where employees feel appreciated. This may not necessarily involve incentives because of the different compensation packages associated with certain positions. However, more training and development opportunities, conducive work environments and supportive managers could be the keys to influencing employees to remain committed to selected municipalities (Das and Baruah, 2013; Knox, 2013; Snelgar, Renard and Venter, 2013; Mokoka, Oosthuizen and Ehlers, 2010; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009).

6.2.2. External forces

This subsection discusses findings relating to the external forces factor, with Table 6.2 illustrating the themes associated with the factor and words used to give meaning to the various themes.

TABLE 6.2: EXTERNAL FORCES FACTOR

Theme	Codes/words	*f*
Political influence/climate		**25**
1NF, 2NF, 3NM, 5NM, 6NF, 7NF, 8NF, 13MM, 14MM, 15MM	Political climate	25
Municipal category		**18**
1NF, 5NM, 6NF, 8NF, 9NF, 10NM, 11MM, 13MM	Municipal grade/level/category	18
Organisational structure		**16**
1NF, 3NM, 9NF, 11MM, 14MM, 15MM, 16MM	Organogram/municipal structure	16
Job evaluation		
1NF, 2NF, 4NM, 7NF, 10MM, 14MM	Job evaluation	**15**
Organisational reputation		**4**
1NF, 5NM	Reputation/mage	4

Fifteen respondents discussed external forces, and the following were the emerging themes:

- Political influence/climate
- Municipal category
- Organisational structure
- Job evaluation
- Organisational reputation

The external forces factor refers to miscellaneous themes identified by respondents outside the scope of the retention factors framework for existing employees. This factor emerged with a

frequency of 78 mentions, with political influence/climate at 25, municipal category at 18, organisational structure at 16, job evaluation at 15 and organisational reputation at four mentions. According to respondents 1NF to 3NM, and 5NM to 16MM, the external forces factor incorporates themes that lie outside the control of municipalities. However, these themes influence the decisions of municipalities and employees. Phago (2014, p.47) argues that public sector institutions operate in an open system context where external factors can have a serious impact on the functioning of the institution. Chapter 2 discusses the impact the outside environment can have on employees' feelings, behaviour and satisfaction within their organisation (see section 2.4.3 for further discussion). According to Owolabi (2012), one of the main drivers of employee satisfaction is organisational environment which applies to how attractive the image of the organisation is to the outside world (Corporate Leadership Council, 2002). It is essentially what individuals and other institutions think of the municipality in which respondents are working.

The external forces factor appears to be similar in nature to aspects of the organisational environment. According to respondents 1NF to 3NM, and 5NM to 16MM, the external forces factor appears to be based on a set of forces surrounding selected municipalities with the potential to affect the way the institution operates and its access to scarce resources such as skilled and experienced employees. With the factor comprising emerging themes such as political influence and climate, municipality category, organisational structure, job evaluations and its reputation (1NF–3NM, and 5NM–16MM), it is evident that the factor addresses the physical and social elements outside the control of municipalities which influence respondents' intention to stay (1NF–3NM, and 5NM–16MM).

6.2.2.1. Political influence and climate, and organisational reputation

Political influence appeared 25 times with ten respondents (1NF–3NM, 5NM–8NF, and 13MM–15MM) describing the theme as "political influence" and "political climate". The phrase "organisational reputation" appeared four times and was mentioned by respondents 1NF and 5NM. Political influence has an impact on the organisational (municipal) reputation, hence the link between the two themes. Phago (2014) describes political influence as political party interference, which is rampant in South African municipalities. Political interference occurs when a ruling political party earmarks certain positions for political deployment within municipalities (Phago, 2014). This is usually done to secure the implementation of party politics policies; unfortunately, political influence sometimes has negative spin-offs.

According to Dzansi, Chipunza, and Monnapula-Mapesela (2016), in South Africa, there have been numerous accusations of too much political interference in municipal human resource management activities. Respondent 7NF expressed the opinion that political appointments sometimes make it difficult to achieve municipal objectives:

"*There is interference, although you might not see it with your naked eye, whereby things will be done behind closed doors and that is also affecting a lot of people from staying or even coming to work at* [name of the municipality]. *You will be doomed for failure; your ideas or views will be overturned and even the implementation of some of these policies and ideas will not be implemented if you support a different political party*".

7NF	29	F	Y	BTech	E	7	ITS

According to respondents 1NF to 3NM, 5NM to 8NF, and 13MM to 15MM, it becomes difficult to work when the municipal environment is a political battlefield. Municipalities largely influenced by party politics instead of the overall municipal objectives can become unstable (Dzansi, Chipunza, and Monnapula-Mapesela, 2016). Many professionals such as engineers, accountants, and managers, struggle to perform their tasks and are therefore not willing to stay due to the interference (1NF–3NM, 5NM–8NF, and 13MM–15MM). Community members, employees and outside individuals develop certain perceptions about those municipalities. Ultimately the image of the municipality can be questioned owing to the political climate affecting the daily operations. According to Waeraas and Maor (2014), organisational reputation within the public sector has been associated with negatively charged words such as "inefficiency", "waste", and "incompetence". Organisational reputation is defined "as a collective assessment of a company's attractiveness to a specific group of stakeholders relative to a reference group of companies with which the company competes for resources" (Fombrun, 2012, p.100). It refers to the collective representation of a municipality past actions and results that describe the institution's ability to deliver services to the community (Waeraas and Maor, 2014; Fombrun, 2012). Organisational (municipal) reputation is based on perception, on how stakeholders of the municipalities see the institution. Respondent 1NF argues that some employees are more likely to stay in the municipality they were first employed by owing to political influence associated with other municipalities; this speaks to municipal reputation:

"There is a lot of political influence, when you come to municipalities and you do not want to go into a new environment where the political climate is unfamiliar to you … the politics here do not affect me."

1NF	35	F	X	Ba	MM	11	FI

Respondent 1NF does not want to go into a new environment where the political climate maybe unfamiliar to her. This form of loyalty towards the municipality may also be termed "continuance commitment", which is discussed in Chapter 5 (section 5.4.1.3) where respondent 1NF is partly committed to the municipality because she is more comfortable with a familiar political climate than one she does not know. According to respondent 7NF, the positions of municipal managers and directors are political appointments and their political party usually influences decisions and shapes their management style and by extension, their relationships with colleagues. Sometimes development and growth opportunities of employees go to certain individuals based on party politics favouritism.

"Here there is political influence. There are political appointments … and if the politicians want you out, they will make sure you leave."

7NF	29	F	Y	BTech	E	7	ITS

It is evident that employees' perceptions of the municipal surroundings or political climate influences their satisfaction or even dissatisfaction with their jobs (1NF–3NM, 5NM–8NF, and 13MM–15MM). Political influence (whether in the form of employment of unqualified people based on political party affiliation, or by the reputation of the political party ruling the municipality) compromises the quality of recruitment and even retention practices in South African municipalities (Dzansi, Chipunza, and Monnapula-Mapesela, 2016; Phago, 2014; Clark, 2012; Managa, 2012; Koelble and LiPuma, 2010). The political climate can negatively impact how employees feel about their institution.

6.2.2.2. Municipal category and organisational structure

Municipal category (including "municipal grade or level") was mentioned 18 times by respondents 1NF, 5NM, 6NF, 8NF to 11MM, and 13MM. Organisational structure appeared 16 times, with respondents 1NF, 3NM, 9NF, 11MM, and 14MM to 16MM referring to "municipal structure" or "organogram". Chapter 1 discusses how municipalities are categorised; this affects their sizes and the structure of the institution. The selected municipalities in this study fall under category B3 (see section 1.1. for further discussion). According to Statistics South Africa (2017) and Koelble and LiPuma (2010), municipalities categorised as B3 are vulnerable from an institutional development perspective. They are very vulnerable from a revenue generation and from an institutional development perspective (Statistics South Africa, 2016). Category B3 are in economically depressed areas and struggle to attract and retain skilled managers, professionals, and technicians (Statistics South Africa, 2016; Government Gazette, 2009). The municipal category and, by extension, the structure and geographical location (which is economically depressed) makes it difficult for the selected municipalities to retain skilled and experienced employees (1NF, 5NM, 6NF, 8NF–11MM, and 13MM). The municipal category affects aspects such as the hierarchical structure, size of the institution, compensation competitiveness and development opportunities available (Koelble and LiPuma, 2010). According to respondent 11MM, their municipality is a lower graded category, which affects the benefits offered:

"Municipalities are classified in terms of grades; we are in Grade 4 as [name of municipality] *and you might have different benefits from the same position that I am having here, for example, car allowance."*

11MM	46	M	X	DHR	E	10	HR

Respondent 11MM continued, stating that with smaller municipalities, there is little chance to move up the hierarchy. Owing to the structure of the selected municipality, it becomes difficult to grow and be promoted in the same area.

"The ceiling stops there. There are no levels where you are moving from junior to senior to a middle and then up the hierarchy, so it is very limited. Hence you will find that people will stay for a minimum amount of time, especially people with scarce skills."

According to the Government Gazette (2011), smaller municipalities also struggle to provide career opportunities in the local community area for the spouses of municipal employees. Professional staff often have a spouse who is also seeking employment, often in professions other than that of the spouse. In small town or rural economies, these opportunities may be limited due to the relative size of the local community. Opportunities for growth and development, especially in the form of a promotion, are therefore limited because of the municipal category and structure of the institution. According to respondents 5NM, 10MM, and 11MM, larger municipalities or category A-B2 municipalities receive more support from national government. Category A-B2 municipalities may be more appealing to Generation Y employees because of the value these employees place on personal development and opportunities of growth such as promotion (Justice, 2017), which smaller municipalities (categories B3 and B4) are unable to provide. In addition, salaries and other benefits are top concerns for Generation Y, as they have grown up being rewarded (Van der Walt, Jonck and Sobayeni, 2016). Thus, selected municipalities will have to implement strategies inclusive of these elements if they plan to recruit and especially retain more employees from Generation Y.

According to respondent 5NM, smaller municipalities are more of a 'stepping-stone'. Stepping-stone is regarded as the "transition from temporary to permanent employment which is likely to depend on both demand factors (organization's motives) and supply factors (employees' willingness to accept such contracts)" (Givord and Wilner, 2014, p.4). It is pointless to compare smaller municipalities who are in lower categories to bigger municipalities, as they have little support to retain key employees. Respondent 10MM agreed that

"Small municipalities are unable to remunerate competitively because municipalities differ: this one is Grade B; the other ones are "metros", so they offer better remuneration, and there are district municipalities. There are a lot of people leaving left-and-right because everyone wants a better salary."

10NM	43	M	X	Ba	TM	15	ITS

Smaller municipalities in category B3, like the selected municipalities in this study, often struggle meet the employees' compensation expectations due to the lack of financial resources from their low recovery rate (Statistics South Africa, 2016). In addition, their size and hierarchy

structure, and opportunities for growth and development, especially in the form of a promotion, are often limited. It therefore becomes more sustainable for the selected municipalities to focus on training and offering challenging, stimulating work to Generation X employees rather than Generation Y employees.

6.2.3. Work–life balance

Subsection 6.2.3 discusses findings relating to the work–life factor with Table 6.3 illustrating the themes associated with the factor and words used to give meaning to the various themes.

TABLE 6.3: WORK–LIFE BALANCE FACTOR

Theme	*Codes/words*	*f*
Flexible work arrangements		**14**
1NF, 2NF, 3NM, 5NM, 6NF, 8NF, 9NF, 13MM, 16MM	Flexible working hours	14
Access to family		**14**
2NF, 3NM, 4NM, 11MM, 15MM	Access to family/family based here	14
Wellness Officer		**4**
11MM, 14MM	Wellness practitioner/officer	4
Childcare facilitates		**4**
4NM, 11MM, 15MM	Children's school	4
Location		**3**
3NM, 6NF, 15MM	This is home	3

Thirteen respondents share their opinions regarding work–life balance. For the work–life balance factor, the following were the emerging themes:

- Flexible work arrangements

- Access to family

- Wellness officer

- Childcare facilities

- Location

Work–life balance emerged with a frequency of 39 mentions, with the themes flexible work arrangements at 14, access to family at 14, childcare facilities at 4, wellness officer at 4 and location mentioned 3 times. (The "wellness officer" theme was not in the theoretical framework and will be later discussed in section 6.2.3.2.) Respondents 1NF to 9NF, 11MM, and 13MM to 16MM described work–life balance as the balance between one's work life and personal life. According to Deery (2008), work–life balance involves employees' family commitments, family related needs and other non-work obligations. It refers to the non-work roles in terms of spouse, family and leisure activities played by employees outside the organisation. Essentially, work–life balance is seen as the stability between the multiple roles in a person's life, involving creating and maintaining a balance between work and personal responsibilities of employees (Massoudi and Hamdi, 2017; Samson, Waigan and Koima, 2015; Meenakshi, Subrahmanyam and Ravichandran, 2013).

6.2.3.1. Flexible work arrangements

With a frequency of 14 mentions, respondents 1NF to 3NM, 5NM, 6NF, 8NF, 9NF, 13MM, and 16MM used the phrase "flexible working hours" to describe the theme. The theme looks at employees being able to change their working hours in terms of their arrival and ending time, with municipalities allowing employees to have flexible working hours (1NF–3NM, 5NM, 6NF, 8NF, 9NF, 13MM, and 16MM). According to Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009), flexible work arrangements can be described as scheduling variations that accommodate individuals' work times, workloads, responsibilities, and locations around family responsibilities. It could involve employees working a certain number of set hours and having the freedom to choose their starting and ending times. Flexible working hours are not normally offered in the selected municipalities; there are high expectations in terms of working hours

when respondents are performing tasks (1NF–3NM, 5NM, 6NF, 8NF, 9NF, 13MM, and 16MM). Respondent 8NF reported finding herself on many occasions putting other areas of her life on hold, to fulfil her duties at work:

"You plan something for the weekend, home or going to Durban. Maybe the deadline is Monday and the issue came on Thursday, you could not [be] *able to finish it by Friday, so you sacrifice and cancel the trip and finish what you are supposed to be doing – so, a lot of sacrifices."*

8NF	41	F	X	PGM	TM	23	ITS

Barik and Pandey (2016) and Dex (2004) point out that work–life balance HR practices such as having flexitime work schedules, flexi-place, job-sharing or even granting sabbatical leave, can improve employees' satisfaction, productivity, and ultimately loyalty towards the organisation (see section 2.4.4). However, flexible work arrangements or work schedules in the form of adjustable working hours might not be practical for skilled and experienced employees (1NF–3NM, 5NM, 6NF, 8NF, 9NF, 13MM, and 16MM). Professionals within the private sector often find themselves having to sacrifice their personal time for the organisation to remain competitive (Meenakshi, Subrahmanyam and Ravichandran, 2013). This was also the case in the selected municipalities. Respondents 1NF to 3NM, 5NM, 6NF, 8NF, 9NF, 13MM, and 16MM, who are also supervisors, were aware of flexible work arrangements; however, they indicated that flexible working hours are not a major influence as they understand that their work requires more from them. Job-sharing might be implemented in selected municipalities, as respondents 1NF, 2NF, 4NM to 8NF, 10NM and 16MM indicated the need to have access to training (practical experience) for career developmental purposes (see section 5.4.2.1). Flexi-place work (working at home or at another location) might be challenging, as this normally occurs when employees have access to resources (laptop, internet, and phone) to communicate with their employers and colleagues. In addition, municipalities are tasked with providing service delivery, which requires personal interaction with the community area, members and other stakeholders.

6.2.3.2. Access to family, location, facilities for children and wellness officer

Access to family (2NF–4NM, 11MM, and 15MM), location (3NM, 6NF, and 15MM), children facilitates (4NM, 11MM, and 15MM) and a wellness officer (11MM and 14MM) were all interconnected themes respondents mentioned when speaking about work–life balance practices already influencing them to remain. In principle, these work–life balance practices refer to how well employees' work aligns with family demands, and personal interests, and whether there is access to facilities such as childcare or wellness (Samson, Waigan and Koima, 2015). Respondents used phrases like "family based here", "this is home", "children's school" and "wellness officers" to describe what was important to their work–life balance. All four themes appeared a total of 25 times (see Table 6.3), with respondents describing the themes in terms of access to their families (2NF–4NM, 11MM, and 15MM), having a safe and good location to raise children (3NM, 6NF, and 15MM) and other important areas of their lives being affected by working at selected municipalities, like access to wellness practitioners or officers (11MM and 14MM). Respondent 15MM commented that he works better knowing that his family is located near to the municipality:

"I'm from Alicedale; my wife is from King Williams Town. We have three kids. From here to Alicedale, it takes 40 minutes. From here to King Williams Town, it takes an hour – if longer – an hour and fifteen minutes, we are in King Williams Town. We have the best schools here. My wife is working at the [respondent names the municipality] *District Office – Education District Office. It balances out – yes."*

15MM	57	M	BB	Ba	E	24	ITS

Work–life balance themes like access to family, location and children's facilities were linked especially for respondents 2NF, 3NM, 8NF, 11MM, 15MM, and 16MM, who had an average work experience of 14 years (see Table 4.4). Respondent 3NM explained that the location of the municipality allowed him to have access to his family:

"Also, one of the reasons I was so keen to work for the municipality is because I have worked in PE for years ... it has always been my intention to come back home. My family is down here ... that is how I ended down here."

3NM	56	M	BB	PGH	TM	10	FI

Respondents 2NF, 3NM, 8NF, 11MM, 15MM, and 16MM represent Generation X and baby boomers who are individuals with certain priorities in life. They want access to their families, a good and safe location where they raise their children, build their family, and have access facilities like good schools. However, although respondents value work–life balance, career development in the form of training and growth is more likely to retain employees in the long term (Yow, 2013). According to McKenzie (2011), local government and private organisations have attempted to entice people into certain locations with significantly increased salaries. However, this approach is more effective in the short term. As mentioned earlier in this chapter (see section 6.2.1.1), people therefore end up with a "here for money" mentality instead of a "here for a long time" approach.

Although respondents 2NF, 3NM, 8NF, 11MM, 15MM, and 16MM did not stay solely because of their work–life balance, the factor aided in making these respondents happier and having a more positive attitude towards the municipality. Work–life balance is not a key influential retention factor; however, respondents that represent Generation X (1NF, 2NF, 4NM–6NF, 8NF, 9NF, 11MM, 13MM, and 14MM), baby boomers (3NM, 15MM, and 16MM) and Generation Y (7NF) appreciate there being a balance between their personal and work lives. These respondents have family responsibilities such as taking care of their extended family, marriage or raising children. Therefore, work–life balance in the form of access to their families, location and children's facilities are themes to consider because of the responsibilities which respondents have.

6.2.4. Indirect financial

This subsection discusses findings relating to the work–life factor with Table 6.4 illustrating the themes associated with the factor and words used to give meaning to the various themes.

TABLE 6.4: INDIRECT FINANCIAL FACTORS

Themes	Codes/words	f
Benefits		**29**
1NF, 2NF, 4NM, 11MM, 12MF, 14MM, 15MM	Family responsibility leave, study leave, sick leave, medical aid, pension funds	23
1NF,2NF, 4NM	Financial advisor with creditors/ Institution acts as employees' surety	6

Indirect financial factors emerged as the lowest employee retention factor, with only one theme, "benefits"*,* appearing 29 times from seven respondents. Literature mentions three indirect financial subthemes, namely non-cash recognition, perquisites and award schemes (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009; Britton, Chadwick and Walker, 1999), but none of these appeared in the 16 interviews conducted. Indirect financial factors offer a form of security for individuals and their families in the form of benefits and pensions and provide recognition for employees by celebrating and acknowledging their extra effort (Silverman, 2014). According to respondents 1NF, 2NF, 4NM, 11MM, 12MF, 14MM, and 15MM, indirect financial factors speaks to benefits implemented by municipalities that might be voluntary or non-voluntary.

6.2.4.1. Benefits

Seven respondents used phrases such as "family responsibility leave" "study leave", "sick leave", "medical aid and pension funds", "financial advisor with creditors", "institution acts as employees' surety" and "housing subsidies" to describe the benefits they were receiving from the municipalities (1NF, 2NF, 4NM, 11MM, 12MF, 14MM, and 15MM). Some benefits are required by law, while municipalities can choose to implement others (Nel and Werner, 2017; Amos, et al., 2016). According to respondent 4NM,

"There are benefits you know you will get from the government; you get those what we call this pension funds and all those things like medical aid ... so some of those things have kept me here."

4NM	36	M	X	DCE	E	5	ITS

Although benefits like unemployment insurance and annual leave, sick leave and maternity leave are mandatory benefits, municipalities should aim to add value and to support their employees in order to retain them. This might be done through voluntary benefits such as pension funds, medical aid and housing subsidies, which according to respondent 4NM, have influenced them to remain employed in the selected municipalities. Respondent 1NF commented that benefits demonstrate that the municipality is concerned about them:

"The municipality is very considerate as far as that is concerned. They allow employees to attend to and prioritise family matters as long as they can ensure that business will be able to continue."

1NF	35	F	X	Ba	MM	11	FI

Voluntary benefits such as medical aid, pension funds, financial advisor with creditors, or the institution acting as employees' surety are ways in which selected municipalities demonstrate their stance on increasing the wealth and wellbeing of their employees (1NF, 2NF, 4NM). Respondent 1NF continued with the observation that

"we are the only municipality that negotiators with the shops in [location of the municipality]*, like your grocery shops, building warehouses, or even car dealerships, where the shops can do stop orders. You won't find that in any other municipality."*

For respondents 1NF, 2NF, and 4NM, this demonstrated that the selected municipalities care about their financial wellbeing. These municipalities were willing to act as their surety when respondents wanted to purchase from local shops. Nel and Werner (2017) and Amos, et al. (2016) state that benefits are offered to employees over and above salary are aimed at

increasing employees' wealth or wellbeing. Respondents 1NF, 2NF, and 4NM indicated the same thing in their interviews. For these respondents, the voluntary benefit of their municipality standing as surety for them in local shops demonstrated a level of value and support being made available by their municipality. Ultimately, employees do not remain in municipalities solely because of benefits offered; however, mandatory and voluntary benefits offer additional assistance to make employees comfortable in and out of the workplace. They have a positive impact on employees' loyalty, which can influence organisational commitment (Odunlade, 2012; Dessler, 2010).

6.3. SUMMARY

Chapter 6 discussed the remaining findings related to employee retention in selected municipalities. This chapter was continuation of the employee retention factors identified by research respondents in the previous chapter. It focused on the second research objective, which was to ascertain the perceptions of employees regarding the current employee retention factors. Chapter 6 presented the descriptions and perceptions of the remaining employee retention factors and their associated themes. Subsequently, the direct financial (income), external force, work–life balance (balance between work and personal life) and indirect financial (additional financial support) factors were discussed in section 6.2. Chapter 7 will present the recommendations and a conclusion to this study.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

7.1. OVERVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a summary of chapters 1 to 6, recommendations and a conclusion to this study. The next section of this chapter presents summaries of the introductory chapter (Chapter 1), the literature explored in Chapters 2 and 3 to add meaningfulness to findings, and the research design and methodology (Chapter 4). The following section (7.3) provides a detailed summary and discussion of the main findings (Chapters 5 and 6). Thereafter, the limitations and contributions of the study are discussed in section 7.4 with overall recommendations of how to retain employees being presented in section 7.5.

As was declared in Chapter 1, the primary research aim of this study was to gain an in-depth understanding of employee retention, as experienced by employees in the two selected municipalities in the Sarah Baartman District Municipality

In order to achieve the aforementioned research purpose, the following research objectives were set:

1. To identify the current employee retention factors evident in municipalities.

2. To ascertain the perceptions of employees regarding the current employee retention factors.

3. To recommend ways to effectively retain employees.

7.2. SUMMARY OF THE INTRODUCTION, LITERATURE AND METHODOLOGY IN CHAPTERS 1, 2, 3 AND 4

7.2.1.   Chapter 1

Chapter 1 served as an introduction to the study, where the research context was explained, and the importance of the study was established. The primary research aim and objectives were stated. Overall, the chapter provided an overview of South African municipalities, the historical role of local government, the transformation process local which government underwent and how this impacted on the role of municipalities after the 1994 democratic election. The challenges facing municipalities today and the importance of employee retention in addressing those challenges was discussed. Chapter 1 concluded with a structure of the present thesis.

7.2.2.   Chapter 2

Chapter 2 examined the nature of employee retention. Overall, the chapter defined employee retention and employee perceptions and briefly discussed the complexity of retention factors. The chapter focused on employee retention factors which could be based on the four attractors and retainers: namely, compensation and benefits, work environment, organisational environment, and work–life balance. This was done in order to better understand the importance of organisations and municipalities catering to the holistic needs and desires of employees, as identified by the Corporate and Leadership Council (2002). Chapter 2 concluded by discussing some of the challenges facing South African organisations, particularly municipalities in terms of retaining employees.

7.2.3.   Chapter 3

Chapter 3 discussed why more emphasis needed to be placed on the ability of organisations, more particularly, municipalities, to effectively retain existing employees instead of reducing employee turnover. In addition, this chapter examined the importance of choosing a theoretical framework for the study that could provide an understanding of employee retention and key influencing retention factors in a municipal context, to give structure and support to the overall aim and objectives of the study. Four theoretical frameworks and models were proposed to assist in further conceptualising employee retention and identifying influencing factors. The retention factors framework for existing employees by Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009) was

chosen as the most suitable theoretical framework to use for this study. Chapter 3 concluded with a detailed discussion of the adopted theoretical framework retention factors and themes.

7.2.4.   Chapter 4

Chapter 4 presented the philosophical assumptions, research design and methodology selected to support the study. The chapter began with the definition and nature of research and a discussion on the philosophical assumptions associated with research paradigms and the research objectives. An interpretivism research paradigm was adopted in order to achieve the study's primary aim of gaining an in-depth understanding of employee retention as experienced by employees in the selected municipalities, together with its key influencing retention factors. The qualitative research approach adopted a case study methodology while the retention factors framework for existing employees was used as the supporting theoretical structure. Respondents were selected through purposive sampling, and in-depth semi-structured interviews were used to collect qualitative data. Direct, conventional and summative content analysis techniques were used to analyse the data. Chapter 4 concluded with a discussion of the qualitative quality criteria checks for trustworthiness of this research and the ethical considerations of the study.

7.3. SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS IN CHAPTERS 5 AND 6

Due to the extensive, thick descriptions achieved through the interpretivism research paradigm, two chapters were used to discuss the findings. Chapters 5 and 6 presented and discussed the findings relating to employee retention in the selected municipalities. The aim of both chapters was to contribute to a better understanding of the meaning of the key factors influencing retention, as experienced by employees in the selected municipalities.

Table 7.1 below presents the Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009) theoretical framework factors and themes, compared to the themes deduced from the responses of respondents within the theoretical framework and the emerging themes from respondents outside the scope of theoretical framework. Discussion of these factors and themes was presented in Chapters 5 and 6. For purposes of this chapter, a summary of the findings and existing theory used is presented in the table.

TABLE 7.1: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Theoretical framework: factors and themes		Themes deduced from respondents within theoretical framework	Themes deduced from respondents outside theory
Affiliation	Organisation commitment	Organisation commitment √	
	Organisation support	Organisation support √	
	Work environment/conditions	Work environment/conditions√	
	Organisation citizenship		
	Leading-edge technology		
	Management style	Management style √	
	Recognition of employees	Recognition of employees √	
		Teamwork/relationship between employees and managers √	
Career	Advancement	Promotion and transfer √	
	Personal growth	Personal growth/opportunities for growth and development √	
	Training	Training √	
	Employment security	Job security √	
	Interaction with experts		
	Stretch assignment	Stretch assignment √	
	Quality of managers		
Work content	Variety	Variety √	
	Challenge	Challenge √	
	Autonomy	Autonomy √	
	Meaningfulness	Job aligned with personal meaning/passion √	
	Feedback	Feedback √	
Direct financial	Base salary	Base salary √	
	Incentives	Incentives √	
	Ownership		
	Cash recognition		
	Premium pay		
	Pay process		
Work life balance	Flexible work arrangements	Flexible work arrangements √	
	Location	Location √	
	Access to family	Access to family √	
	Childcare facilities	Childcare facilities√	
		Wellness officer √	
Indirect financial	Benefits	Benefits √	
	Non-cash recognition		
	Perquisites		
	Award schemes		
Miscellaneous		Political influence/climate √	
		Municipal category √	
		Organisational/municipal structure √	
		Job evaluation√	
		Organisational reputation √	

7.3.1. Main findings of Chapter 5

Chapter 5 first presented the research sample in terms of their biographical indicators. Thereafter, the chapter focused on the first and second research objectives, with Chapter 6 as a continuation of the second research objective. The subsections below summarise the main findings from Chapter 5. The first of these (7.3.1.1) addresses research objective one, identifying the current employee retention factors, and by extension, the associated themes.

7.3.1.1. Findings: identified factors and associated themes

Chapter 5 achieved the first research objective by presenting 28 themes identified from the consolidated responses of the study participants. These themes were the reasons respondents gave for remaining in the employment of the selected municipalities. Using content analysis processes, these 28 themes emerged from meaningful phrases and words the researcher extracted from segmented quotes (see Table 4.9 in Chapter 4 for further discussion). Using the direct (deductive) content analysis process enabled the researcher to use the retention factors framework for existing employees by Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009) to identify the current employee retention factors and their associated themes. Some of the theoretical framework themes did not influence respondents, and as a result, did not appear in the findings. The researcher was also able to identify emerging themes outside the scope of the theoretical framework by way of conventional (inductive) content analysis. In addition, summative content analysis was used to identify the most influential factors and themes. Overall, seven grouping factors with their 28 associated themes were identified and are presented above in Table 7.1 with their associated themes. The grouping factors are affiliation, career, work content, direct financial, external forces, work–life balance and indirect financial factors.

Affiliation appeared to be the most influential grouping factor, with six of its associated themes (*management style, teamwork/relationship between employees and managers, work environment/conditions, organisation commitment, recognition of employees* and *organisation support)* appearing a total of 300 times in the findings. Under the affiliation factor, *organisation citizenship* and *leading-edge technology* were the two themes from the theoretical framework that did not appear in findings (see Table 7.1). The theme *teamwork and relationship between employees and managers* emerged outside the theoretical framework and was interrelated to *management style.* In terms of influence, career was the most important grouping factor, followed by work content, direct financial, external force, work–life balance and indirect

financial factors respectively. The career grouping contained the themes of *training, personal growth*, *promotion and transfer (advancement), job security (employment security)* and *stretch assignment* appearing a total of 202 times. The theoretical framework themes of *interaction with experts* and *quality of managers* however did not appear in the findings and therefore had no influence on the respondents (see Table 7.1). The work content grouping factor followed with all five associated themes from the theoretical framework (*meaningfulness, challenging, autonomy, feedback* and *variety)* appearing a total of 137 times. Within the retention factors framework for existing employees, the direct financial factor grouping had five themes of which only two (*base salary* and *incentives)* appeared in the findings a total of 119 times. Themes relating to *ownership, cash recognition* and *premium pay* had no influence on the respondents in the selected municipalities.

Some themes emerged outside the scope of the theoretical framework and under certain existing factors, the miscellaneous grouping focused on themes that were outside the control of municipalities which also played a role in the retention of employees. Table 7.1 grouped all these themes under miscellaneous, which was later termed the "external force factor". This factor emerged from the findings with themes *political influence/climate*, *municipal category*, *organisational structure*, *job evaluation* and *organisational reputation* making appearances 78 times in total. The work–life balance had five associated themes (*flexible work arrangements, access to family, childcare facilities, wellness officer* and *location*) making a total of 39 appearances, with the theme *wellness officer* emerging outside the theoretical framework. The indirect financial factor was the least influential factor with only *benefits* appearing 29 times under this grouping. The themes *non-cash recognition, perquisites* and *award schemes* did not appear in the interviews and as a result, were not considered to be influences on the respondents.

The seven grouping factors and associated themes identified in Table 7.1 cater to the holistic needs and desires of a diverse workforce. As discussed in Chapter 2 section 2.4, the retention of key employees is multifaceted. Retention involves a host of factors that address the different priorities of employees (Kossivi, Xu and Kalgora, 2016; George, 2015; Das and Baruah 2013; Samuel and Chipunza, 2013; Masibigiri and Nienaber, 2011). No longer can organisations and municipalities use the traditional salary and benefits package as the only method to cater for the diversity and long stay of the workforce in the organisations (Sinha 2012). Ultimately, the

findings emphasise the importance of having a range of retention factors that different employees. These elements can include leadership and management style, opportunities for training and development, the alignment between an individual's job and career interests, compensation and benefits, conducive working environment, reputation of the organisation, communication of the organisation strategy and direction of the division, work–life balance, co-workers interaction and relationship with immediate boss (Nel and Werner, 2017; Mohanty and Mohanty, 2016; George, 2015; Nazia and Begum, 2013; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009; Fairhurst, 2007; Narimawati, 2007).

The subsections below (7.3.1.2 to 7.3.1.4) address the second research objective, to ascertain the perceptions of employees regarding the current employee retention factors. This is done by discussing the perceptions of municipal employees regarding the three most important employee retention factors, namely, affiliation, career and work content factors.

7.3.1.2. Summary of affiliation findings

The findings show that commitment, and ultimately the retention of employees, is closely linked to the bond and attachment to the municipality and its community (municipal area), which is seen as the affiliation factor. Clark (2013) and Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009) state that affiliation refers to the affection (feelings) individuals have towards their organisation. Essentially, if employees feel affiliated to the municipality, they share the same values of the organisation and identify themselves with the institution (Clark, 2013; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). Respondents indicated that this bond and their overall decision to remain with their respective municipalities is influenced by the themes that give meaning to affiliation, namely *management style, good working environment* and *organisational commitment, recognition of employees* and *organisation support* (see Table 7.1). For Meyer (2005) and for the majority of the respondents, the theme management style (which falls under the affiliation factor) is identified as the most prominent influential way to retain professional and management employees in a municipal context. Respondents' behaviour and perceptions about the municipality were largely influenced by the management style they were exposed to. Employees value a combination of paternalistic and democratic management styles. They want to be innovative in the way they do their job while having their interests taken into consideration (paternalistic management style). In addition, employees prefer to be engaged, to give feedback and have their plans or ideas considered when decisions are being taken (democratic management style) (Okon and Isong, 2016). Essentially, municipalities need

managers who are present, supportive, trustworthy and who offer guidance in order to convince employees to remain employed. Another important theme under the affiliation factor that positively influenced employees was having a conducive work environment and conditions. Massoudi and Hamdi (2017) describe this theme as the conditions the employees operate in. How well employees engage with the organisation, especially with their immediate environment, influences on a great extent their error rate, level of innovation and collaboration with other employees, absenteeism, and ultimately how long they stay in the job (Chandrasekar, 2011). The work environment and conditions theme involves all the aspects which act and react on the body and mind of employees (Jain and Kaur, 2014), such as office layout plans, adequate availability of resources (for instance computers or safety equipment), and the physical appearance of the municipality. Although none of the respondents said they would stay solely because of the work environment, it was evident that having a pleasant work environment forms an important part of ensuring that employees are happy where they work.

Organisational commitment was found to be another important part of the affiliation factor as it encompasses the loyalty and attachment employees have towards their municipalities. Generally, organisational commitment refers to the bond employees experience with their organisation, which normally includes a sense of job involvement, loyalty and belief in the values of the organisation (Ogamba and Nwuche, 2016; Clark, 2013). A majority of the respondents indicated that they saw themselves as a part of the municipality. They expressed an emotional attachment to and identified themselves with municipal objectives, owing to their desire to make an impact through service delivery. This is affective commitment: the respondents have chosen to stay because of their affection for and connection with the municipality (Ogamba and Nwuche, 2016). Organisation commitment is a multidimensional concept and can vary; some respondents demonstrated more than one form of commitment. Reasons provided for being committed range from a fear of the unknown, having no alternative jobs in the area, to a sense of family responsibility. Their commitment to the municipalities is based on fear and therefore the economic benefits they receive by staying provide a sense of comfort (Ogamba and Nwuche, 2016). These respondents have continuance commitment. Other respondents indicated that they remain committed to the municipality because of the development and practical training they received at the beginning stages of their careers. This is seen as normative commitment where the respondents feel obligated to stay and pass on what they have learned.

7.3.1.3. Summary of career findings

As the second most influential factor, "career" was described as the degree to which respondents perceive their chances to grow, develop and be promoted within their municipalities. Career plays a crucial role in the retention of employees; Bussin and Toerien (2015) describe the career factor as the long-term opportunities for development and advancement for employees. Essentially, this factor talks to whether employees could envision a future growth path for themselves within the municipality. *Training, personal growth, advancement and employment security* were the themes that gave meaning to the factor and positively influenced employees to stay (see Table 7.1). An essential part of this factor for respondents was the exposure and opportunity to learn something new in a municipality, which is training. Most of the respondents indicated that training is a form of human capital investment where municipalities take time to teach them how to perform tasks beyond what they have learned at school and previous jobs. It is an attempt to change the knowledge, skills and behaviours of employees in such a way that organisational objectives are achieved (Ng'ethe, Iravo, and Namusonge, 2012). Training creates a sense of loyalty, and if done correctly, this form of opportunity can make employees feel that the municipality values them, and that there are opportunities for growth within the institution, which then gives meaning to their current job.

Training and personal growth were closely linked as they both involve the development of individuals (Nel and Werner, 2017). All respondents described personal growth as including study assistance, and opportunities to attend workshops and courses. According to Nel and Werner (2017), personal growth is a matter of the development opportunities made available to employees; these can be in the form of formal education, relationships, or assessments of personality and abilities that help employees prepare for the future. Although advancement (i.e. promotion) is not something smaller municipalities are able to implement owing to their limitations in terms of hierarchy structure, the career factor enables employees to visualise a career path within municipalities because of the opportunities afforded to them through training and personal growth. Ultimately, the retention of key employees is closely linked to their careers, because career development opportunities can increase an employee's commitment to the organisation (George, 2015; Sinha, 2012).

7.3.1.4. Summary of work content findings

As the third most influential factor, work content – which concluded Chapter 5 – involves job characteristics such as being meaningful, providing informal and formal feedback on performance, and offering freedom to make decisions and opportunities to solve challenging problems (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). All respondents described work content as the satisfaction they received from doing their job. The themes *meaningfulness, challenge, autonomy, feedback* and *variety* gave meaning to the work content factor (see Table 7.1). Work content is seen as job-related elements that encourage employees to stay in the organisation; the factor refers to the stimulation received from the tasks performed (Ely, 2014; Dockel, 2003; Kochanski and Ledford, 2001). Meaningfulness formed an important part of the work as it encompassed the feelings and connection respondents had with their job, or with aspects of their job. The work has significance; it allowed employees to perform normal organisational tasks for a greater purpose, such as serving their communities (with provision of housing, water and sanitation and electricity to residents), or loyalty towards a work project. By performing meaningful work, all respondents felt worthwhile, useful, and valuable, that they make a difference, and were not taken for granted in their work-related activities and experience (De Crom and Rothmann, 2018). In the long term, this form of job satisfaction is vital and even more effective than financial rewards (Ely, 2014). Employees normally want to perform tasks that are interesting, with an element of challenge and where they are recognised for a job well done. Stimulating and interesting aspects of the job influence skilled and experienced employees into staying, because they need work that is challenging, not repetitive, and that allows them freedom to make decisions, while providing feedback (Kochanski and Ledford, 2001).

7.3.2. Main findings of Chapter 6

As a continuation of the previous chapter, Chapter 6 focused on the remaining findings of the second research objective, to ascertain the perceptions of employees regarding the current employee retention factors. The subsections below summarise the main findings from Chapter 6. Subsections 7.3.2.1 to 7.3.2.4 addresses the second research objective by discussing the perceptions of municipal employees regarding the other employee retention factors, namely, direct financial, external force, work–life balance and indirect financial factors.

7.3.2.1. Summary of direct financial findings

Direct financial factors were described as the way in which municipalities compensate employees for work performed. They are tangible, pay-related factors which can be in the form of a salary, overtime pay or even incentives (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). According to Nel and Werner (2017) and Nazia and Begum (2013), "direct financial" factors are usually an exchange for employees' services, whether in cash or item value, and are therefore able to satisfy most employee needs. The themes *base salary* and *incentives* gave meaning to the factor grouping (see Table 7.1). All respondents argued that direct financial aspect, and more importantly the base salary component of the factor, was an important reason they remained with their municipalities because they were dependent on their salaries. According to literature, salaries persuade behaviour because salaries are able to fulfil financial and material desires, as well as provide the means for employee status (Mello, 2014; Swanepoel, et al., 2014; Deloitte, 2012; Milkovich and Newman, 2004; Parker and Wright, 2001). Employees depend on their earnings to sustain themselves, their dependents and lifestyles (Stoltz, 2015; Das and Baruah, 2013; Khan, et al., 2012). All respondents indicated that they were able to fulfil their financial responsibilities (such as supporting their families) and material desires because of their earnings. Employees were therefore able to maintain their quality of their lives and provide a level of protection and financial stability for themselves and their families (Nel and Werner, 2017; Odunlade, 2012). In addition, the study found that fair compensation was important aspect of salaries. Employees want to be fairly recompensed for the work they perform. According to Rambur, et al. (2005), the degree to which employees perceive they are paid fairly for what they contribute to the organisation is identified as a key job dimension related to the retention of professionals in the public sector. Therefore, a significant feature of compensation in relation to retention appears to be the perception that decisions relating to pay are transparent and that salaries are fair and based on performance and effort (George, 2015; Parker and Wright, 2001). However, a retention strategy mainly focused on salaries or a pay raise is not sustainable in the long term, according to the findings. As a consequence of the role salaries play in the initial relationship between the employer and employees (luring employees to the institutions), employees tend to view their salary as a right. Incentives therefore become important financial supportive elements within the public sector; employees' value that financial benefit, which can also stimulate them to improving their work performance.

7.3.2.2. Summary of external force findings

Chapter 2 argued that for any organisations to be able to effectively retain key employees, it needs to be aware that they operate in an open system, which by its nature is affected by the outside world (see section 2.4.3). The same sentiments apply to municipalities. According to Mello (2014), municipalities operate in an open system context where external elements can have a serious impact on the functioning of the institutions. This open system can affect employees' feelings, behaviour and satisfaction within their municipalities (Mello, 2014). The Corporate Leadership Council (2002) identified this open system as the organisational environment which is the image of the organisation. Essentially, the organisational environment is how municipalities are seen by stakeholders. According to Owolabi (2012), one of the main drivers of employee satisfaction is organisational environment, which refers to how attractive the image of the organisation is to the outside world (Corporate Leadership Council, 2002). The findings identified an external force factor, which involves miscellaneous emerging themes that fall outside the scope of Munsamy and Bosch-Venter's (2009) theoretical framework. Generally, the factor comprises physical and social elements outside the control of municipalities, which have influenced respondents' intention to stay. Like organisational environment, external forces have the potential to affect the way municipalities operate and their access to scarce resources such as skilled and experienced employees (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). The themes *political influence and climate, municipality category, organisational structure, job evaluations* and *reputation* gave meaning to the external force factor. These themes are interrelated and are therefore discussed together to better understand their influence on employee retention in the municipal context. Political climate and influence is an important external theme talking to the political party interference evident in South African municipalities (Mello, 2014). political climate and influence, which is usually the responsibility of the ruling political party, has negatively affected the image of many municipalities, their reputation and their human resources activities such as attraction and retention (Dzansi, Chipunza, and Monnapula-Mapesela, 2016). Some municipalities have even been termed "battlefields" owing to political influence. In the process, municipalities' reputations become damaged to the point where employees struggle to identify themselves with the institution and opt to leave.

In Chapter 1, the categorisation of municipalities was discussed. These categories in turn have affected the size and structure of the institutions (see section 1.1.). According to Koelble and

LiPuma (2010) and the State of local government in South Africa reported in the Government Gazette (2009), depending on the category, some municipalities are vulnerable from an institutional development perspective. In this study, the selected municipalities were in categories B3 and B4, which are in economically depressed areas and struggled to attract and retain skilled managers, professionals, and technicians (Statistics South Africa, 2017; Government Gazette, 2009). Some of the respondents argued that the category of their municipalities affected their hierarchical structure, the size of the institution, compensation competitiveness and development opportunities available. Thus, the municipal category and structure may influence employees to leave the institution, as some retention strategies (such as opportunities for growth and development in the form of promotions and salary competitiveness) are limited in category B3 and B4 municipalities.

7.3.2.3. Summary of work–life balance findings

The work–life balance factor was described as the balance needed to be maintained between work and personal responsibilities of employees (Massoudi and Hamdi, 2017; Samson, Waigan and Koima, 2015). The factor is the balance between one's work life and personal life. Most respondents recognised it as *flexible work arrangements*, a*ccess to family*, c*hildcare facilities*, *wellness officer* and *location*. According to Deery (2008), work–life balance is influenced by employees' family commitments, family-related needs and other non-work obligations. Several respondents indicated that flexible work arrangements were not an influencing element in terms of their employee behaviour. Access to family, location, children's facilities and a wellness officer positively influenced employees' attitudes and made them happier, but the employees on this study did not view work–life balance as a valid reason to stay with or leave their municipalities.

7.3.2.4. Summary of indirect financial findings

Indirect financial factors emerged as the least influential as identified by respondents. Although theoretically the factor had three other themes, namely *non-cash recognition, perquisites* and *award schemes* (Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009), only *benefits* appeared in the findings. Respondents described the indirect financial factor as the additional security offered to them and their families. Whether the benefits were mandatory (such as sick leave) or voluntary (for example, municipalities willing to act as surety when employees wanted to purchase from local

shops), benefits showed that the municipalities cared for their employees and wanted to increase their well-being.

Chapters 5 and 6 achieved the first two research objectives of the study by identifying employee retention factors used in the selected municipalities and by ascertaining the perceptions held by employees of these factors. Although the researcher anticipated that this study would make a valuable contribution to the knowledge base of employee retention, specifically in a municipal context, it is nonetheless important to be aware of the shortcomings of the study. The section below discusses the limitations and the contributions of the study.

7.4. LIMITATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE CURRENT RESEARCH

While it is believed that this study will contribute to the knowledge base of human resource management and employee retention within a municipal context, it is important to be aware of the study's shortcomings. A limitation of this study is that the findings cannot be extended to the private sector. The study focuses on understanding retention as experienced by the employees within selected municipalities. As a result, these findings may only be useful to similar-sized municipalities in South Africa. The external influence of politics, the reputation of the institutions, the municipal category, and its impact on the organisational structure were not probed further in the study. The political sphere may have a bearing on retention factors but does not negate the usefulness of this study's findings. Reference has been made to studies outside local government, more particularly to private sector institutions (e.g., corporate leadership council). However, the theoretical framework chosen to serve as the structure, support the rationale for the study, the aim, its significance, and its research objectives was developed within the South African municipal context.

Despite these limitations to the study, it made contributions to the body of knowledge regarding B3-B4 sized South African municipalities. While pre-existing theory was used as a basis for the study, the findings identified an employee retention factor, termed "external force factors", emerging outside the scope of the retention factors framework for existing employees as identified by Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009). This identified factor examines external themes outside the control of the municipalities (political influence and climate, municipal category, organisational structure, job evaluations and reputation). Physical and social elements of these themes influence the perception stakeholders have of municipalities and ultimately, the willingness of existing employees to remain and even potential employees to

join these municipalities. To the researcher's knowledge, no studies have been undertaken on employee retention in a municipal context within the Sarah Baartman District municipality. This study contributes to the body of knowledge with regard to employee retention in smaller municipalities within the area of jurisdiction, providing valuable information through its findings and recommendations on ways in which human resource managers, municipal managers and local government as whole, can further develop existing retention strategies for B3–B4 municipalities.

7.5. RECOMMENDATIONS

A prevailing assumption has been that most municipal performance failings are caused by a lack of capacity (Siddle and Koelble, 2012). The capacity crisis in South African municipalities continues to be a struggle for the institutions. Although it is important for municipalities to know why employees leave, it is more critical to determine the organisational and municipal characteristics that make skilled and experienced employees remain (Jones, 2017). Taking into consideration the limitations and contributions of this study, the following recommendations are made to assist municipalities (human resource managers, municipal managers and local government) to further develop strategies to retain skilled and experienced employees.

Retention strategies need to cater to the different needs and desires of employees within local government (municipalities) and thus generational factors need to be considered. Three generations (baby boomers, Generation X and Generation Y) represent today's workforce in most South African organisations and municipalities. Municipalities need to review and develop retention strategies that cater to all generations. As a result, the following differences between generations must be considered when developing retention strategies;

- Baby boomers tend to have a deep identification with the organisation, and they value challenging work (Kupperschmidt, 2000). This generation can be mainly retained through the affiliation, career and work content factor which involves a variety of themes which will be discussed below.

- Generations X employees are an organisation's human capital repository (Jonck, Van der Walt and Sobayeni, 2017; Van der Walt, Jonck and Sobayeni, 2016). By retaining Generation X, municipalities keep the knowledge, skills and expertise within the institution. In addition, municipalities then have in-house access to employees who can

train and develop other newer employees entering the institution. Generation X mainly value being retained through the career and work content factors.

- Generation Y are eager to share their ideas and opinions and want to be allowed the platform to do so (Justice, 2017). They are ambitious individuals who also value rewards, therefore career development and direct financial benefits are a good way of retaining these individuals.

Ultimately, a holistic approach needs to be considered when implementing retention strategies due to the diverse nature of today's workforce. It is evident from this study that the retention of skilled and experienced employees in a municipal context requires more than one traditional method to influence these individuals into staying. Although some retention factors can be more influential than others, key employees attach far more importance to a combination of employee retention factors that take into account their holistic needs and desires (Jones, 2017; Knox, 2013; Morris, 2013; Snelgar, Renard and Venter, 2013; Sinha, 2012; Munsamy and Bosch-Venter, 2009). The recommendations below should be implemented simultaneously.

Municipalities need to create an environment where there is bond and a feeling of connectedness (affiliation) with its key employees. Municipalities must nurture the bond between employees, the community (municipal area) and the municipalities through providing supportive managers and leaders, conducive work environment and conditions, and instilling a sense of commitment and recognition. This can be done in the following ways:

- Employees need to be exposed to management styles that promote and provide a supportive, engaging and conducive environment, especially in the early stages of an employee's municipal career in order to convince them to stay. Municipal managers and directors can ensure this by including key employees in decision-making processes, or by having continual interaction and exchange of information and ideas through weekly, fortnightly or monthly meetings. These meetings can be aimed at engaging employees about their tasks to demonstrate interest or can be various discussions on current national events affecting municipalities or the division. By implementing this, municipal managers or directors initiate a working relationship where employees feel engaged, included and ultimately see that their manager is actively presented, and provides guidance and support.

- Human resource managers and practitioners in consultation with managers of various municipality divisions need to ensure that they create and continuously develop a conducive working environment where the physical and behavioural workplace aspects are considered. Khoso et al. (2016), Samson, Waiganjo and Koima (2015) and Chandrasekar (2011) emphasise the importance of spatial layout and functionality of the surroundings needed for employees to want to work there. Municipalities need to adequately resource employees' immediate environment by providing enough office layout space which is physically appealing with some degree of privacy and serenity for employees to perform their tasks there. Access to equipment (such as computers) and workplace rest areas also need to be provided for employees to connect with their workplace.

- Municipalities need to effectively communicate their purpose and objectives in order for employees to identify themselves as a part of that institution. Čudanov and Kirchner, (2016), Ogamba and Nwuche (2016) and Munsamy and Bosch-Venter (2009) argue that overall loyalty and commitment to an organisation is based on employees identifying themselves with the purpose of the institution. Municipalities need to purposely share their constitutional mandate of providing adequate service delivery to communities, so that employees have a sense of connectedness. The municipality's objectives need to be continuously emphasised in various platforms in municipalities such as in staff meetings, departmental team-building retreats, office posters or even in emails. By engaging with and communicating the institution's objectives and overall purpose, employees will begin to align their value system to that of the municipality, attach personal meaning and eventually commit to the municipality.

Municipalities must strive to create better working environments for employees and make the local government sector an attractive career choice. They need to facilitate employees career paths through training and development and various personal growth opportunities which can include:

- Embedding a culture of learning, through mentoring and coaching relationships, in municipalities to improve the level of service delivery and satisfaction among employees. Municipalities need to utilise their senior managers to create an

environment that stimulates and rewards other employees' career growth. For instance, senior managers can be delegated the responsibility of on-the-job training for other key employees, and

- Making an effort to invest in the knowledge and skills of its employees by providing access to career development programmes such as workshops, courses, conferences and financial assistance to study further needs to be readily available in order for employees to visualise a future in working in municipalities.

Municipalities need to offer work opportunities that stimulate and challenge employees. In addition, there needs to be a level of independence, flexibility and autonomy granted to skilled and experienced employees in order to demonstrate a sense of trust and appreciation from the municipality's side. In consultations with key employees and human resource divisions, municipalities can look into the following:

- Job characteristics can be reviewed to allow for work tasks to be more meaningful and challenging. For many skilled and experienced employees, their jobs are their identities (who they are), and as a result, employees need to use their minds and make a significant contribution (Bussin and Toerien, 2015). Municipalities should better communicate and align their goals of providing adequate service delivery with employees' passion to serve, or with their loyalty to the community area.

- In addition, municipalities need to be able to offer employees job descriptions that are diverse in nature, in order to stimulate them and provide useful feedback on performance.

Municipalities need to ensure that they identify a sustainable way of compensating employees so that those individuals can fulfil their financial responsibilities (such as supporting their families) and material desires. Amos, et al. (2016) discuss a criterion for organisations and municipalities to consider when formulating a compensation policy. The criterion talks to the compensation package being adequate, equitable, balanced, cost-effective, performance-related and acceptable to employees (Amos, et al., 2016). When reviewing their compensation policies:

- Municipalities must ensure that compensation is adequate. Human resource managers and their division need to research and determine whether, depending on job descriptions, employees are being paid above, below or at the prevailing market rates. In addition, municipal human resource managers must communicate and motivate for any changes that need to be made by provisional or national government.

- Municipalities must equitably pay their employees. Employees need be paid in line with their job requirement, abilities and skills. Any additional responsibilities assigned to employees must also be compensated, whether through an increase in salary, additional incentives or private office space.

- Compensation packages should be balanced by including base salary, incentives (vehicle and allowance) and benefits to provide additional financial support for employees.

Depending on their location, municipalities are unique in terms of categories, organisational reputation, culture and the overall relationship between political spheres and administration in the form of employees. Ultimately, for municipalities to effectively implement the above recommendations, various municipality stakeholders need to be aware of the negative impact of political interference and undue political pressure has on the working environment and the institution's image. Whether in the form of mayors, municipal managers, or directors, political leadership should aid municipalities in performing their constitutional mandate and encourage the institution not to be used as political battlefields. Political parties must aim to deploy candidates who have a proven track record of positive change within the local government and find working in municipalities meaningful and impactful.

Throughout the study, the same sentiments are echoed; a municipality's success largely depends on the calibre of individuals employed there. The role of sound and effective human capital in local government should not be underestimated. Numerous authors in the study have shown how municipalities in South Africa have been unable to effectively ensure development in their communities so that people in the area have access to basic services. Worsening service delivery over the years has been directly linked to the lack of expertise in municipalities. This problem will continue to intensify should municipalities be unable to identify effective and practical ways to retain suitably qualified and skilled employees. For this reason, it was

important to gain an in-depth understanding of employee retention as experienced by employees within the municipal context.

Although municipalities operate in a challenging environment, they are still accountable to the communities in their areas. They must actively engage in creating and fostering an environment where employees feel valued and appreciated. No longer can municipalities only look at acquiring key employees; the institution needs to acknowledge, develop, and ultimately retain these individuals to ensure the community's adequate delivery of services.

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Research Aim: The aim of this study is to gain an in-depth understanding of employee retention, as experienced by employees in selected local municipalities in the Sarah Baartman District Municipality.

Target Informants: Employees

Interview Duration: 45–60 minutes

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

A. Descriptive Biographical Data

Gender	
Age (or approximately)	
Education/Qualification level	
Length of service	
Division	

B. Retention

1. Please, tell me about your working experience in the municipality?
2. How would you describe the term employee retention?
3. What are the things that you most value as an employee? Can you please give examples?
4. Do you feel valued and appreciated in the organisation? Please explain why you feel this way.
5. Why did you choose to remain employed at the municipality?
6. Please describe the ways the municipality retains employees? /How does the municipality ensure that exiting employees want to stay?
7. What is your view on the methods used to retain employees? Are those methods effective? Please elaborate.
8. In your opinion, what are the challenges facing municipalities when it comes to retaining highly skilled and experienced employees?

C. Framework/Retention factors

Affiliation

1. Do you feel like you believe in and accept the goals set by the municipality? Please explain how this has impacted your intention to stay in the municipality. Do you feel like there is an alignment between your goals and the municipality?

2. What is your ideal management style? Why? Could you elaborate on the current management style in the municipality and the influence it has on you staying?

3. Please tell me about the relationship with your co-workers. To what extent did your co-workers influence your intention to stay?

4. Please tell me about your working environment. How has it influenced your intention to stay?

Direct Financial

1. Please elaborate on whether compensation was a key factor in you deciding to join this municipality? To what extent does it currently influence your intention to stay?

2. In your opinion, explain whether you perceive your remuneration package as being fair and equitable relative to your work contribution?

Indirect Financial

1. In your opinion, to what extent do the benefits and incentives in your remuneration package influence your intention to stay?

Work-life Balance

1. With regard to work-life balance, please highlight the factors that influenced you to stay in this municipality.

Career

1. Identify and elaborate on the factors that are most important in developing your career path. (What are your expectations from the Municipality).

2. In your opinion, how would the opportunities and access you have had in developing your career influence your intention to stay?

3. How important was job security in your intention to stay? Explain.

Work Content

1. Please highlight which aspects of your work content *(meaningful work, autonomous, task variety, challenging work)* would motivate you the most.

2. In your opinion, which aspects of your current work content motivate you the most? To what extent do these aspects influence your intention to stay? Please explain.

D. Conclusion

From what we have spoken about and based on your experience, what recommendations would you like to add with regards to improving employee retention in the municipality? Is there anything else that you would like to add?

RHODES UNIVERSITY

Makhanda ● *6140* ● *South Africa*

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT
Tel: [+27] 046 603 7558
Cell: [+27] 076 986 6558
E-mail: l.maholo@ru.ac.za

14 August 2017

Dear Sir or Madam

Re: Invitation to conduct research at your institution

Ms. Lisa Maholo (under the supervision of Mr. Mattheus Louw and Mr. Trevor Amos) is a Management Masters student at Rhodes University carrying out research on "An analysis of employee retention: A study of selected local municipalities in the Sarah Baartman District Municipality". The aim of this research is to identify the current staff retention factors and to ascertain the perceptions regarding the current staff retention factors. The participation and cooperation of your institution is important so that the results of the research are accurately portrayed.

The research will be undertaken by conducting individual interviews with about three to four employees. The data to be collected from this research will be recorded and transcribed. The identity of your institution and the employees who voluntarily consent to participate will be treated with complete confidentiality. The collection of this data will require from each participant about thirty to forty-five minutes to complete.

We look to you for guidance in identifying the employees at your institute that would be suitable to interview (at a time and date that suites them).

Attached for your information is a copy of the participant's Informed Consent Form. If you have questions or wish to verify the research, please feel free to contact us.

If you would like your institution to participate in this research, please complete and return the attached form.

Thank you for your time and I hope that you will find our request favourable.

Yours sincerely,

Lisa Maholo   Mattheus Louw and Trevor Amos
Research Student   Supervisors

An analysis of employee retention: A study of selected local municipalities in the Sarah Baartman District Municipality

Participation Consent
I consent for you to approach employees from different departments to participate in the "An analysis of employee retention: A study of selected local municipalities in the Sarah Baartman District Municipality".

I acknowledge and understand:
- The role of the institution is voluntary.   - I may decide to withdraw the institution's participation at any time without penalty.   - Selected employees from different departments will be invited to participate and that permission will be sought from them too.   - Only employees who consent will participate in the project.   - All information obtained will be treated in strictest confidence.   - The employees' names will not be used and individual employees will not be identifiable in any written reports about the study.   - The institution will not be identifiable in any written reports about the study.   - Participants may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.   - A report of the findings will be made available to the institution.   - I may seek further information on the project from Lisa Maholo on (+27) 0769866558.

Full Name:	
Position:	
Signature:	
Date:	

Please return to:	Lisa Maholo l.maholo@ru.ac.za [+27] 076 9866 558

APPENDIX C: INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPATION LETTER AND INFORMED CONSENT

RHODES UNIVERSITY

Makhanda ● 6140 ● South Africa

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DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT
Tel: [+27] 046 603 7558
Cell: [+27] 076 986 6558
E-mail: l.maholo@ru.ac.za

12 November 2017

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Dear Sir or Madam

Re: Invitation to participate in research study

You are invited to participate in a research study entitled "An analysis of employee retention: A study of selected local municipalities in the Sarah Baartman District Municipality". The aim of this research is to identify the current staff retention factors and to ascertain the perceptions regarding the current staff retention factors. The participation and cooperation of your institution is important so that the results of the research are accurately portrayed.

The research will be undertaken by conducting interviews and the data to be collected from this research will be recorded and transcribed. Your identity and that of your institution will be treated with complete confidentiality. The collection of this data will require about thirty to forty-five minutes of your time to complete.

We will provide you with all the necessary information to assist you to understand the study and explain what would be expected of you (the participant). These guidelines would include the risks, benefits, and your rights as a study subject. Furthermore, it is important that you are aware that this study has been approved by a Research Ethics Committee of the university.

Participation in this research is completely voluntary and this letter of invitation does not obligate you to take part in this research study. To participate, you will be required to provide written consent that will include your signature, date and initials to verify that you understand and agree to the conditions. Please note that you have the right to withdraw at any given time during the study without penalty.

Thank you for your time and I hope that you will find our request favourable.

Yours sincerely,

Lisa Maholo   Mattheus Louw and Trevor Amos

Research Student   Supervisors

RHODES UNIVERSITY
INFORMED CONSENT FORM
Department of Management

Research Project Title:	An analysis of employee retention: A study of selected local municipalities in the Sarah Baartman District Municipality
Principal Investigator(s):	Lisa Maholo

Participation Information

- I understand the purpose of the research study and my involvement in it

- I understand the risks of participating in this research study

- I understand the benefits of participating in this research study

- I understand that I may withdraw from the research study at any stage without any penalty

- I understand that participation in this study is done on a voluntary basis

- I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified and my personal results will remain confidential

- I understand that I will receive no payment for participating in this study

Information Explanation

The above information was explained to me by: Lisa Maholo

The above information was explained to me in: □English □Afrikaans □isiXhosa □isiZulu □Other:

and I am in command of this language

OR, it was comprehensibly translated to me by:

Voluntary Consent		
I, , hereby voluntarily consent to participate in the above-mentioned research.		
Signature:	**OR**, right hand thumb print Witness signature:	Date: / /

Investigator Declaration	
I, Lisa Maholo, declare that I have explained all the participant information to the participant and have truthfully answered all questions ask me by the participant.	
Signature:	Date: / /

Translator Declaration	
I, , declare that I translated a factually correct version of: 1. all the contents of this document 2. all questions posed by the participant 3. all answers given by the investigator In addition, I declare that all information acquired by me regarding this research will be kept confidential.	
Signature	Date: / /

APPENDIX E: INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANT CODING QUOTES AND KEYS

Biographical information

Code number	Age	Gender	Education	Position	Length of service	Division

Individual participant quotes and keys

Themes	Quotes and pages	Keys
Employee Retention		
Definition		
Values of employee		
Themes Identified by respondent		
Challenges		
Affiliation		
Organisation commitment		
Organisation support		
Work environment/conditions		
Leading-edge Technology		
Management style		
Recognition of employees		
Direct Financial		
Base salary		
Incentives		
Ownership		
Cash recognition		
Premium pay		
Pay process		
Indirect Financial		
Benefits		
Non-cash recognition		
Medical aid and pension		
Work-life Balance		
Flexible work arrangement		
Location		
Access to family and children facilities		
Career		
Advancement		
Personal growth		

Training		
Employment security		218
Interaction with experts		
Stretch assignment		
Quality of managers		
Work Content		
Variety		
Challenge		
Autonomy		
Meaningfulness		
Feedback		
Miscellaneous/emergent themes		

APPENDIX F: DEPARTMENTAL ETHICAL CLEARANCE

RHODES UNIVERSITY
Grahamstown • 6140 • South Africa

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT ● Tel: (046) 603 8246 ● e-mail: t.amos@ru.ac.za

15 August 2017

Dear Lisa Maholo

Research Ethics Approval Feedback

Research Title: Staff retention: An exploratory study of local municipalities in the Sarah Baartman District Municipality's area of jurisdiction.
Research Type: Master's
Supervisor: Mr Mattheus Louw and Mr Trevor Amos

Nature of application

An original application	√
A re-application	

At a meeting of the Department of Management Ethics Sub-Committee held on 11 August 2017 the Committee resolved to:

Approve the application	√
Approve the application, with stipulations (see below)	
Modifications required (see below)	
The project is to be monitored (see below)	
No approval required	
Not approved (see below)	

Notes (if applicable)**:**

Sincerely

_____   _____
Mark Maritz (Mr)   Tinashe Ndoro (Mr)
Department of Management   Department of Management
Human Research Ethics Committee Member   Human Research Ethics Committee Member

Please note that this letter needs to be considered in the context of the following:
- Ethical Standards for Research on Human and Animal Subjects
- Introduction to ethics of research involving humans
- Rhodes University Ethical Standards Handbook

219

RUTH COETZEE

**Full member: Professional Editors' Guild
Plain language practitioner Academic
specialist**

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34 Heritage Village
Tzaneen 0850

Cell: 072 9339417

Home: 015 0650145

Email: ruthc111@gmail.com

7 March 2020

To whom it may concern

I am an experienced English language editor, accredited by the Professional Editors' Guild, South Africa.

I hereby confirm that I have completed a language edit of the Master's dissertation by **Lisa Maholo** titled: **An analysis of employee retention: A study of selected local municipalities in the Sarah Baartman District Municipality**.

The work was edited to achieve

- clarity of expression and style;
- accuracy of grammar, spelling and punctuation;
- consistency in all aspects of language and presentation.

The author was requested to attend to suggestions for improvement of the text, and is responsible for the quality and accuracy of the final document. References were not included in the language edit.

RCoetzee

Ruth Coetzee (Mrs)

Professional EDITORS' Guild

Ruth Coetzee
Full Member

National Treasurer
Membership number: COE004
Membership year: March 2019 to February 2020

treasurer@editors.org.za

www.editors.org.za