

**Perceptions and Experiences of Senior Managers Regarding Organisational
Transformation and Change within eThekweni Municipality**

By

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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my own original work, unless it is specified to the contrary in the text. All citations and references have been duly acknowledged. The dissertation has not been submitted for a degree at any other university.

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MARCH 2013

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the perceptions and experiences of senior managers regarding organisational transformation and change. To achieve this objective, a qualitative methodology was undertaken and twelve open-ended questions were formulated for the study. Twenty-two semi-structured interviews were conducted. A non-probability sampling technique was utilised, along with snowball sampling and judgement sampling methods to select participants for the study. The sample consisted of twenty-two senior managers from different Units and Departments within the eThekweni Municipality. The data collected were then qualitatively analysed using thematic analysis. The findings of the study were presented under key themes that had emerged during the study. The main findings of the study showed that the municipality had radically transformed in response to the new political dispensation in South Africa, as of 1994. The study highlighted the general consensus amongst senior managers that fundamental transformation of the Municipality was imperative. The participants of the study expressed the view that the former municipal organisation had become misaligned with its environment. It was therefore imperative to ensure fundamental transformation of the municipality. Most senior managers, however, felt that the transformation process was poorly managed. These negative views were attributed to, *inter alia*, the long period of transformation, poor change management, and lack of a clearly articulated organisational culture coupled with some poorly implemented systems. Although negative views were expressed with regard to the transformation process, most senior managers were satisfied with their specific jobs. This surprising finding was attributed to positive personality characteristics and humanistic-existential perspectives that most senior managers were found to possess. Existentialists believe in people taking responsibility for their lives and the humanists stresses the importance of self-actualisation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents	Page
Chapter One: Introduction and Background	
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background	1
1.3 Problem Statement	3
1.4 Aim	4
1.5 Research Questions	4
1.6 Broad Research Question	4
1.7 Overview of Chapters	4
Chapter Two: Literature Review.	
2.1 Introduction	6
2.1.1 Global Context	6
2.1.2 Internal Sources of Change	7
2.1.3 External Sources of Change	8
2.2 Types of Change	9
2.2.1 Planned Change	9
2.2.2 Transactional Change	10
2.2.3 Transformational Change	13
2.3 Theoretical Framework	15
2.3.1 Systems Theory	15
2.3.2 Kotter's Intergrative model of organisational dynamics	20
2.3.3 Burke-Litwin Model of organisational performance and change	23

2.3.4	Models for managing change.....	42
2.3.5	Theories of perceptions	47
2.4	Conclusion	59

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

3.1	Introduction	60
3.2	Research Paradigm	60
3.3	Research Approach	62
3.4	Research Design	62
3.4.1	The Case Study	63
3.5	Research Techniques	63
3.6	Setting of the Study	64
3.7	Target Population	65
3.8	Sampling Techniques	66
3.8.1	Snowball sampling/networking	67
3.8.2	Judgement Sampling	67
3.9	Sample	68
3.9.1	Criteria for selection of sample	68
3.9.2	Unit of Analysis	69
3.9.3	Composition of sample	69
3.10	Research Instruments	72
3.10.1	Interview Guide	73
3.10.2	Structure of the Interview Guide	73
3.11	Pilot Testing	75
3.12	Revision and Fine Tuning of Research Instrument	75

3.13	Ethical Considerations	76
3.14	Access to Organisation	79
3.15	Data Collection	79
	3.15.1 Interviews	79
	3.15.2 Documentation	81
	3.15.3 Identification of data requirements	82
3.16	Data Analysis	82
	3.16.1 Underlying principles of grounded theory	83
	3.16.2 Preparation of data	83
	3.16.3 Developing Codes	83
	3.16.4 Coding Data	84
	3.16.5 Describe and Compare Data	84
	3.16.6 Categorise and Conceptualise Data	86
	3.16.7 Theory Development	86
3.17	Limitations	87
3.18	Validity	87
	3.18.1 Credibility	87
	3.18.2 Authenticity	88
	3.18.3 Criticality	88
	3.18.4 Integrity	88
3.19	Reliability	89
3.20	Conclusion	90

Chapter Four: Presentation and Discussion of Research Findings

4.1	Introduction	91
4.2	Presentation and Discussion of Findings	91
4.2.1	Perceptions of Transformation	91
4.2.2	Transformation through Amalgamation	93
4.2.3	New Organisational Structure	99
4.2.4	New Leadership	104
4.2.5	Change Management	108
4.2.6	Organisational Culture	112
4.2.7	New Policies	117
4.2.8	New Systems and Processes	122
4.2.9	Task Grading and Job Evaluation System	124
4.2.10	Coping with Change	127
4.2.11	Challenges experienced regarding Transformation	130
4.2.12	Views on participants' jobs	134
4.2.13	Perceived Outcomes of Transformation and Change	137
4.3	Conclusion	142

Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1	Introduction	144
5.2	Summary	144
5.3	Limitations of Study	146
5.4	Conclusion	147
5.5	Recommendations of the Study	147

References

Annexure A – Interview Guide

Annexure B – Letter of Consent

Annexure C – Old Municipal Boundary: eThekweni Municipality

Annexure D – New Municipal Boundary: eThekweni Municipality

List of Diagrams

Fig. 2.1	Beyond Change Management	14
Fig. 2.2	Kotter’s Intergrative Model of Organisational Dynamics	20
Fig. 2.3	Burke-Litwin Model of Organisational Performance and Change	24
Fig. 3.1	Gender of Research Participants	69
Fig. 3.2	Racial Demographics of Research Participants	70
Fig. 3.3	Research Participants’ Years of Service	70
Fig. 3.4	Age of Research Participants	71
Fig. 3.5	Cluster/Department of Research Participants	71

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

Major changes within organisational environments have a profound bearing on twenty-first century organisations. Fox (2006) identifies drastic abrupt change to total structures, managerial processes and corporate culture as key facets of transformation and change. Similarly, French, Bell and Zawacki (2005) state that transformation in organisations is fundamental change that entails a new paradigm for organising and managing organisations. Organisational transformation therefore occurs in response to or in anticipation of major change in the organisation's environment. A number of factors within an organisation's environment may trigger change.

In the book, *Change Management*, the following triggers of change are identified: globalisation, technological changes, political changes, social changes, legal or legislative changes and eco-environmental changes. In this regard, Reddy, Singh and Moodley (2003) argue that in South Africa the political change of 1994 radically transformed and changed the local government system. As a sphere of the government system, municipalities across the country had to respond to the political changes within the country. Accordingly, the eThekweni Municipality embarked on a process of transformation and change, which had significant implications for its employees. This study explores perceptions and experiences of senior managers with regard to transformation and change within the eThekweni Municipality. This chapter also outlines the background to the study, problem statement, aim of the study, key study questions, and the research methodology and offers an overview of chapters of the study.

1.2 Background

The White Paper on Local Government (1993) stipulates that apartheid regulations barred most retail and industrial development in black areas. Municipalities in black areas were therefore deprived of the means to meet the needs of local residents. The White Paper on

Local Government (1993) further states that rejection of the past local authorities in the mid 1980s led to popular uprisings and organised boycotts of rents and service charges. Towards the end of the apartheid era, during the early 1990s, municipalities were on the brink of collapse. Reddy, Singh and Moodley (2003) maintain that the crisis within the old municipalities and the new political dispensation of 1994 were major factors that led to the transformation and change of local government in South Africa. To this effect the *Local Government Transition Act 1993* mapped out three phases of transition, namely, The *Pre-Interim Phase, 1994–1996*; The *Interim Phase, 1995–1999* and the *Final Phase, 2000–2010*. These phases were implemented in order to ensure fundamental transformation and change of municipalities. Proclamation LG123 of 1995 highlights how the Durban Transitional Metropolitan Council and four Transitional Metropolitan Sub-Structure Councils were established. This move saw the demise of 48 former Municipalities and Boroughs within the Greater Durban Functional Region. According to the *Local Government Transition Act 1993*, the Sub- Structure Councils were recognised as Transitional Councils that were to function until the first democratic local government (municipal) elections were held. Proclamation 38 of 1996 illustrates that the Transitional Councils were dissolved with effect from 28 May 1996 and replaced by the Durban Metropolitan Council and six Local Councils. This process marked the interim phase in transforming and changing the Municipality. The White Paper on Local Government (1998) explicates that the Metropolitan Council and its Local Councils functioned from June 1996 to December 2000.

The Unicity Committee Report (2000) articulates that the eThekweni Municipality was established after amalgamation of seven local councils into a single municipality. This process marked the final phase in the transformation of local government within the greater Durban functional region. According to the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Notice 5562 of 2000 (the Section 12 Notice), the eThekweni Metropolitan Council was established in December 2000. The establishment of the eThekweni Metropolitan Council resulted in formation of a centralised system of municipal government. Cameron (1998) asserts that centralisation at the local government sphere was viewed as the most appropriate mechanism for addressing the challenges created by the legacy of apartheid

i.e. segregation, fragmented services, inequities, distorted economic distributions, and huge service delivery backlogs. Similarly, Reddy, Singh and Moodley (2003) explain that statutory changes, institutional and administrative changes were imperative for fundamentally changing and transforming municipalities. Consequently, a plethora of issues that needed to be addressed resulted in significant implications for municipal employees.

1.3 Problem statement

The amalgamation of seven autonomous local councils into a single organisational structure resulted in, *inter alia*, the transfer of employees from different municipalities into a single municipal organisation. This was regulated by the *Transfer of Staff to Municipalities Act 1998*. The amalgamation of the municipality required fundamental transformation of systems, processes and consolidation of diverse cultures into a common cohesive organisational culture. Additionally, the paradigm shift within the organisation had to be managed in accordance with organisational change and transformation methodologies. The application of organisational development principles during the transformation period was also imperative. Transformation of the municipality was considered as radical, multilevel, and multifaceted, a complex process which was bound to have severe implications for employees within the municipality. In this regard, French and Bell (1999) argue that organisational transformation is fundamental change that affects the core attributes of an organisation. Furthermore, French, Bell and Zawacki (2005) advocate that organisational transformation and change affects everyone in one way or another within the system that has changed. This study therefore explores the perceptions and experiences of senior managers regarding organisational transformation and change within the eThekweni Municipality.

The findings of the study will be crucial in providing an in-depth understanding of phenomena under investigation. Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) advocate that understanding of study phenomena enables an explanation of theory and contributes to broader social processes. It is therefore anticipated that the understanding that will be

gained from this study will add value and contribute towards a deeper understanding of organisational transformation and the resultant perceptions of the research participants.

1.4 Aim

The aim of the study is to explore perceptions and experiences of senior managers regarding organisational transformation and change within the eThekweni Municipality. The research also attempts to gain an in-depth understanding of perceptions of organisational transformation of the study participants.

1.5 Research Questions

- 1.5.1 How do senior managers perceive transformation within eThekweni Municipality?
- 1.5.2 How do senior managers perceive change within eThekweni Municipality?
- 1.5.3 What were the experiences of senior managers with regard to transformation within eThekweni Municipality?
- 1.5.4 What were the experiences of senior managers regarding changes that occurred within the eThekweni Municipality?
- 1.5.5 What were the challenges faced by senior managers associated with change and transformation within eThekweni Municipality?
- 1.5.6 What were the perceived and experienced outcomes of the transformation process for senior managers?

1.6 Broad Research Question

What are the perceptions and experiences of senior managers regarding organisational transformation and change within the eThekweni Municipality?

1.7 Overview of Chapters

The dissertation is structured as follows;

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

An introduction and background to the study is presented. This is followed by the problem statement, aim of the study, key questions and chapter overview.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Key concepts and constructs for the study are articulated. Appropriate theories and models are elaborated to understand the phenomena under study and provide a theoretical framework for the study. Relevant literature from academic sources, journals, the Internet, organisational reports and documents is examined and provides a context for the study.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

The methodological approach for this research is located within the qualitative premise, with exploratory questions that seek to understand phenomena under study. This chapter specifies the research method and provides justification of the methods and techniques selected. The procedures used to select research participants and ethical considerations are also articulated. An outline of data analysis procedures is highlighted. Challenges encountered in the data collection process are elucidated.

Chapter 4: Presentation and Discussion of Results

This chapter presents a critical analysis of senior managers, experiences and perceptions regarding organisational transformation and change within eThekweni Municipality. The findings of the study are presented, interpreted and discussed.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusion, Recommendations and Limitations

This chapter provides a summary of the study. It discusses its limitations, draws conclusions and makes recommendations emanating from the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

A literature review was conducted to provide a frame of reference for the study. The literature review encompassed books, journals, articles, previous studies, organisational publications, reports and other online literature. Mouton (2001) emphasises the importance of conducting a literature review. He further points out that a literature review prevents duplication of previous research. The literature review was articulated by defining key concepts, constructs, comparing and conceptualisation of key terms specific to this field of study. A critical analysis and evaluation of specific theories, models and validation of concepts was also undertaken.

2.1.1 Global Context

Phenomenal and dramatic changes are affecting the world of work. Thomson (2003) asserts that twenty-first century organisations now exist in turbulent environments, making everything and everyone susceptible to continuous change. Turbulence and complexity have replaced stability and predictability as defining traits of contemporary organisations. Since organisations are embedded within dynamic environments, it is therefore essential to identify factors and sectors within the wider organisational environment that are likely to trigger change. Hodge, Anthony and Gales (1996) explain that an organisation is affected by one or more of the following factors: legal, political, economic, technology, human resources, physical resources, consumer and client factors. Hodge, Anthony and Gales (1996) further elaborate that legal and political factors relate to the laws, regulations and political elements within the environment; economic factors refer to types of economic aspects that the organisation must confront; technology entails efficiencies in business processes and systems, and human resources entail the human skills and competencies that are available. Lastly, the customer and client sector is critical, as organisations have to respond to customer and client demands. Daft (2007) mentions additional factors that affect organisations such as globalisation, maintaining high standards of ethics and social responsibility, achieving rapid response to

environmental changes, re-engineering business processes, managing organisational crises or new customer expectations, shifting to a technology-based workplace, and supporting diversity. According to Daft (2007), these trends contribute to a state of ongoing change which ultimately affects employees within the organisation.

Similarly, Hayes (2002) expounds on the following sources of major change: political factors, legal factors, environmental factors, technological factors and economic factors. These factors are construed as existing outside the organisation i.e. the external organisational system. Champoux (2000) argues that the external and internal organisational environment includes competitors for market share, threats of acquisition, increased interest in global markets and workforce diversity. Ivancevich and Matteson (2002) advocate that in most cases, external factors of change are beyond management control and cause significant change. An examination of the internal and external sources of change is therefore critical in exploring how these factors act as catalysts of change. An analysis of these factors will provide in-depth understanding of how organisations change and transform in response to changes within the broader organisational environment.

2.1.2 Internal Sources of Change

Fox (2006) argues that change may be generated within the organisation, and this type of change is called endogenous change. Kreitner and Kinicki (2007) suggest that internal sources of change come from within the organisation and are a manifestation of human resource problems or managerial behaviour decisions. The Human Resources problems are expressed, on the one hand, tacitly or explicitly by the way employees behave and conduct themselves, through absenteeism, high turnover, or low productivity. On the other hand, managerial behaviour decisions are characterised by change in institutional processes, systems, work design and practices. These elements affect how employees work. French and Bell (1999) present the following additional internal factors of change: organizational systems, policies, practices, technology, and physical work. Internal forces of change are generally considered to be within management control. Champoux (2000) explicates further internal factors of change such as dissatisfaction, discontent,

low job satisfaction and felt stress, loss of control over internal processes, dysfunctionally high conflict, turnover and absenteeism. It is important to observe that these factors are manifested at a micro-individual level. Factors such as staff turnover and increased industrial relations are issues that generally manifest during organisational transformation periods and are associated with internal sources of change.

2.1.3 External Sources of Change

Vecchio (2000) asserts that external sources of change are normally found within the external organisational system. Fox (2006) goes further to point out that change generated from the external environment is called exogenous change. In most instances, exogenous changes cause endogenous change within organisations. Champoux (2000) argues that the external environment includes triggers such as technology, globalisation, workforce diversity, competitors, customers, suppliers, political, economic, and legislation. Changes in the external environment can therefore have profound positive or negative implications on the organisation's success and survival. This study highlights how the new political dispensation of 1994 in South Africa was an external source of change which caused fundamental change across municipalities. French and Bell (1999) indicate that external sources of change are normally experienced outside the organisational system and that most organisations do not have control over such factors. Once the changes take place, the effects permeate the internal organisational system and this necessitates subsequent changes within the organisation. It is important to acknowledge the fact that organisations respond in different ways to change. French, Bell and Zawacki (2005) stipulate that organisational change is typically triggered by a change within the external organisational system, and once sensed, leads to intentionally generated responses by the organisation. These authors argue that the intentionally generated response will determine success or failure for the organisation. Furthermore, the responses that are generated by the organisation are also influenced by the system and nature of the organisation.

2.2 Types of Change

French and Bell (1999) point out that change has different facets i.e. it can be deliberate, planned or unplanned. Its magnitude can be large or small. It can affect many elements of the organisation or only a few. It can be fast, abrupt and revolutionary, or slow and evolutionary. The new state of things can have an entirely different nature from the old state of things. Alternatively, the new state of things can have the same nature with some moderate modifications. Additionally, French and Bell (1999) state that 'change' means that the new state of things is different from the old state of things. Van Tonder (2004) argues that there are two primary types of change, referred to as Type I and Type II change. These types of change can be viewed as two extremes of change. Van Tonder (2004) further states that Type I change entails sequential change which evolves over extended periods of time, does not have a disruptive influence on the system and is generally within the control of the system. Type I change also involves continuous change, described as gradual adjustment of the organisation's internal structure and mode of functioning to continuously changing environmental circumstances. This type of change is also known as Evolutionary Change as it features the slow pace at which change proceeds.

Van Tonder (2004) argues that Type II change refers to major disruptive, unpredictable, paradigm-altering and system-wide transformation, which has a very sudden onset and escalates rapidly to a point where it is perceived as being beyond the control of the system. Type II change is also called discontinuous change. It entails change events or processes that are not continuous with the past or current direction of the organisation. This type of change is sometimes called revolutionary change and is characterised by reorientation which refers to short periods of continuous change that completely transforms the organisation's existing strategies, power relations, structure and systems. It is also apparent that change in organisations requires both planning and management.

2.2.1 Planned change

According to French and Bell (1999), planned change can be divided into two types, organisational development and organisational transformation. The former, also referred to

as first-order change, is transactional, evolutionary, adaptive, fine-tuning, incremental or continuous change. The latter type of change, organisational transformation, is also known as second-order, transformational, revolutionary, recreational, radical, or discontinuous change.

2.2.2 Transactional Change

French, Bell and Zawacki (2005) suggest that transactional change is synonymous with developmental change. This change entails system-compatible change of an incremental nature. The scope is generally limited, and initiated proactively for the purpose of improving efficiency within the framework of the existing organisational system. It entails fine-tuning, fixing problems, making adjustments, and modifying procedures. This type of change involves implementing modest changes that improve the organisation's performance yet do not fundamentally change the organisation. Reorientation is another term used for this form of change; its features entail a step-by-step mode adopted by the organisation in response to external events. Van Tonder elaborates that this type one change involves gradual change and is synonymous with first order change or organisational development. French, Bell and Zawacki (2005) suggest that organisational development concentrates only on work setting changes that either help an organisation better adapt to its current environment or improve its fit into expected future environments. It is an organisational improvement strategy in which management practices, systems, policies, procedures and the organisational structure are targeted for change. This approach produces appreciable, not radical, change in individual employee cognitions as well as behaviour. Kreitner and Kinicki (2007) emphasise that organisational development is a set of planned tools or techniques that are used to implement planned change. Hodge, Anthony and Gales (1996) contend that although organisational development change efforts could address any aspect of an organisation, these approaches aim to improve the social functioning of organisations. The focus is therefore usually on improving and facilitating interactions amongst organisational members. Similarly, Paton and McCalman (2003) assert that the main essence of organisational development is trying to maintain control over an organisation that is in constant change. Senior and Fleming (2006) further explain that organisational

development is a process of change with a framework of recognisable phases that are characterised by the following:

- It is orientated to improving the total organisational system and views the organisation as a complex social system.
- It emphasises goals and processes.
- It has top management support and involvement.
- It is participative, drawing on the theory and practices of the behavioural sciences.
- It involves a facilitator who takes on the role of a change agent.
- It deals with medium to long term planned changes that need to be sustained over a significant period of time and that can adapt to a changing situation.

Robbins and Judge (2010) argue that organisational development is a term used to encompass a collection of change interventions built on humanistic-democratic values that seek to improve organisational effectiveness and employee well-being. Key values that underpin the organisational development approach are articulated by Robbins and Judge (2010) and entail the following:

- Respect for people. It is contended that individuals should be treated with dignity and respect;
- Trust and support. This refers to characteristics such as trust, authenticity, openness and a supportive climate within the organisation. confrontation of organisational problems and participation within the organisation.

Similarly, Francesco and Gold (2005) explain that organisational development attempts to apply social science research theories to create and improve organisational efficiency and effectiveness, and to create organisational health and build capacity for continuous change. Top management usually initiates an organisational development project and has to participate in the change for it to be successful. A number of strategies are utilised to involve individuals and various groups that are part of the change. Kreitner and Kinicki (2007) stress the broad focus of organisational development and that it is value loaded,

implying a diagnosis-prescription cycle that is process-oriented and involves profound change.

Similarly, Slocum and Hellriegel (2009) maintain that the organisational development approach refers to developing employees competencies to solve problems by enabling them to identify and become emotionally committed to improving the performance of the organisation. In order to improve performance, employees need requisite skills and competencies which are developed through human resources development programs. Mankin (2009) explains that line managers and human resources development practitioners will need to develop and improve new competencies in order to contribute to organisational efficiency. Human resources development initiatives are viewed as complementary to organisational development initiatives, as the focus is on the individual and resultant organisational performance. Likewise, developmental change is usually a response to a relatively small, continuous need to improve current operations (process improvement). French, Bell and Zawacki (2005) explain that developmental change concentrates on work setting changes that either help an organisation better adapt to its current environment or improve its fit into expected future environments. This type of change is easy to communicate and navigates a known path. The change is normally incremental in nature. French and Bell (1999) articulate that at a micro-level, when organisational change is directed to employees, it results in cognitive change which then leads to change in behavior. This normally enhances individual development and improves organisational performance.

Drafke (2009) further elaborates that organisational development is a group problem-solving process intended to bring about planned, orderly change for the purpose of improving the effectiveness of the organisation. Drafke (2009) recognises that any problem can be the job of a change agent or organisational development practitioner who attempts to diagnose specific problems, provide feedback related to the findings and then assist in developing strategies and interventions for improving the total organisation. Organisational development is therefore an approach that is construed as one that seeks the betterment of both the individuals and the organisation.

2.2.3 Transformational Change

French, Bell and Zawacki (2005) contend that organisational transformation is massive, multidimensional and requires a multiplicity of interventions that take place over a fairly long period. The nature of the organisation is fundamentally and substantially altered. Transformational leadership style is appropriate for this type of change; it embodies inspiration, which leads to achievement of organisational goals. French and Bell (1999) assert that organisational transformation involves fundamental large-scale change in the organisational strategy, culture, leadership and practices. Organisational transformation is therefore planned and primarily directed at creating a new vision for the organisation. French, Bell and Zawacki (2005) further argue that organisational transformation is an advancement over organisational development owing to its focus on precipitating more profound transformation and change in organisations. Multilevel, fundamental changes occur as a result of transformational change. Transformational change is considered to be quite complex as this type of change results in a radical shift from one state of being to another. The shift is so significant that it requires a shift of the organisational culture, vision and leadership. In this regard, French and Bell (1999) articulate that transformational change or second-order change factors transform the organisation and cause permanent change in the organisational culture, which produces changes in individual cognitions. This apparently moves the organisation towards the achievement of its new goal and purpose. Organisational transformation is also known as “recreation” as it entails significant transformation that affects the core attributes of the organisation i.e. leadership, values, strategy and culture. These changes are normally in response to environmental circumstances that threaten the existence of the organisation. The scope of transformation is huge and the nature is complex and radical. French, Bell and Zawacki (2005) contend that at a micro-level, individual level change results in a change in cognition which leads to a change in behavior. The organisational outcome is improved organisational performance.

Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) assert that transformational change is very difficult to manage as it will in most cases involve the entire organisation. This kind of change has a life of its own and at best, leaders can only influence and facilitate it. The

future state is not always known at the beginning of this kind of change, as it would be emergent. It is suggested that this kind of change is managed by emphasising and facilitating the learning process. Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) suggest that the transforming organisation rises out of the ashes of its old beliefs, behaviour and form, to take on a new direction that in its new world raises its performance capability to a much greater level of effectiveness. It is, however, important to note that achieving effectiveness is also dependent on a number of other critical interventions. Such interventions consequently require proper implementation and appropriate monitoring. Armed with new insight, leaders begin to see the possibility of an entirely new direction that better serves their environment. Notwithstanding this, the path that transformational change follows is not smooth and the process is not as clear as with the other types of change. Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) point out that transformational change is unpredictable and does not conform to a pattern or stages; the major challenge is therefore how to manage such an unpredictable emergent process.

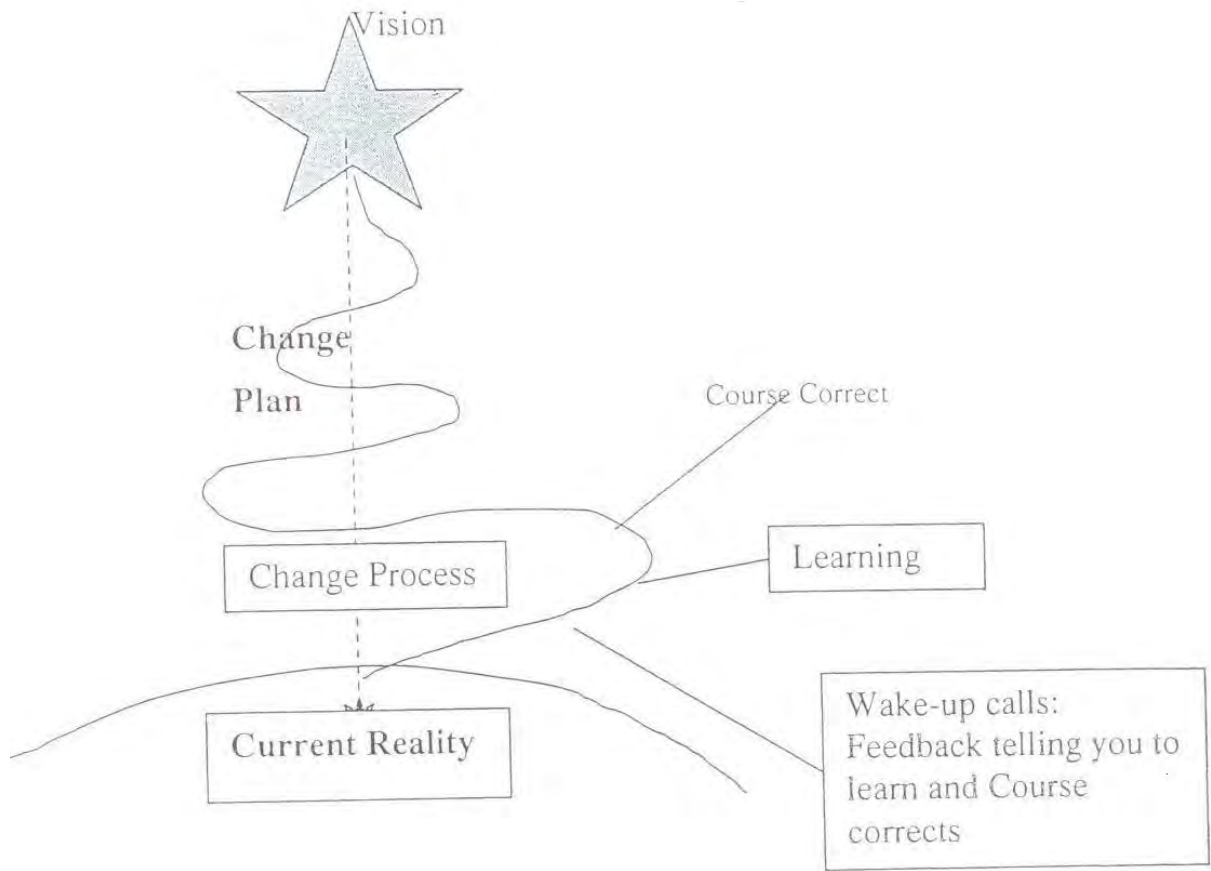


Fig. 2.1: *Beyond Change Management*. Source: Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson (1986).

The figure above shows a pattern of change that is not predictable; the important point is that the organisation is able to respond to lessons learnt and put in place corrective action. Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) argue that irrespective of what would be going on in the organisation, it is very important for the organisation not to lose sight of its vision, purpose and mission. Within the eThekweni Municipality, the vision and purpose of the municipality is spelt out in its Long Term Development Framework (2001). An examination of this vision will be presented later in the study. An analysis of the transformation process within the municipality was undertaken and key interventions that were instituted are highlighted. Consequently, employees' perceptions of organisational transformation and change are attributed to how good or bad the transformation process was perceived to be.

2.3 Theoretical framework

Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004) explain that a theoretical framework positions research within a specific discipline or subject. It reflects the stance that the researcher adopts in research and frames the work. The research then remains within the boundaries of the frame. Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) note that a conceptual framework is the same as a theoretical framework, and that it essentially contains the concepts included in the study. Key concepts for this study were extricated from the literature review and include systems theory, Kotter's integrative model of organisational dynamics, Burke-Litwin's model of organisational performance and change, macro-micro level change models and the perceptual process. These key concepts and theories provided a theoretical framework for the study.

2.3.1 Systems Theory

Van der Waldt (2007) advocates that a system is characterised by the following features: interdependency, interconnectedness and inter-relatedness among elements in a set that constitute an identifiable whole. These are crucial features that define a system. Interdependency and interconnectedness show the importance of reliance on other components of the system. Inter-relatedness highlights the important relationships that are found within a system. These features have important implications for organisations,

which includes their survival and success. French and Bell (1999) emphasise that every system is delineated by a boundary; what is inside the boundary is the system and what is outside the boundary is the environment. This is another important aspect that shows the co-existence of internal factors and external factors within organisational systems. The way an organisation responds to change can be used to classify the type of system that the organisation falls within. Kreitner and Kinicki (2007) distinguish two types of organisational systems: open systems and closed systems. The distinction between a closed system and open system is, however, a matter of degree. Additionally, Kreitner and Kinicki (2007) explain that every worldly system is partly closed and partly open. The key issue is how great a role the environment plays in the functioning of the system.

Champoux (2000) refers to modern organisations as open systems that must constantly interact with their environments in order to survive. This is based on the premise that organisations are open systems with permeable boundaries. Similarly, Spector (2010) sees organisations as open systems, as a kind of organism that exists in constant interaction with its external environment and between its own internal elements. Champoux (2000) further emphasises that open systems have transactions and exchanges with various parts of their external system. It is therefore expected that whenever there is a mismatch between the organisation and the external organisational system, this leads to changes within the organisation. Daft (2007) argues that a closed system does not depend on its environment; it is autonomous and sealed off from the outside world. Similarly, Kreitner and Kinicki (2007) suggest that a closed system is a self-sufficient entity which is closed to the surrounding environment. As a result, the management of closed systems would be quite easy. The environment would be stable and predictable and would not intervene to cause problems. The primary management issue would be to run things efficiently.

Hayes (2002) espouses that in the case of an open system, the system is linked to its external organisational system. It is inter-related and interconnected to both the internal and external organisational systems. French and Bell (1999) acknowledge that open systems are input-throughput-output mechanisms i.e. systems take input from the

environment in the form of energy, information, money, people and raw material. The inputs are converted or transformed and exported as products to the environment in the form of outputs. An analysis of the eThekweni Municipality suggests that it is an open system in active exchange with its environment. The Municipality's Long Term Development Framework (2001) highlights how its vision is aligned to its environment. Its strategies are based on input from its external system, which is translated into outputs that are geared to serve communities. This clearly shows how the municipality is interlinked, interconnected and inter-related to its environment, as well as how it exists within an open system.

Van der Waldt (2007) asserts that open systems have permeable boundaries and the purpose of the organisation must therefore align with the needs of its environment. Likewise, French and Bell (1999) highlights how an organisation's purpose is reflected in its outputs. If the environment does not want these outputs, the organisation will cease to exist. This brief analysis of the two types of systems clearly shows why municipalities that existed prior to 1994 were in a state of crisis and on the verge of collapse. The poor services that were being provided to certain sectors of the communities were deemed to be incongruent with the needs of those communities. The White Paper on Local Government (1993) contends that there was a mismatch between services that former municipalities provided and the needs of some of the communities. The White Paper on Local Government (1993) highlighted the fact that the former municipalities were on the verge of collapse, as they did not respond to the needs of their communities.

Hayes (2002) presents Nadler and Tushman's model, which is an open-systems model that gives greater attention to both internal and external alignment. Nadler and Tushman's model conceptualises the organisation as a transformation process that takes inputs from the environment and transforms them into individual, group and organisational outputs. Hayes (2002) argues that the transformation process includes four major elements: task, individuals, formal organisational arrangements and the informal organisation. In this case, effectiveness is determined by the degree of congruence that exists between the organisation and its environment and between the four internal

elements of the organisation. Hayes (2002) further explains that strategy is presented as an input that manages the organisation's alignment with the wider world or organisational environment.

2.3.1.1 Key Characteristics of Open Systems

French and Bell (1999) highlight the following critical characteristics found within an open system that need to be understood: steady state, dynamic homeostasis system, equifinality and sub-systems. These different attributes of open systems are important in understanding how organisations change or the phases and forms they go through, especially during transformation periods. French and Bell (1999) present a brief analysis of each of the key characteristics of an open-system:

- i) *Steady State*: Systems apparently achieve a steady state or equilibrium point and seek to maintain this equilibrium against disruptive forces that are found either in the internal or external organisational system. The preservation of the system is, however, contrary to the realities that twenty-first century organisations face. This is exacerbated by the fact that although organisations endeavor to maintain equilibrium or a state of no change, in reality all forces move towards change.
- ii) *Dynamic homeostasis systems*: Dynamic homeostasis systems tend to get more elaborated, differentiated, specialised and complex over time. This process is called differentiation. French and Bell (1999) emphasise that increased differentiation, integration and coordination are necessary in this case. It is important for organisations that have grown to this extent to acknowledge this status and to institute relevant measures to coordinate their activities. Co-ordination and appropriate interventions are critical in ensuring achievement of organisational objectives, especially for organisations that find themselves within a dynamic homeostasis system. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of interventions that have been implemented enhance co-ordination and ensure that the organisation is still on course with regard to the achievement of its objectives.

- iii) *Equifinality*: This principle is defined as systems that have multiple ways to arrive at a particular outcome or state i.e. systems that have multiple paths to the same goal(s). Organisational systems that equate to this type of system are normally found amongst private sector organisations. Public organisations such as the municipality normally follow clearly outlined paths to attain their goals. Within the eThekweni Municipality, the system followed to achieve the desired organisational transformation outcome was through the legislative process. This was illustrated by the *Local Government Transition Act 1993*, which mapped the process for change. This process is clearly different from equi-finality. It is likely that systems that have multiple ways to arrive at a particular outcome thrive within a dynamic environment as they are flexible and thus can easily adapt to rapid changes within their environment.

- iv) *Sub-systems*; The existence of a hierarchy of systems within a system is another characteristic of open systems, with each system moving from less important to more important phenomena. Sub-systems seem to be a feature of transforming organisations. This is evidenced by the transitional phases that organisations go through.

An analysis of the municipality from an open systems perspective has several advantages e.g. factors within the municipality are not viewed in isolation, but seen in relation to other forces within the organisational system. The different phases of a transforming organisation can be analysed on the basis of the systems approach. French and Bell (1999) point out that a systems approach encourages analysis of events according to multiple-causation instead of as a result of a single cause. Changing one part of a system influences other parts; multiple effects, not single effects, are therefore expected. This is explained by changes that occur in one part of the organisational system that trigger multiple changes within the organisation.

2.3.2 Kotter's Integrative model of organisational dynamics

The alignment of an organisation's purpose with the external organisational system is crucial for its continued survival. Hayes (2002) alludes to the notion that organisations are systems or inter-related elements embedded in and strongly influenced by a larger system. Kotter's integrative model of organisational dynamics articulates the inter-relationship, interdependency and interconnectedness of the various organisational factors. This study determined that environmental factors had an influence on the internal dynamics within the municipality. Below is a detailed graphic representation of the integrative model of organisational dynamics.

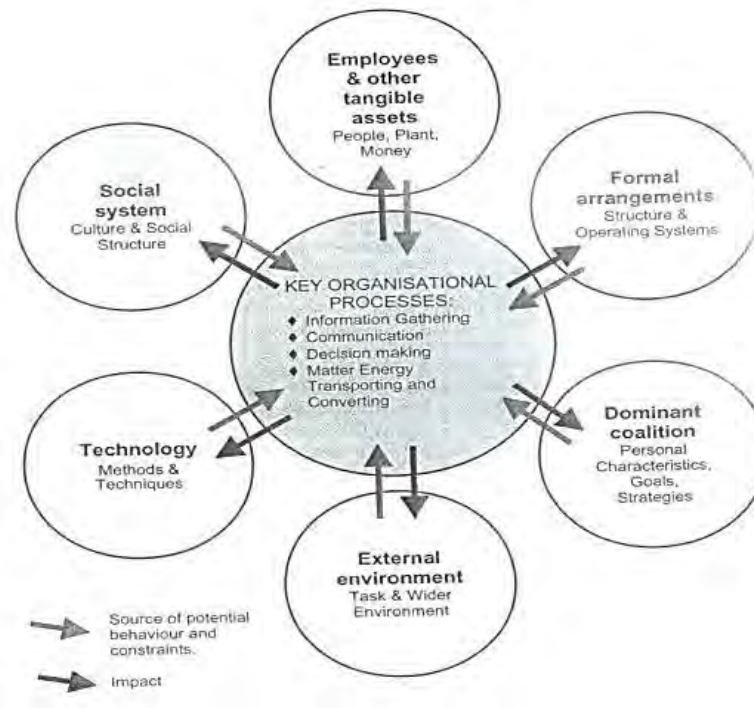


Fig. 2.2: *Kotters Integrative Model of Organizational Dynamics*. Source: Hayes (2002).

Hayes (2002) advocates that the key organisational processes are categorised as informational processes such as information gathering, communication, decision-making and processes that are concerned with the conversion or transportation of matter/energy. Similarly, French and Bell (1999) argue that the collapse or survival of organisations may be attributed to various factors, but the most fundamental one is information.

Information is viewed as feedback from the external organisational system. There are generally two kinds of information, construed as negative feedback and positive feedback. Hayes (2002) maintains that negative feedback measures whether or not the output is on course with the organisational purpose and goals. Positive feedback measures whether or not the purpose and goals of an organisation are aligned with its environmental needs. Information forms a critical component of organisational processes, particularly feedback from the external organisational environment. If negative feedback is not heeded by the organization, this may have significant implications for the organisation's success and survival. Hayes (2002) elaborates on the other six structural elements in Kotter's model which are deemed critical for alignment of the internal and external organisational system.

External environment includes the immediate task-related environment and the wider environment. In the context of this study, it refers to the political changes that occurred in the country where a major factor related to the transformation and change that occurred within the organisation.

Employees and other tangible assets include buildings, plant, inventories and cash. This also relates to human resources management strategies that are essential during transitional periods.

Formal structure entails job design and operating systems. The new organisational structure that was implemented within the municipality will be examined in relation to the need to align the structure to the strategy of the organisation. The structure also has implications for the job design, tasks, roles and responsibilities of employees.

Internal social system includes the organisation's culture and social structure, an investigation of the organisational culture and other socio-cognitive factors within the eThekweni Municipality, which will be analysed to establish linkages with other elements of the system.

Technology is associated with the organisation's core products. The linkage between technology and competencies of the workforce is assessed in accordance with the principles of the systems approach.

Dominant coalition refers to the objectives and strategies of those who control policy-making. This is also linked to the new organisational vision and strategy that was formulated within eThekweni Municipality and its relation to the task environment and internal elements.

In addition, Hayes (2002) suggests that changes to any one of the internal or external elements of an organisational system will cause changes to other elements. This is based on the nature of interdependence among all the elements and the equilibrium-seeking disposition of systems. He cites the following example as causes of misalignment:

- If goals and strategies championed by the dominant coalition are not aligned to the task environment, this results in misalignment.
- If the size of the workforce or other tangible assets are not sufficient to deal with technologies, misalignment occurs.
- If levels of specialisation of the formal organisational arrangements are incongruent to skills and competencies of the workforce, misalignment happens.

Hayes (2002) expounds that sustained misalignment, also known as poor fit, eventually threatens the survival of the organisation. The strong linkages between internal characteristics of an organisation and its external environment have been articulated. Kotter's Integrative model clearly highlights this situation, and notes that the ability of the organisation to adapt to changes is important. Hayes (2002) stipulates that adaptability is important as it determines whether or not an organisation will be able to maintain the required degree of alignment over the long term. Spector (2010) asserts that organisational effectiveness is best achieved when a state of congruence exists between various elements of the open system.

French and Bell (1999) articulate that an important dynamic of the open systems theory is that the forces that are currently at play at the time of certain events are the actual forces that need to be analysed in order to provide an accurate diagnosis. These authors further contend that there is a move from analysing historical events towards examining current events. Therefore, to successfully change a system, the whole system has to be changed, not just the component parts. The systems approach provides an ideal and powerful paradigm for conceptualising transformation and change within eThekweni Municipality, as well as understanding the existence of the municipality within the context of an open system.

2.3.3 Burke-Litwin Model

The Burke-Litwin model for organisational performance and change was used to provide an in-depth understanding of change and transformation of the eThekweni Municipality. French and Bell (1999) present the Burke-Litwin model of organisational performance and change which highlights core factors that ensure fundamental transformation and change within the organisation.

The Burke-Litwin Model of Organisational Performance and Change

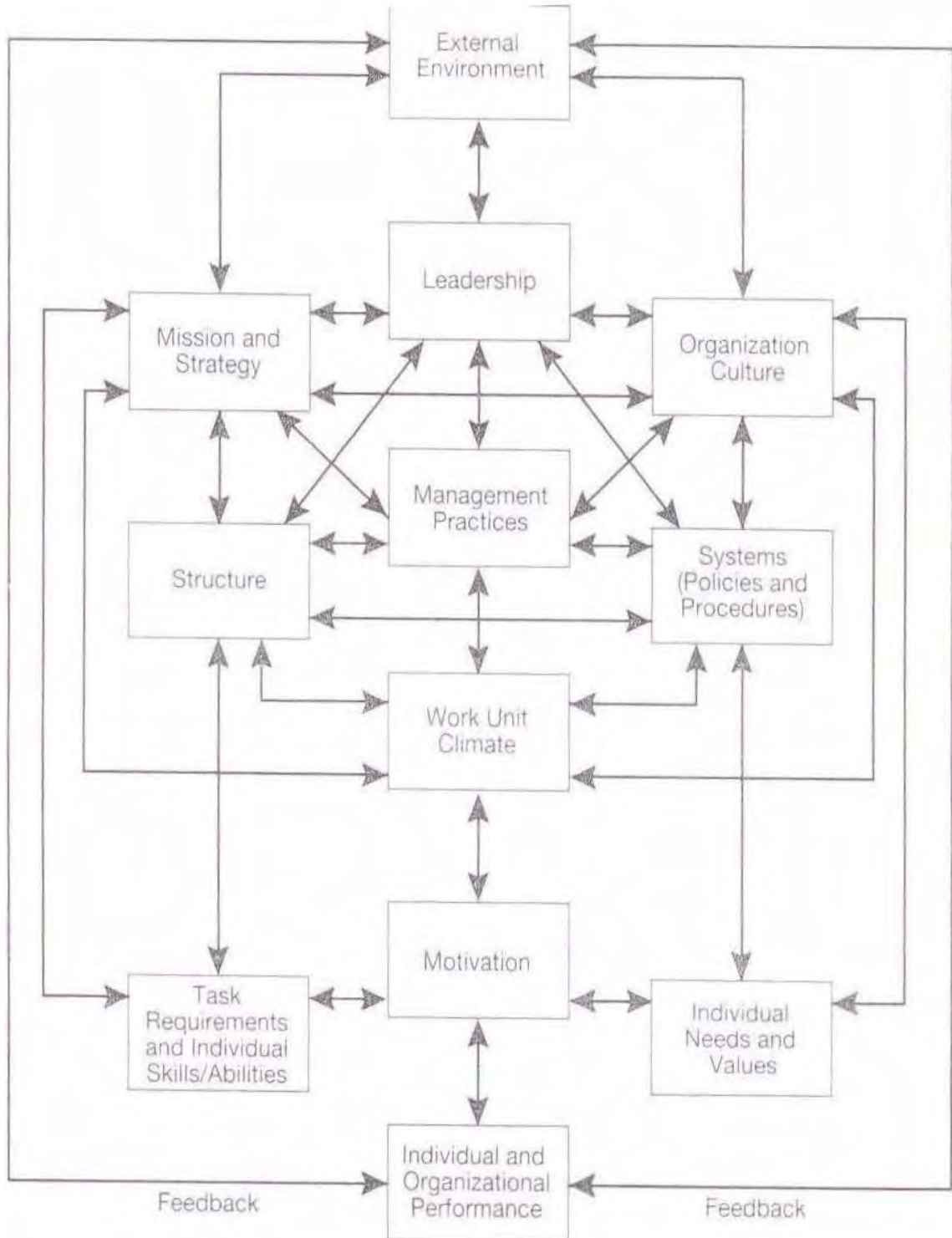


Fig. 2.3: *Burke-Litwin Model of Organisational Performance and Change*. Source: French & Bell.

The Burke-Litwin model is quite significant in implementing planned change. It is imperative to identify the type of change that is required i.e. transactional or transformational change. Thereafter, target interventions must be directed towards relevant features of the organisation that need to be changed or transformed. French and Bell (1999) highlight two distinct sets of organisational dynamics. The first set is primarily associated with the transactional level of human behaviour or the everyday interactions and exchanges that create the organisational climate. The second set of dynamics is concerned with processes of human transformation; these transformational processes are required for fundamental change in the nature and culture of an organisation. The dynamics that are concerned with human transformation are critical as it is generally not easy to ensure transformation. The Burke-Litwin (1999) model of organisational performance and change was used in this study to examine change and transformation interventions within the eThekweni Municipality during its transformation.

The Burke-Litwin model of organisational performance and change provides a clear distinction between first order and second order change. French and Bell (1999) point out that first order change involves change of some features of the organisation but not the fundamental nature of the organisation. First order change can also be classified as Type I change, as articulated by Van Tonder (2004). An overview of Type I change demonstrates that this type of change is incremental, and involves fine tuning and making adjustments. It is also known as transactional change. Second order change or type two change entails fundamentally and substantially transforming the nature of an organisation. It is also referred to as transformational, revolutionary, radical or discontinuous change. These two distinct types of change were discussed earlier in the study.

2.3.3.1 Variables for Transactional Change

The Burke-Litwin model (1999) advocates that changing the structure, management practices and systems results in changes in the organisational climate. This has an impact

on employees. A brief analysis of the key organisational variables targeted for change in the model is provided below.

i) Organisational Structure and Design

Senior and Fleming (2006) contend that an organisation's structure could be regarded as the official definition of the way that particular organisation functions. This is further elaborated by the definition provided by Stacey (2003) in Senior and Fleming (2006), that the structure of an organisation is the formal way of identifying who is to take responsibility for what, who is to exercise authority over whom, and who is to be answerable to whom. The structure is a hierarchy of managers and is a source of authority as well as legitimacy of decisions and actions. The organisational structure is also characterised by relationships between component parts of the organisation. Senior and Fleming (2006) maintain that this also includes formal patterns of interactions and co-ordination, designed by management to link the tasks and individuals and groups in achieving organisational goals. This characteristic is prevalent in all modern organisations.

Francesco and Gold (2005) articulate that another approach to understanding an organisational structure is to examine its variables. The extent of complexity, centralisation and formalisation of every organisation reflects its structure. This has implications during periods of change and transformation. A detailed analysis of the municipal structure and its implications for senior managers was explored and will be presented further on in the study.

Within the local government context, Van der Waldt (2007) defines a municipality's organisational structure as consisting of the Council and the Administration. The Community is served by the municipal organisation. The political structure is made up of the Council and Executive Committee or Ward Forums. The administrative structure is made up of various Units and Departments. Within the eThekweni Municipality, the Units and departments are further grouped into Clusters. The community refers to all residents who reside within the boundaries of the municipality. The *Municipal Structures*

Act 1998 states that the Mayor is the Head of the political sphere and is responsible for policy and providing political leadership. Similarly, the administrative sphere is responsible for implementing the strategy and policies adopted by the Council. Gildenhuis (1997) suggests that there must be a clear understanding of the functions of the Council as Legislative Authority, the functions of the Committees as Executive Authorities, and those of the City Manager and relevant management teams as Administrative authorities.

The political sphere/structure and the administrative sphere/structure differ on the one hand and yet supplement each other on the other. This is evidenced by the fact that the political component cannot exist on its own; it requires the administrative component to implement its policies. The Administration also cannot exist in isolation as it requires directives on priorities that need to be implemented from the Political sphere. The key focus of this study is, however, on fundamental transformation that occurred within the Administrative sphere/structure of the municipality. An in-depth analysis of the role and functioning of the political sphere/structure was therefore not done.

ii). Factors that Influence the Organisation's Structure

A number of factors influence an organisation's structure. Some of these factors will be examined in the study. Senior and Fleming (2006) highlight the important links as the relationship between organisational strategy and organisational structure: the relationship between organisational culture and politics as further mediating variables that indirectly influence the structure of an organization, and creativity and leadership as other important determinates of organisational structure. It is equally important to highlight important principles of organisational design within the local government context. In this regard, Gildenhuis (1997) contends that before any Municipal reorganisation, it is imperative to understand the following principles which are classified as general principles:

- Agreements on the division of functions, or authority between metropolitan councils and other local councils that are to be amalgamated in the new structure.
- A clear understanding of the role of the political sphere and that of the administrative sphere.
- An organisational model must always suit the local circumstances.
- Priority of needs should be established as this will have an impact on the structure.
- The goals and objectives of the municipality must be taken into account.
- Reasonable and equitable manner of dealing with redundant employees.
- Quality and quantity of personnel required must be based on goals and objectives.
- Capacity for knowledge, skills and experience must be developed through relevant strategies.

Management principles advocated by Gildenhuis (1997), are presented as follows:

- The structure should create circumstances for effective and efficient management.
- The hierarchical structure must provide for optimum span of control.
- Formal and informal, horizontal and vertical communication lines are to be provided to ensure proper co-ordination of information.
- Clear definition of organisational goals, objectives, functions and service activities, as well as the responsibility for executing such functions, must be clearly provided.
- Proper job descriptions and job evaluations must be provided for. Remuneration should be determined independently for each position based on the qualification, requirements and extent of responsibility as well as market value of the position.

Similarly, Section 51 of the *Municipal Systems Act 2000* states that a municipality must within its administrative and financial capacity, establish and organise its administration in a manner that enables it to be responsive to the needs of the local community. Van Der Waldt (2007) refers to the organisation of the administration that takes place according to the main functions performed by a municipality. Most of these functions are in terms of Schedule 4B and 5B of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996). The restructuring of the administrative structure of the eThekweni Municipality was therefore

reviewed against this backdrop and against key concepts discussed in this study. Furthermore, the municipality's Long Term Development Framework and Integrated Development Plan, which is the municipality's vision and strategy, were also taken into account.

Hodge, Anthony and Gales (1996) identify five contextual factors that must be considered in determining the most appropriate organisational structure: organisational goals; environments; technology; size; and culture. The inability to take cognizance of these factors when designing an organisational structure generally results in an inefficient and ineffective organisation. Furthermore, French and Bell (1999) advocate that an organisation's structure and design play a crucial role in its function. In the biological sciences, structure defines function:, so too for organisations. Similarly, Senior and Fleming (2006 : 108) compare a well-structured efficient and effectively functioning organisational structure to a healthy human being in that all components are required to ensure a fully operating effective organism. The analogy is that the brain is the organism's strategy; the skeleton the structure; the blood supply the financial resources; the nervous system and muscles, the people, technology and information system. Therefore, without an appropriate structure (the skeleton) to provide basic support, the organisation will wobble and possibly collapse. Without strategy (brain) to direct it, the structure will become misaligned to its purpose. This has a direct impact on the functioning of the organisation. Accordingly, an analysis of the eThekweni Municipality's structure was undertaken to fully understand its implications for senior managers. Moodley (2004) articulates that the inward looking structure and design of the previous municipal structure had to be changed since it no longer suited the mission and strategy of the new organisation. This was explored and will be discussed further in the study. Senior and Fleming (2006) illustrate some underlying dimensions that are essential in establishing an organisation's structure as:

- *Structuring of activities* - this entails the formal regulation of employee behavior through processes of specialisation, standardisation and formalisation;

- *Concentration of authority* - the extent to which decision making is centralised at the top of the organisation or at other levels where authority lies in the hierarchy to make decisions that have an impact on the whole organisation;
- *Line control of workflows* - by line management rather than through impersonal procedures;
- *Configuration* - the width and height of the role of the structure i.e. the layers that are there and the number of people who typically report to anyone person.
- *Traditionalism* - how many procedures are understood rather than having to be written down; how commonly accepted is the notion of the way things are done around the organisation.
- *Support component* - relative size of the administrative and other non-workflow personnel performing activities auxiliary to the main workflow.

In order to highlight the importance of an organisational structure, and factors such as reporting lines, span of control, are noted as having major implications for senior managers. Roles and responsibilities, relationships, efficiency and effectiveness, and communication are additional factors that are dependent on the organisational structure. In this regard, Vecchio (2000) argues that organisational design is based on several important dimensions, such as:

- *Decentralisation versus centralisation.* Decentralisation is the degree to which decision-making occurs lower down in an organisation's hierarchy and in centralisation there is less participation by employees. Generally, the larger the amount of latitude allowed employees for expenditure, the greater the decentralisation.
- *Tall versus flat structure, which* refers to the number of levels of authority and the width or size of each level. Tall organisations have more levels than flat organisations.
- *Unit and Chain of command.* Unit of command relates to the reporting lines where every subordinate should have one and only one superior. Chain of command refers to the flow of information and authority i.e. information proceeds from level to level.

These dimensions of an organisation characterise different types of organisations. Vecchio (2000) explains that the most prevalent types of organisation design in use are the functional, product and a matrix or hybrid i.e. a combination of functional and product. These organisational designs present both advantages and disadvantages. This study will, however, only focus on the functional design that was adopted by the eThekweni Municipality. Fincham and Rhodes (2005) note that functional designs are closely associated with bureaucratic structures and have a strict division of labour, formal rules and procedures, and tight accounting and record keeping systems. Slocum and Hellriegel (2009) suggest that bureaucratic organisations function effectively when the environment is stable. Bureaucratic organisations also thrive when management require tight centralised control of day-to-day decisions. Additionally, Fincham and Rhodes (2005) point out that another advantage of the bureaucratic organisation relates to providing a stable career ladder for its employees. Hodge, Anthony and Gales (1996) state that the mechanistic or bureaucratic organisations are best suited for stable, simple environmental conditions and organic organisations are best suited for complex and unstable environmental conditions. Furthermore, Fincham and Rhodes (2005) assert that the biggest disadvantage of this design is its ineffectiveness i.e. the bureaucratic “red tape” and the inward focus on internal procedures. The pursuit of internal efficiency therefore over-rides the overall organisational objectives. This should, however, not be the case. The over-riding advantage and focus must be the ability to respond to changes within the organisation’s environment, since this is linked to the success and survival of the organisation. Hodges, Anthony and Gales (1996) suggest that the organic structure allows flexibility in responding to new conditions because they are less constrained by rules.

An analysis of organisational structures highlights some critical factors that have implications for senior managers. Hodge, Anthony and Gales (1996) articulate that the characteristics of an appropriate structure include clear lines of authority and accountability, effective differentiation and integration and well-developed and clear communication channels. In the same way, consideration is provided by Daft (2007) regarding the new trends to move away from highly structured systems based on the

mechanical model towards loose, more flexible systems. Daft (2007) suggests that when an organisational structure is out of alignment with organisational needs, one of the following appears: decision-making is delayed or lacking in quality; the organisation does not respond innovatively to a changing environment; employee performance declines and goals are not met; too much conflict is evident. The analysis of organisational structures that has been done is essential as this determines if the eThekweni Municipal structure is indeed a viable mechanism for achieving organisational objectives. This will be analysed further in the study.

iii). Management practices and systems

Management practices and systems involve a change in the organisation's policies and procedures. Reddy, Singh and Moodley (2003) advocate that the policies and systems of the former municipalities were no longer congruent with the new municipal organisation, and could therefore no longer serve the new organisation. It was thus imperative to develop and implement new policies and systems that were in line with the new organisation. In this regard, a number of policies and systems within the municipality were changed to fit the new vision and mission of the new organisation. A brief discussion of the key policies and systems that were implemented will be presented further in the study.

iv). Organisational climate

Robbins (1993) asserts that organisational climate is defined as people's perceptions and attitudes about the organisation. Organisational climate is the shared perceptions of organisational policies, practices and procedures, both formal and informal. Organisational climate is the way members perceive, and feel about the personality of the organisation at a particular time. Perceptions of senior managers are therefore deemed useful in determining if the organisational climate was considered good or bad by the senior managers. Perceptions are a powerful conceptual tool and impressions that are formed are normally perceived as reality. It is however argued that perceptions are easy to change since they are built on employees' reactions to current managerial and

organisational practices. A critical examination of the concept perceptions is provided further in this chapter, since this concept is central to this study.

2.3.3.2 Variables for Transformational Change

According to the Burke-Litwin model, organisational transformation identifies three main variables that are targeted to ensure fundamental transformation. These are vision, mission and strategy; leadership, and organisational culture. French and Bell (1999) point out that the vision consists of the guiding beliefs and principles of the organisation; an enduring organisational purpose grows out of these beliefs. A mission that is consistent with the organisational purpose is also important. Components of the organisational vision affect a “deeper” level in the organisation than those traditionally targeted for change by organisational development approaches i.e. work settings. The key features of organisational transformation include mission and strategy; leadership styles and organisational culture, all key features which are analysed below. The study will investigate if these key features were, *inter alia*, successfully targeted for transforming the eThekweni Municipality.

i). Vision & Strategy for Organisational Transformation

Fox (2006) maintains that the organisation’s vision maps out the course to be charted by the organisation. The vision is normally aligned to the organisation’s broader environment and is crafted to ensure that the organisation survives and prospers. The goals and implementation plans are fine-tuned in the organisation’s mission and strategy. French and Bell (1999) assert that an organisation’s vision and strategy are key attributes that are targeted to fundamentally transform an organisation. Within the eThekweni Municipality, the Long Term Development Framework (hereinafter referred to as the LTDF) encapsulates the municipality’s vision. It is a twenty-year strategic framework for the eThekweni Municipality. Moodley (2004) advocates that the adoption of the LTDF was a milestone in the transformation of the Municipality; another milestone was marked by the development of the Integrated Development Plan (hereafter referred to as the IDP). Moodley (2004) explains that the IDP is a short-term five-year management tool used to realise the long-term vision of the municipality. Accordingly, senior

managers play an important role in the successful implementation of this strategy. It will therefore be interesting to establish experiences of senior managers in this regard, and the findings will be presented further on in the study.

ii). Analysis of vision and strategy adopted by the Municipality

A brief analysis of the vision and strategy adopted by the eThekweni Municipality is presented. This will enable a deeper understanding of the magnitude and complexity of transformation and change within the municipality. The Long Term Development Framework sets out the strategic vision for the eThekweni Municipality over the next twenty years. Three types of actions needed to achieve the eThekweni Municipality's vision of a high quality of life for all its people are listed in the Long Term Development Framework as follows:

- actions to unwind the legacy of apartheid and correct wrongs of the past.
- actions to build on current strengths of the city.
- actions to create new skills and technology and invest in the future.

The municipality's strategy is contained in its IDP. Moodley (2004) advocates that the IDP focuses on addressing more immediate challenges, integrates and coordinates the actions of various departments and drives the city's planning and budget, to maximise the developmental impact. In addition, Van der Waldt (2007) argues that integrated development planning is a participatory planning process aimed at integrating sectoral strategies in order to support the optimal allocation of scarce resources between sectors and geographical areas and across the population in a manner that promotes sustainable growth, equity and the empowerment of the poor and marginalised. A complex process of transformation, alignment and integration had to take place within eThekweni Municipality. The experiences of senior managers in relation to the IDP as a transformation strategy will be examined and discussed further in the study.

iii). Leadership

A number of definitions for leadership have been provided by different authors and researchers. However, Chamorro-Premuzic and Furnham (2010: 191) contend that regardless of the framework and approaches used to conceptualise leadership, the term always denotes the following:

- *Excellence and outstanding achievement* within one's field or professional career. Thus leaders are people who excel at what they do and are recognised as competent by other people in the field.
- *The capacity to influence others, which* may involve direct leadership when there is personal interaction with the leader or indirect leadership, if the leader's impact is merely based on his/her ideas or products.

Drafke (2009) notes that leaders are able to lead only when they can effectively influence people over extended periods of time. Leaders are more likely to retain their influence and the support of their followers when their behaviour sets a good example. Drafke (2009) clarifies that the behaviour set that is desirable includes confidence, honesty, assertiveness, enthusiasm, self-awareness, intelligence, initiative, achievement, and decisiveness. These qualities are important as they provide a guide to followers, particularly when an organisation is undergoing major transformation and change. Chamorro-Premuzic and Furnham (2010) emphasise additional goals that leaders must fulfill in order to be successful, these entail firstly building credibility in the legitimacy of his or her followers (image management). Secondly, a leader must develop relationships with subordinates that enable those subordinates to move toward individual and collective goal attainment (relationship development). Finally, leaders must effectively use the knowledge skills and material resources present within their groups to accomplish the group's mission. The goals highlighted above augur well for dynamic organisational environments in which contemporary organisations exist.

Leadership is also defined by a number of approaches such as the trait approach, situational/contingency approach and leadership style/behavioural approach. Chamorro-Premuzic and Furnham (2010) explain that trait approaches seek to identify distinctive psychological characteristics and personal attributes that define and distinguish between leaders and non-leaders; situational or contingency approaches refer to contextual or situational factors that facilitate or inhibit leadership. Leadership style or behavioural approaches highlight different leadership styles and how they impact on followers and organisations. This study focuses on a specific segment of the behavioural approach, namely, the transformational leadership style, as it is deemed most suitable for transforming organisations. French and Bell (1999), assert that transformational leaders are leaders who inspire followers to transcend their own self-interest for the good of the organisation and are capable of having a profound and extraordinary effect on their followers. Transformational leaders are known to cause second order change. Furthermore, Fincham and Rhodes (2005) suggest that core attributes of transformational leadership include the following characteristics;

- *Charismatic communication style*; transformational leaders are able to engender trust and respect. Their communication style both motivates and intellectually stimulates followers.
- *Communicating a vision*; transformational leaders set challenging goals for followers and these usually cause followers to question traditional approaches, values and beliefs.
- *Implementing a vision*; transformational leaders are able to energise their followers and focus their efforts on achieving goals.
- *Individualised consideration*; transformational leaders give their followers the feeling that they are treated as unique individuals.

The impact of leadership on organisational performance and survival is significant, especially during transformational periods. Since fast-paced modern day organisations exist in dynamic and complex environments, there is a need for transformational

leadership. Fincham and Rhodes (2005) contend that transformational leadership is equated with adaptive change and the leader's skills should include the following;

- *Creating agendas*; by establishing direction; developing a vision of the future; developing change strategies.
- *Building networks*; through alignment of people and inculcating vision in persons/teams.
- *Execution*; by inspiring and energising others to overcome barriers.
- *Outcomes*; through initiating potentially revolutionary changes and creating order out of chaos.

The type of leadership engaged to transform the municipality was explored against this backdrop. The Burke-Litwin model also highlighted leadership as a key intervention targeted to ensure fundamental transformation within an organisation. It is therefore imperative to assess the leadership engaged to ensure fundamental change and transformation of the municipality, since the leader leads the transformation process. French and Bell (1999) stress that the transformational leadership style is most appropriate for organisations undertaking major restructuring or transformation. Likewise, Gildenhuis (1997) contends that the main proviso for success is the appointment of well qualified and competent public managers; for example, the qualifications of the City Manager and the top managers, apart from their relevant professional qualifications, should preferably be a post-graduate qualification in public management or administration.

Gildenhuis (1997) argues that it is imperative that leadership and senior managers have requisite knowledge, skills and competencies. Other relevant personal and psychological qualities are required as well. These attributes are critical in successfully implementing the new organisational interventions as well as for efficient and effective management. Van der Waldt (2007) further notes that Senior Management grapples with various operational matters as well as Human Resources matters that arise during transitional periods e.g. low staff morale, increased labour unrest, and low productivity. As such, it is

critical to have senior managers who possess the correct competencies, attributes and temperament as they are tasked with handling a number of contentious matters that arise during transitional periods. It is important to note that a great deal of emphasis is placed on leadership, as poor leadership has detrimental effects for the organisation. Fincham and Rhodes (2005) point out that corporate failure within organisations is the direct result of poor leadership. These are extreme manifestations of poor leadership; other more common outcomes of poor leadership include employee stress, disenchantment, lack of creativity, high staff turnover and low productivity. Poor leadership ultimately results in poor organisational effectiveness. It is thus imperative that the right leader leads the organisation, particularly during organisational transformation processes.

iv). Organisational Culture

Robbins and Judge (2010) define organisational culture as a system of shared meaning held by organisational members that distinguishes the organisation from other organisations. On close scrutiny, the shared meaning is actually a set of key characteristics the organisation values. Similarly, Hodge, Anthony and Gales (1996) define organisational culture as a two-level construct that includes both observable and unobservable characteristics of the organisation. At the observable level, culture includes aspects such as architecture, dress, behavior, patterns, rules, stories, myths, language and ceremonies. Hodge, Anthony and Gales (1996) further describe the unobservable aspects as consisting of shared values, norms, beliefs and assumptions of organisational members. These aspects of organisational culture entail deep-seated assumptions, values and beliefs that are enduring, often unconscious and difficult to change. Furthermore, Robbins (1993) emphasises that culture is a pattern of basic assumptions invented, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems. This definition points out that culture involves assumptions, values, beliefs, rituals and learning. A further analysis of culture is articulated by Ivancevich and Matteson (2002), who define culture as consisting of three layers:

- *Layer I*; includes artifacts and creations which are visible but often not interpretable, such as art, technology, visible and audible behaviour patterns, symbols, language, ideologies, rituals, myths, an annual report, and a newsletter.
- *Layer II*; includes the values or the things that are important to people. Values are conscious, effective desires or wants. They are testable in the physical environment, only by social consensus. There is a greater level of awareness at this level.
- *Layer III*; includes the basic assumptions people make that guide their behavior, such as assumptions that inform people how to perceive, think about and feel about work, performance, goals, human relationships and the performance of colleagues. These are often taken for granted and are invisible and preconscious.

Fincham and Rhodes (2005) advocate that culture has an evaluative element involving social expectations and standards, the values and beliefs that people hold central and that bind organisational groups. It is also a set of material elements or artifacts i.e. signs or symbols that the organisation is recognised by; they are events, behaviours and people that embody the culture. The medium of culture is social interaction, so shared language is particularly important in expressing and signifying a distinctive organisational culture. Culture is therefore that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, law, custom and many other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Kreitner and Kinicki (2007) emphasise another aspect of culture which entails giving members an organisational identity, facilitating collective commitment, promoting social stability as well as shaping behavior by helping members make sense of their surroundings. Culture is therefore something that an individual has and something that an organisation has. It influences the way individual members interact, behave and respond to organisational and environmental factors.

Robbins and Judge (2010) argue that culture performs a number of functions within the organization, such as providing a defining boundary by creating distinctions between one organisation and others; conveying a sense of identity for organisational members; facilitating the generation of commitment to something larger than one's individual self-

interest; enhancing the stability of the social system; providing appropriate standards for what organisational members should do, and serving as a sense making and control mechanism that guides and shapes the attitudes and behavior of employees.

Hodge, Anthony and Gales (1996) contend that organisational culture orients or directs organisational members to manage problems and their surroundings. The role of culture in influencing employee behavior has become increasingly important within modern day contemporary organisations. As organisations are subjected to rapid and radical changes, a strong organisational culture ensures that organisational members are guided in the right direction. Spector (2010) emphasises that culture shapes behaviours, behaviours produce results and results reinforce culture; culture thus makes an appeal to the higher ideals and values of employees. It provides identity, commitment and meaning for organisational members. In the same way, Ivancevich and Matteson (2002) suggest that culture is also known to sustain people throughout periods of difficulty and serves to ward off anxiety. One of the ways to achieve this is by providing continuity and stability. Although culture offers a number of advantages for organisations, it may also be perceived as a liability to organisations. Robbins and Judge (2010) highlight the potentially dysfunctional aspects of culture as follows:

- *Barriers to change*, when the shared values are not in agreement with those that will further the organisation's effectiveness. This is most likely to occur within dynamic organisations and affects adaption and change.
- *Barriers to diversity*, when strong cultures exert pressure on employees to conform, and this impedes innovation and limits acceptable values.
- *Barriers to mergers/amalgamation*, when the success of a merger or an acquisition is also dependent on how well the different organisational cultures match up once the organisation is amalgamated or merged.

Similarly, Spector (2010) notes that a strong culture may also hinder adaptiveness and change, by focusing attention exclusively on the past, while sacrificing the need to respond to future changes. Notwithstanding these few potential limitations of

organisational culture, the critical role that organisational culture plays cannot be underestimated. It is therefore important to highlight the pervasive nature of organisational culture. Senior and Fleming (2006) explain that it virtually affects all aspects of organisational life. Organisational culture can therefore be manifested in a multitude of ways. Finchman and Rhodes (2005) purport that since organisations exist in current climates of unpredictable, fast-paced change, a strong organisational culture fosters success, excellence and innovation. Culture is also construed as being symbolic and unifying, which is central for modern day organisations. Since organisations have to respond to rapidly changing environments, relevant strategies that ensure success are critical for organisations. Organisational culture is also determined by how strong or weak the culture is. Robbins and Judge (2010) note that a strong organisational culture has a great influence on behavior of organisational members due to the high degree of sharedness, intensity and agreement among members about what the organisation stands for. Furthermore, such unanimity of purpose builds cohesiveness, loyalty and organisational commitment. Hodge, Anthony and Gales (1996) note that organisational culture may change and evolve in response to changes within the organisation and its environment. Robbins and Judge (2010) argue that most large organisations have a dominant culture and numerous sets of sub-cultures. Robbins and Judge (2010) contend that the dominant culture expresses the core values shared by a majority of the organisation's members and that sub-cultures tend to develop in large organisations to reflect common problems, situations or experiences that members face. Such sub-cultures are likely to manifest within departments, regions, units or functional areas. The perceptions and experiences of senior managers about the new organisational culture were explored to determine if the organisational culture changed and the effect on deep-seated assumptions, values and beliefs. The findings will be discussed further on in the study.

Culture is one of the key factors highlighted by the Burke-Litwin model as a key intervention targeted to ensure fundamental transformation. This study examined if there was a paradigm shift and if a new organisational culture was developed within the municipality, with the findings presented further on in the study. The Burke-Litwin

model of change was used to analyse a series of key interventions that were instituted to fundamentally transform and change the eThekweni Municipality. This model allowed a critical analysis of the change strategies and was powerful in unraveling organisational transformation and change imperatives within the municipality.

2.3.4 Models for managing change

Two models for managing change are presented here. One focuses on macro-organisational level change and the other on micro-organisational level change. An analysis of the macro-organisational level change management model will be done firstly.

i). Change Beyond the Quick Fix Model

French and Bell (1999) argue that a comprehensive model for managing change by Ralph Kilmann specifies the critical leverage points for organisational change. *Managing Beyond the Quick Fix* model has five stages, namely:

- Initiating the program
- Diagnosing the problems
- Scheduling the “tracks”
- Implementing the “tracks” and
- Evaluating the results

ii) Initiating the programs

This entails getting commitment from top management. The programs that are initiated take from one year to five years to complete. An examination of the strategies undertaken to fundamentally transform the municipality did not show programs and strategies that were instituted for managing change during the transitional period. This is contrary to the first leverage point of managing change identified by Ralph Kilmann. Implications of this for senior managers will be examined further in the study.

iii). Diagnosing the problem

The second stage of the model entails diagnosing the problem, which requires an analysis of the problems and opportunities facing the organisation. Within the eThekweni Municipality, an Internal Perception Study was undertaken in 2007 to diagnose perceptions and beliefs of employees on the changes within the organisation. According to the Internal Perception Study (2007), a number of critical areas that needed to be addressed were highlighted and included, *inter alia*, change management, communication, values, leadership and organisational culture. The diagnostic process was, however, only initiated in 2007, seven years after establishment of the new organisation. This timeframe undertaken to diagnose problems within the organisation is likely to have negative implications. Such implications will be explored further in the study.

iv). Scheduling the “tracks”

The third stage of the model refers to scheduling the tracks and in this regard, five critical leverage points are identified. When these function properly, they cause the organisation to be successful. French and Bell (1999) point out that these five tracks include the culture track; the management skills track; the team building track; the strategy-structure track and the reward system track. Scheduling the tracks entails developing a strategy for key areas that are highlighted in an endeavour to manage change. This strategy was used to examine and explore the critical areas and interventions instituted to manage change within the municipality.

v). Implementing the “tracks”

The fourth stage in the model entails implementing the tracks. Consideration is provided by French and Bell (1999) that the tracks are implemented in a phased sequence. The first sequence would be the culture track, followed by the management skills track, the team building track, the strategy-structure track, and lastly, the reward system track. The sequence for implementation of these tracks is fundamental to successful change. An investigation and comparison of this model and the implementation of change tracks within the municipality will be explored further in the study.

vi). Evaluating the results

The final stage of the model requires a critical analysis of what each track entails and does for the organisation, and this is undertaken as part of the process of evaluating the results. French and Bell (1999) suggest that the culture-track enhances the following factors: trust, communication, information sharing, and willingness. It is also noted that the management skills track provides all management personnel with new ways of coping with complex problems and hidden assumptions. These factors are immensely critical for successful change. French, Bell and Zawacki (2005) find that in most instances the personnel interventions are not addressed and are overlooked. This always leads to unsuccessful change or short-lived success in organisational change. It will be useful to establish if this was also overlooked within the eThekweni Municipality.

The strategy-structure track is defined as developing either a completely new or revised strategic plan for the organisation. Moodley (2004) contends that the eThekweni municipality embarked on a new strategy and structure which was imperative for addressing challenges that had been identified, as well as ensuring alignment of the organisation with the greater organisational environment. French and Bell (1999) advocate that the reward system track establishes performance based reward systems. The reward system implemented within the municipality will be discussed further in the study.

The model for managing change as presented by Ralph Kilmann is important, and elements of this model will be examined. It is anticipated that this will provide better understanding of senior managers' perceptions and experiences of organisational transformation and change within the municipality.

2.3.4.1 Macro-micro level change model

The macro-micro level change model advocates the importance of managing change at the macro-organisational level as well as at the micro-individual level. Van Tonder (2004) argues that organisational change ultimately boils down to micro-level change but at a collective level. Individual employees therefore have to change for the organisation

to transform. The macro-micro level change model presented below reflects various stages of transitions, and various psychological reactions are also found in this model.

- *Phase I:* pre-change baseline functioning. For the organisations, this is the status quo. The organisation's announcement (1-3 months). During this period, the individual employees experience shock, fear, immobilisation, denial, disbelief, and minimisation. Hayes (2005) contends that the intensity of this phase will be influenced by the degree of preparedness and consequences will be influenced by the desirability of the transition.
- *Phase II:* preparation phase for the organisation (3-6 months). During this phase, individual employees experience recognition, alarm, anxiety, defensive retreat, denial and resistance.
- *Phase III:* implementation for the organisation (6-18 months). In this period, individual employees experience anger, blaming, bargaining, chaos, grief, depression, resignation, "letting go", acceptance, and receptiveness. This phase is known as the *Death Valley* of change.
- *Phase IV:* recovery/revitalization (18-30 months). At this time, individual employees experience exploration, testing, search for meaning, discovery, learning understanding, reflection, integration, internalisation, re-emergence, renewed sense of purpose, and re-energisation.

The above macro-micro level change model is important in understanding the cognitive and affective responses of individual employees. Van Tonder (2004) states that the following emotional states are also experienced: optimism, disillusionment and relief, with satisfaction and disappointment as the outcomes. The macro-micro level change model emphasises two critical factors: the importance of managing individual change and time-frames for initiating and completing change.

- *Timeframes for managing macro-organisational change:* The macro-micro level change model advocates a five year period for instituting change. This study explored ramifications for senior managers of the period taken to transform and change the municipality.
- *Individual change management:* The importance of managing individual micro-level change is critical during the transformation process. Vecchio (2000) highlights the following measures that are critical for successful change: survey feedback; team-building, sensitivity training; confrontation meetings, and quality of work life. These factors cause individual change or organisational development at the micro-level/person change. These programs highlighted above assist employees to adapt to changes within the organisation.

Van Tonder (2004) argues that despite the fact that successful organisational change initiatives and efforts hinge on successful personal change, this remains one of the most neglected areas in organisational change practice. Ensuring individual change is critical for the success of the organisation. It is therefore imperative to highlight how individuals can be guided or aided during the transformational process. Hayes (2005) emphasises interventions that are initiated in relation to each stage of the process of transformation. This method of facilitating progress is targeted at the individual or employees within the organisation and includes the following:

- *Phase I: Shock.* Associated with announcement or discovery of change, this can be minimised by consulting and involving employees in the decision-making process. Other options include deciding on the best person to make the announcement as well as the best time, method and content. It is critical to provide support during this stage.
- *Phase II: Denial/Anxiety.* It is crucial to diagnose what is being denied and to confront what is being denied by finding ways to engage with the reality of change.
- *Phase III: Death Valley/Depression.* Employees may be assisted by providing support, listening, providing space to grieve, explaining the need to change;

eliminating symbols of the past and marking the end of rituals and ceremonies. This entails letting people take souvenirs and mementoes.

- *Phase IV: Reflecting/learning and internalising.* Employees are assisted by creating space, time and resources required to test and promote creative thinking, acting as a mentor, reviewing performance and learning, praising and supporting success, and helping employees review the experience of change.

Hayes (2005) acknowledges that the individual's experiences of a transition will be influenced by various factors such as whether it is perceived as a gain or loss, the intensity of its impact, the existence of other simultaneous transitions, or the resilience of the individual. This has significant consequences for organisations that go through fundamental, complex transformational processes. Management of individual level change becomes critical as it is the individuals who have to change in order for successful organisational change to happen. Van Tonder (2004) argues that individual change is imperative as this is manifested by behavior and emotions that are in evidence in all aspects of perception, thinking, and behavior. These factors must be considered one of the critical success factors that will differentiate effective from non-effective change initiatives. French Bell and Zawacki (2005) assert that cognitive and affective changes are the most fundamental change processes at the individual level. The perceptions and experiences of senior managers will provide a deeper understanding of the micro-level change that occurred within the organisation.

2.3.5 Theories of Perceptions

An understanding of the concept perceptions and the perceptual process is crucial since perceptions of participants of this study form a central construct for the study. Slocum and Hellriegel (2009) contend that perception is the psychological process by which people observe, select, organise, interpret and respond to information from the world around them. This brief definition of perception highlights the perceptual process and two key concepts, namely, *select* and *organise*. The information that is selected by one person may differ from that which is selected by another individual. Similarly, the organisation and interpretation of the selected information may also differ from person to

person. The concept perception is further explained by Robbins, Judge, Odendaal and Roodt (2009), who describe perception as a process by which individuals organise and interpret their sensory impressions in order to give meaning to their environment. A number of factors may be attributed to the way different people interpret information. Prior to analysing the factors that influence the perceptual selection, it is important to further elaborate how perceptions are formed, as this will clarify and enhance understanding of this concept.

2.3.5.1 Nature of Perception

Luthans (2005) defines perception as a very complex cognitive process that yields a unique picture of the world, a picture that may be quite different from reality. Hullen (2003) mentions that Roget's Thesaurus describes perception as a condition of being aware, awareness, cognizance, consciousness, sense; it is that which exists in the mind as the product of careful mental activity. Similarly, Pomerantz (2003) suggests that perception is the process of attaining awareness or understanding of the environment by organising and interpreting sensory information. Luthans (2005) further contends that raw sensory input is not enough; the sensory data must be processed to make sense and in order to understand the world around the perceiver. In addition, Vecchio (2000) articulates that most people erroneously assume that the perceptual process is a largely passive or a receptive process dictated by attributes of the observed object. The perceptual process actually involves an active process on the part of the perceiver. Generally, perception involves signals in the nervous system which in turn results from physical stimulation of the sense organs. Encyclopedia Britannica (2002) explicates that perception is the process of registering stimuli as meaningful experience. Additionally, Vecchio ((2000) alludes to the fact that during the perceptual process, the perceiver is simultaneously bombarded with other stimuli. It is thus clear that the perceiver is actually involved in the construction of his or her experiences, and there is thus more to perceptions than it appears.

Encyclopedia Britannica (2002) provides a distinction between physiological and cognitive processes, two constructs that are used to clearly define perception. It is noted

on the one hand that physiological processes consist of sensory sensations such as vision, hearing, smell, touch and taste perceptions. On the other hand, cognitive processes refer to the complex constructions of simple elements joined through association. These require a higher level of processing by the brain.

Similarly, Kent (2006) points out that the Oxford Dictionary of Sports Science and Medicine defines perception as the mental process by which the brain interprets and gives meaning to information it receives from sense organs. In this regard, perceptions are dependent on both the psychological and physiological characteristics of the perceiver, in addition to natural stimuli.

2.3.5.2 Physiological Factors of the Perceiver

Since perceptions are dependent on physiological and psychological factors of the perceiver, it is essential to highlight the role of these factors. With regard to physiological factors, sensory organs are a part of the sensory system. Gregory (1966) advocates that a sensory system consists of sensory receptors, neural pathways and parts of the brain involved in sensory perception. Luthan (2005) explains that vision, hearing, sensation (touch), taste and smell are considered as physical senses. A brief overview of the sensory organs that relate to this study is elucidated below;

- *Vision:* Kolb and Whishaw (2003) suggest that the receptive field is the specific part of the world to which a receptor organ and the receptor cells respond. The visual system has been identified as a receptive field. To this effect it is assumed that what is seen by senior managers in this study is relayed to the brain and after active processing, an opinion formed.
- *Auditory system:* An assertion by Kolb and Whishaw (2003) is that hearing or (audition) is the ability to perceive sound. The auditory system includes the ears and inner structure and the pathways to the brain, where auditory information arrives and is processed. Moore (2009) suggests that hearing involves the complex task of separating sources of interest. Within the context of this study, hearing involves the

critical information that is processed by the senior managers. This proceeds to manifest as the opinions, views, and perceptions that are ultimately formed in relation to the information that was received and processed by the auditory system.

- *Speech Perception:* Kolb and Whishaw (2003) contend that speech perception is the process by which the sounds of language are heard, interpreted and understood. In this study, what is said and communicated forms a critical component of what eventually is processed by the receptors in the brain. This information is stored and in time retrieved as the percepts, views, opinions and beliefs of the receiver. In this study, this is construed as the senior managers' perceptions about the information they receive regarding transformation and change within the municipality.

Sensory organs for smell and taste will not be discussed as these are not relevant to the study. Luthans (2005) contends that sensation deals chiefly with very elementary behavior that is determined largely by physiological functioning. The signals that are received through the physiological senses are transmitted and processed by the central nervous system. This process is linked to the psychological factors that are critical in the formation of perceptions.

2.3.5.3 Psychological Factors of the Perceiver

Psychological factors mainly consist of the cognitive processes of actively processing information that is transmitted to the brain. Most likely, it is the final neural processing in the brain that underlies or causes perceptual experiences and so perception-like experiences can sometimes occur without external stimulation of the receptor organs. This study will focus primarily on psychological/cognitive characteristics of the perceiver or perceptions of events and objects or apprehension of events rather than largely on physiological sensation or sensory processes. As highlighted above, the study is restricted to psychological processes of perception and to pertinent perception modalities such as feelings, thoughts and beliefs. These complex processes are subjective and seem mostly effortless because the process happens outside conscious awareness.

2.3.5.4 Perceptions versus Reality

A distinction of the term perception and conception allows a clear understanding of what is objective and what is subjective. Coon and Mitterer (2008) maintain that there are two kinds of characteristics, primary characteristic such as mass and hardness, and secondary characteristics which are created by the brain – the mind. In this regard, what is objective is construed to be the primary characteristic and what is subjective is associated with the secondary characteristics – created by the brain – the mind. This brief synopsis provides greater comprehension of perceptions. From the above it can be construed that perceptions consists of both primary and secondary characteristics. In this way the primary characteristics entail objective data and information that are translated through physiological processes to the brain and thereafter processed by cognitive processes. It can thus be deduced that perceptions do have an element of objectivity or reality. Similarly, McGraw-Hill (2006) contends that perceptions are considered to be those subjective experiences of objects or events that ordinarily result from stimulation of the receptor organs of the body. This stimulation is transformed into neural activity and relayed to the nervous system where further neural processing occurs.

However, Kent (2006) explains that the Oxford Dictionary of Sports Science and Medicine stresses that perceptions are separate and in several ways different from conceptual understanding, as perceptions must work fast, whereas it may take minutes or hours to make up our minds and years to form new concepts. Another key distinction between perceptions and concepts is that perceptions are of individual objects and events in present time, while concepts are abstract and generally timeless. Nonetheless, McGraw-Hill (2006) argues that perceptions are considered as an intelligent activity requiring still only partly understood problem solving to infer the objective world from sensory signals. It is further speculated that perceptions depend on active physiologically based intelligent processes. Gibson (1966) suggests that if perceptions are simply picked up, the brain would have little to do; however, a very great deal goes on physiologically and cognitively. Moore (2009) suggests that perceiving objects and events seems simple and easy, as it happens so fast and so effortlessly it is hard to conceive the complexity of the processes that are involved. Gregory (1966) argues that stored knowledge and

assumptions actively affect even the simplest perceptions. This shows how illusionary phenomena can reveal processes of perception far removed from the world we perceive.

2.3.5.5 Factors influencing Perceptions

A variety of factors influence perceptions. Slocum and Hellriegel (2009) categorise these factors into external and internal factors.

(i) External Factors

The external factors include the following factors: culture, intensity, size,; contrast, motion, repetition, novelty and familiarity. A brief analysis of factors that are relevant for this study is presented below;

- *Culture* is viewed as one of the most common external factors affecting behavior, based on the fact that different cultures influence the way people respond to different cues. Culture will therefore be taken into account when analysing the perceptions that are presented in this study.
- *Intensity is another factor.* The more intense an external factor, the more likely it is to be perceived. For instance, the more significant or profound a situation, the more likely it is to influence perceptions of people. In this study, the intensity of the fundamental changes that occurred within the municipality is bound to have an influence on perceptions.
- *Novelty and familiarity impacts when* new objects or events in a familiar setting will draw the attention of the perceiver.

A number of the above or similar factors may be operating at any time to influence perceptions.

(ii) Internal factors

A number of internal factors also influence perceptions. A brief synopsis of those factors that have relevance to this study is provided. In this regard, Slocum and Hellriegel (2009) contend that internal factors are related to the perceiver and they influence the way people perceive. Below is a brief synopsis of the internal factors.

- *Personality* appears to strongly affect how an individual perceives other people. Slocum and Hellriegel (2009) refer to one of the Big Five Personality factors, namely, conscientiousness. This type of personality pays attention to the external environmental cues and as such influences perceptions.
- *Mental State, indicating* attitude, beliefs and current mental state, may influence perceptions. Drafke (2009) defines attitudes as descriptive thoughts based on knowledge, opinion or faith. He goes on to suggest that beliefs are thoughts based on emotion and as such they may be irrational. Attitude and beliefs are quite important as they are often retained for a long time. Drafke (2009) describes mental state as feelings, your mood, how pressured you feel and similar factors. Mental state may change within a short space of time, for example by completing a task or receiving help from someone. This alternatively has an effect on perceptions.
- *Attention and Emotional State*, it is suggested, is a factor, as through selective attention the subject focuses on a limited number of stimuli and ignores those that are considered less important.
- *Motivation and expectation*; indicate perceptual expectation as a predisposition to perceive things in a certain way. Coon and Mitterer (2008) acknowledge that perceptual expectancy occurs in different senses e.g. when someone has a reputation for being funny, an audience are more likely to find him amusing. Motivation is another factor that influences perceptions. Slocum and Hellriegel (2009) attribute this to expectations. The influence of perceptual expectancy will be analysed on the basis of the different views and opinions adduced from senior managers.

- *Effect of Learning/experience, which, according to Slocum and Hellriegel (2009), determines the development of perceptual sets. A perceptual set therefore relates to an expectation of a particular interpretation based on past experience with the same or similar object. The experiences of some of the senior managers in this study are likely to influence their perceptions of transformation and change within the organisation. This will be analysed and discussed in greater detail further in the study.*

Robbins, Judge, Odendaal and Roodt (2009) suggest further factors that influence perceptions: personal characteristics, which includes a person's attitudes; personality motives, interests, past experiences and expectations; characteristics of the target, which also influence perceptions, and the context in which we observe objects or events.

Other perceptual properties such as constancy, motion form and illusion that influence perception will not be considered in this study, since these are not critical for the study and there is therefore no direct relevance for it.

2.3.5.6 Factors that Influence how a Person Perceives Others

Slocum and Hellriegel (2009) distinguish characteristics of the perceiver, the perceived and the context within which the perception takes place. Likewise, Fox (2006) explains that certain factors function to shape and sometimes distort perception. These factors reside in the perceiver, the object or target being perceived or in the context of the situation within which the perception is made. With regard to the perceived physical characteristics, personality traits and specific behaviours are usually noted. Slocum and Hellriegel (2009) attribute the implicit personality theory to a person's belief about the relationships between another's physical characteristics and personality. The implicit personality theory has, however, not been scientifically proven as there is generally no correlation between a person's physical attributes and personality. Slocum and Hellriegel (2009) further argue that a person's own personality traits, values, attitudes, current mood and past experiences determine in part how that person perceives someone else. Draffe

(2009) notes that environmental background and experience also determines perceptions. This is explained by utterances that are prevalent in a person's environment that would result in formulation of certain impressions. Peer pressure from friends is also related to environmental experiences, which is a further determinate of perceptions. The factors highlighted above will be critically analysed upon presentation of the research findings.

2.3.5.7 Perceptual Errors

Misjudging situations and the characteristics, abilities, conduct and behavior of someone is caused by a number of errors in perception. It is important to highlight these errors as they provide in-depth understanding of the perceptual process. In this regard, Slocum and Hellriegel (2009) explore the five common types of perceptual errors: perceptual accuracy; perceptual defense; stereotyping; the halo effect; projection and impression management.

- *Perceptual accuracy*: Slocum and Hellriegel (2009) suggest that making more accurate perceptions is dependent on avoiding generalisation from an observation of a single trait; avoiding assuming that a behavior will be repeated in all situations and avoiding placing too much reliance on physical appearance; An elimination of these biases improves the accuracy of perceptions and awareness of these errors in perception may enable accuracy of assessing and judging others.
- *Perceptual Defense*; this is referred to as the tendency to protect oneself against ideas, objects or situations that are threatening. This type of perceptual error is similar to resistance to change, and usually has negative ramifications. It may also result in a perceiver being fixated with something.
- *Stereotyping*: this type of perceptual error is one of the common errors experienced in the perceptual process. Slocum and Hellriegel (2009) contend that stereotyping is the belief that all members of specific groups share similar traits and behaviours. Stereotyping is also linked to factors such as race, gender, and physical appearance. Luthan (2005) articulates that stereotyping greatly influences social perception in

today's organisations. This type of error disadvantages the members of a group that are negatively assessed or observed by the perceiver. It is therefore important to be mindful of this form of error in the perceptual process.

- *Halo Effect, which* entails evaluating another person solely on the basis of one attribute, either favourable or unfavourable. This also has negative consequences on the part of the person who is unfavourably observed. It may also present a false impression of the person who is favourably observed. Drafke (2009) explains that with the halo effect, at times you do not have to think about individuals. You just assume that certain people will always do well. This type of perceptual error is worth noting as misjudgments have negative implications for the desired outcome.
- *Projection* is equated with the tendency for people to see their own traits in other people. Slocum and Hellriegel (2009) explain that falsely believing what others share or believe can lead to poor performance.
- *Impression Management* is described as an attempt by an individual to manipulate or control the impressions that others form about them. Slocum and Hellriegel (2009) define this as systematic manipulation of the perceptual process. Within an organisational context, this may be manifested through communicating positive details about oneself in order to dispel the poor assessment that one has received or is aware of. Impression management does not correct any poor impression that one has. A solution would rather be to confront the issue and resolve it without putting on a charade.
- *Perceptual distortion* entails denying that something occurred or that we witnessed something. Distorting or modifying what has actually been observed is another form of perceptual error. Illusion is a form of distortion whereby the perception of something does not reflect its reality.
- *Snap judgements:* Drafke (2009) indicates that most of us from time to time are guilty of making snap judgements before we have gathered enough facts to come to a valid

conclusion. Snap judgements can result in confusion or problems within the organisation as the judgement call is usually not accurate.

Vecchio (2000) attributes perceptual errors to barriers to the precise perceptions of others' behaviours. He goes further to indicate that each barrier is a possible source of misleading, or distorted information. This is important to note especially for this study, as these errors are obstacles to accurate perceptions. It is important to understand perceptual errors and the obstacles to accurate perceptions, as these factors have implications for this study. This relates to information that is observed or reported within the municipality, especially during the transformation period.

2.3.5.8 Attribution Theory

Attributions are normally made in an attempt to understand the behaviours of others as well as to make sense of related situations. Luthan (2005) argues that attribution theory entails making sense of our world and involves attributing people's actions either to internal or external causes, in fairly logical ways. Likewise, Vecchio (2000) elaborates on Kelley's theory of causal attribution where judgments of another's behavior are influenced by three sources of information: agreement, consistency and distinctiveness. Agreement is illustrated by consensus amongst participants or people that are observing behavior or conduct. In this study, should there be consensus from a number of participants, this will indicate high agreement and equate to objective attributions. Vecchio (2000) explains that consistency defines the degree to which the observed person behaves in the same manner in other situations, and distinctiveness refers to the degree the observed person behaves similarly in comparatively different settings.

Likewise, Fox (2006) explains that in observing individual behavior, an attempt is made to determine if it was internally or externally caused. Fox (2006) further suggests that the determination is dependent on three factors, distinctiveness, consensus and consistency. Distinctiveness relates to observed behaviour that is unusual or not: if the behavior is unusual, this will be attributed to external factors. Consensus refers to similar behaviour by people faced with the same situation: if consensus is high, this is attributed to external

attribution. Vecchio (2000) asserts that consistency shows that if a person responds the same way over time, the more consistent the behaviour this will be attributed to external attributions. In articulating the attribution process, Slocum and Hellriegel (2009) argue that it consists of three distinct factors: antecedents; attributions and consequences.

- *Antecedents*: this relates to the amount of information that the perceiver has about the people and the situation, and how the information is organised by the perceiver, the perceiver's beliefs and the motivation of the perceiver. These factors are internal factors that influence the attribution process and perceptions.
- *Attributions* made by the perceiver relate to the perceived causes of behavior.
- *Consequences* for the perceiver include behavior, feelings and expectations.

Slocum and Hellriegel (2009) suggest that people infer causes of the behavior of others, and their perceptions of why certain behaviours occur influence their own subsequent behavioural responses and feelings. This contention has important implications for organisations since perceptions have been demonstrated to guide behavior. In this study, this will be manifested by the responses and views provided by senior managers who are participants of this study.

2.3.5.9 Attribution Errors

Two biases related to attribution errors are the fundamental attribution error and the self-serving bias. Luthans (2005) articulates that the fundamental attribution error involves the tendency to ignore powerful situational forces when explaining others' behaviours. In this regard, people tend to attribute others' behaviours to personal factors such as intelligence, ability; motivation, attitudes or personality even when it is the situation or circumstances that caused the person to behave in a certain way. Luthans (2005) goes further to explain that a self-serving bias leads to people presenting themselves favourably. In this case, a person attributes her success to her ability or effort, without taking cognizance of the situational or circumstantial factors. Attribution errors have

significant implications within organisations, particularly during transformation periods. In this situation, the organisational environment is generally unstable, therefore attribution errors may result in incorrect perceptions being formed about people or situations. In order to dispel attribution errors, situational forces need to be considered when explaining behaviour or when presenting perceptions.

Attribution theory is important for understanding perceptions within an organisational context and in workplace behaviours. In the context of this study, attribution theory is particularly important in analysing the effects of key factors that were targeted to ensure fundamental transformation, namely, leadership; strategy and organisational culture. It is, however, only leadership that is relevant to causal behavior that is dependent on the situation. In this regard, cause of behavior or conduct is likely to be attributed to internal or external factors. The causes that the senior managers in this study infer will greatly influence their perceptions. Robbins, Judge, Odendaal and Roodt (2009) suggest that people respond to their perceptions rather than objective reality. An examination of perceptions was therefore essential as this concept is central for this study. An analysis of the perceptual process also provided a paradigm for in-depth understanding of perceptions of senior managers regarding transformation and change within the municipality.

2.4 Conclusion

The literature review and theoretical framework provided a paradigm for critically analysing the municipality in the context of its greater environment. Furthermore, the Burke-Litwin model of organisational performance and change was presented as an ideal model for instituting fundamental organisational transformation and change. Critical elements of the model were highlighted. Similarly, the macro-micro level change model was presented and highlighted a time period of sixty months for instituting and completing an organisational transformation process. A critical analysis of the perceptual process was also articulated. This enabled in-depth understanding of how perceptions are formed.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The research paradigm and research methodology for this study are outlined in this chapter, along with the research questions and research objectives. The setting of the study is clearly articulated to provide a context for the research. A description of the population, sampling procedures and the criteria for selecting the sample is provided. The composition of the sample is clearly defined. Informed consent and ethical considerations pertinent to this study are elaborated. An analysis of data collection procedures, data requirements and the measuring instrument is presented in this chapter. The methods for data processing and data analysis are expounded as well. Limitations of the research method and of the study are explained. The chapter further articulates the reliability and validity of data collection methods that have been chosen for the study.

3.2 Research Paradigm

The research paradigm incorporates the researcher's fundamental philosophical beliefs about the world and the nature of reality. Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) refer to paradigms as perspectives or ways of looking at reality and the frames of reference used to organise observations and reasoning. Specific methods and techniques that are adopted when conducting a research study are also underpinned by the research paradigm. This study uses the interpretive paradigm, which is basically the underlying assumption of qualitative research. Babbie (1995) states that the qualitative method is a distinct perspective for pursuing knowledge in a scientific manner.

Hussey and Hussey (1997) argue that the qualitative paradigm advocates that the world is socially constructed and subjective; the observer is part of what is observed; science is viewed as driven by human interests; the interpretation focuses on meaning, and reasoning is inductive. The approach tries to understand what is actually happening. Qualitative approaches use multiple methods to establish patterns or themes in different subjective views. In addition, Hussey and Hussey (2000) contend that the qualitative

and quantitative paradigms represent two extremes of a continuum. It is therefore possible for researchers to use a blend of these methods. This study, however, uses the qualitative method. Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) state that qualitative methods are typically used for providing in-depth understanding of the research issues that embrace the perspectives of the study population and the context of the study. Miles and Huberman (1994) note that a major feature of the qualitative method is that it focuses on naturally occurring events in natural settings; the richness of the data collected allows thick descriptions. This method was therefore deemed most suitable for meeting objectives of the study, as it addresses “why” and “how” questions. Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) suggest that a qualitative method allows understanding of behaviour, beliefs, opinions and emotions from the perspectives of study participants. This is in line with the focus of this study, which entails understanding the meaning of phenomena embedded in a real-life context. By undertaking an in-depth investigation in a natural real-life setting, it is anticipated that the phenomena under study will be uncovered and clearly understood. In order to provide a backdrop within which experiences and perceptions of senior managers are understood, a great deal of attention was focused on understanding critical information as well as what appeared to be trivial details. The objective was to obtain detailed rich information from the research participants’ subjective perspectives. This made the qualitative paradigm most appropriate for this research.

The methodology for this study also shows the appropriateness of the qualitative paradigm as opposed to the quantitative paradigm. Hussey and Hussey (1997) maintain that the qualitative paradigm tends to produce qualitative data; it uses small samples; it is concerned with generating theories; the data are rich and subjective; the location is natural; reliability is low; validity is high and it allows generalisation from one setting to another. This suits the objective of this study. Similarly, Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) state that gaining detailed understanding of underlying reasons and beliefs forms the objective of the qualitative method. Moreover, the data consist of words called textual data; analysis is interpretive and a small number of participants is purposively selected

non-randomly. One is able to develop an initial understanding to identify and explain behaviour, beliefs or actions, using this paradigm.

Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2003) articulate that in qualitative research, the researcher makes meaning from the data by seeing the bigger picture and by converting raw information into what they refer to as “thick descriptions”. Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2003) state that a thick description gives an account of the phenomena that is coherent. It offers more than facts, through an empirical content and context that interprets data in light of other empirical information. Based on the key features highlighted above, the qualitative method was deemed most appropriate for this study. The richness of data, natural setting and high validity enables insight and greater understanding of the phenomena under investigation.

3.3 Research Approach

This research was exploratory in approach. Babbie (1995) suggests that one of the main reasons for exploratory research is the desire for better understanding. Furthermore, the exploratory approach is essential in providing new insight. The exploratory approach was also best suited to exploring the senior managers’ experiences and perceptions with regard to transformation and changes that occurred within the Municipality. During the research study, the exploratory approach enabled deep comprehension of the research problem and allowed detailed information to be obtained from the participants. Additionally, the exploratory approach enabled an in-depth understanding to be gained of the experiences of senior managers regarding transformation and changes instituted within the municipality.

3.4 Research Design

The focus of this study was on uncovering phenomena embedded in a real life context. Understanding the meaning of the rich information was also central to this study. In order to ensure accurate findings for the research, it was imperative that the most appropriate strategy was selected. Creswell (2007) highlights a number of strategies within the qualitative paradigm such as case study, action research and ethnography. The

case study was, however, deemed as the most appropriate approach for this study. Below is a description of the case study approach.

3.4.1 The Case Study

There are multiple definitions of case studies. Hussey and Hussey (2000) enunciate a case study as a systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomena of interest. A case study of the eThekweni Municipality was therefore undertaken in order to explore and understand the experiences and perceptions of senior managers regarding organisational transformation and change. Hussey and Hussey (2000) point out that case studies are most helpful when the researcher is dealing with phenomena embedded in a real life context. This involves gathering detailed information with a view to obtaining in-depth understanding. This approach was selected based on its ability to yield data at the unconscious as well as conscious level. The case study design allowed a thorough exploration and understanding of senior managers' experiences and perceptions with regard to transformation and changes that occurred within the Municipality. Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn (2003) indicate that the advantage of case studies is their realism and richness of data as well as the insight they can provide. Case studies often involve in-depth interviews with a small sample of participants.

3.5 Research Techniques

The research technique selected was that of in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews are most appropriate for exploring phenomena embedded in a real-life context. This is appropriate for the qualitative approach and case study method chosen for this study. The information was gathered from in-depth interviews using a limited number of interview participants. Although the number of research participants was limited, numerous aspects were observed, even details that were presumed to be trivial. This was deemed crucial for the in-depth and comprehensive understanding that was sought. The low number of research participants was justified, since the objective of the study was to undertake an in-depth study or provide a "thick description". This is not possible in quantitative studies where a large number of research participants is surveyed. The

qualitative paradigm uses multiple methods to establish themes from different subjective views. Qualitative data therefore produces rich and subjective information. The data obtained was not generalised but was used to gain deeper understanding of the phenomena under study.

3.6 Setting of the Study

The study was conducted within the eThekweni Municipality, a public sector organisation. According to the Unicity Committee Report (1999) Profile Durban Metropolitan Area, the eThekweni Municipal Area is located on the east coast of South Africa, covering an area of 2 297 square kilometres. The area is 60% rural and 40% urban city. The Municipality has vastly extended boundaries compared to the previous smaller areas that were covered by the erstwhile local councils. In *Annexure "C"*, Moodley (2004) elaborates that the eThekweni Municipal Area stretches from the Southern tip of the Umkomaas River up to Tongaat along the north coastline; the western inland stretches to Cato Ridge and the east coastline borders the eastern area. In *Annexure "D"*, Reddy, Singh and Moodley (2003) assert that the new vast area has huge implications for the municipality in terms of service delivery. The challenges associated with the extended boundaries, the amalgamation process and the resultant effect on senior managers will be examined further in the study.

The Municipality is therefore a huge and complex organisation which is characterised by different functional Units. The functionalities or service delivery sectors are divided into eight clusters, namely: the Corporate and Human Resources; Governance; Health and Social Services; Procurement and Infrastructure; Safety and Security; Sustainable Development and Enterprises; Treasury and Office of the City Manager www.durban.gov.za/Durban/government/administration/structure. Gildenhuys (1997) advocates that a municipal organisation has two spheres, the administrative sphere and political sphere, which complement one another. Councillors fall under the political sphere and employees fall under the administrative sphere. This study focuses on the administrative sphere of the municipality. The political sphere of the municipality is nonetheless worth noting, as this illustrates the complex nature of the organisation.

The Clusters within the municipality provide operational support and deliver services and infrastructure to residents across the eThekweni Municipality. The research participants for this study were selected from the different Clusters within the Municipality. The exact numbers and percentages per cluster are provided later in the study. The various Units and departments that fall under the different clusters are dispersed throughout the municipal area. The traveling distance between my office (the researcher) and the research participants was between one kilometre and about twenty-five kilometres. Most of the interviews, however, occurred within the Durban Central Business District, as the main offices are based within the Central Business District. The actual setting for interviews was therefore held in office blocks that are used by the municipality. Offices, boardrooms and rest areas characterised the actual interview settings.

3.7 Target Population

According to Du Plooy (2002), the term ‘population’ not only refers to people but can also be defined as any group or aggregate of individuals, groups or organisations. In order to obtain accurate data about members of a population, every member of a population could be interviewed. This is, however, not possible due to constraints such as time, distance and cost. It is nonetheless critical to have a clearly defined target population. May (2001) argues that the population is the universe to be sampled. In this study, the population consisted of 220 senior managers, which was in terms of the eThekweni Municipality Employment Equity Statistical Report (2009), which shows 220 senior managers within Level II of the Management Hierarchy.

In this study, the target population was all senior managers within the eThekweni Municipality. According to the eThekweni Municipality’s Task Job Grading and Evaluation Collective Agreement (2003), there are four management levels, classified as follows:

- *Level I: Grade 19-26;* top managers i.e. posts designated as City Manager, Deputy City Managers, Heads of Units and Deputy Heads.

- *Level II : Grades 16-18;* senior managers i.e. posts designated as Senior Manager, Project Executives and other professional technical posts.
- *Level III: Grades 13-15;* middle managers i.e. posts designated as Manager; Senior Artisans and Senior Legal Advisors.
- *Level IV: Grades 09-12;* junior managers i.e. posts designated as Technical, Supervisors, and Senior Administration Officers.

For purposes of this study, all employees within the Level II Management Band will be referred to as senior managers. Senior managers are therefore placed between top management and middle management. French, Bell and Zawacki (2005) argue that all employees within an organisation are affected by transformation and change. In this study, senior managers were, however, deemed to have been significantly affected. Since senior managers are sandwiched between strategic management and tactical levels within the organization, they have to implement strategic decisions and at the same time deal with operational challenges experienced from lower management and operational levels.

The experiences and challenges faced by senior managers who participated in the study were investigated to fully understand their perceptions regarding transformation and changes within the municipality. Employees that fall under the Management Level II of eThekweni Municipality, referred to as senior managers, were therefore the target population for this research study.

3.8 Sampling Techniques

The non-probability sampling method was used for this research study. It concentrated on in-depth analysis of specific cases. Unlike probability sampling, where all elements of the population have the same chances of being drawn into the sample, this ideal is seldom achieved with the non-probability design. Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) explain that qualitative research uses non-random methods of participant recruitment such as networking and purposive recruitment. Purposive recruitment is both deliberate and flexible, since only participants who have information of the study topic are selected. Similarly, Blaikie (2000) notes that with non-random or non-probability sampling

methods, not every element in the population has a chance of selection, since the objective is concerned with in-depth understanding of phenomena rather than generalisations. These methods of participant recruitment suited the aim of the study. Below is an analysis of specific methods used to select participants for this study.

3.8.1 Snowball sampling or networking

Snowball sampling is a non-probability method used in the selection of participants for this study. May (2001) explains that snowball sampling refers to initial contact being made with a member of a population who then leads the researcher to other members of the same population. Accordingly, some of the senior managers who were selected for the study were able to lead me to other participants who met the selection criteria. These participants were then included as part of the sample. There was little influence on the composition of the sample. Senior Managers, who had been employed by the eThekweni Municipality during the transformation period from 2000 (or prior to that) to 2010, were viewed as possessing relevant information for this study and were selected. This was considered essential as the sample selected had experienced the transformation process. It was anticipated that the sample selected would be able to provide valid and authentic information with regards to the transformation and change within the municipality.

3.8.2 Judgement Sampling

Judgement sampling is another non-probability sampling method that involves choosing subjects that are in the best position to provide relevant information. Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) state that participants in qualitative research are chosen because they have particular characteristics or experiences that can contribute to a greater understanding of the phenomena studied. Nelson and Quick (2006) define judgement sampling as not lending itself to generalisation. Judgement sampling and network sampling are methods that are the best ways of gathering information and understanding the research problem. This sampling method was also used in the selection of research participants. It was important to select research participants who had experienced the transformation of the Municipality. The number of years' service with the Municipality was one of the selection criteria used. Only research participants who had been employed by the

Municipality for at least ten years were selected. The data gathered from these research participants were explored for deeper meaning. Since the selected participants were familiar with the phenomena under investigation, rich information was gathered. This allowed greater clarity and understanding of the research problem.

3.9 Sample

Miles and Huberman (1994) articulate that sampling in qualitative research involves the creation of a frame to assist the researcher in exploring, confirming or qualifying the basic constructs or processes that underpin one's study. Miles and Huberman (1994) further note that sampling in qualitative research involves the establishment of boundaries with the aim of defining aspects of your case(s) that you can study within the limits of your time and means that connect directly with your research questions. This probably includes what you want to study. A sample of research participants for this study was therefore chosen in accordance with the predetermined criteria.

3.9.1 Criteria for Selection of Sample

The following criteria were used to select the sample for the study:

- Management level i.e. senior managers at Management Level II.
- Number of years employed by the municipality, with at least 10 years' service.
- Demographic details e.g. gender, race and age of research participants.
- Unit or Department that the research participant worked within the municipality.

The management level confirmed that the sample was that of senior managers within the Municipality. The number of years' of service also ensured that senior managers who had experienced transformation and changes within the municipality were selected. Demographic details countered possible bias and also ensured that a representative sample was selected from within the organisation. The different Units and Departments that research participants belonged to further ensured that a diverse representative sample was selected. The above criteria also enhanced the validity of information that was collected. Having taken cognizance of the predetermined selection criteria, judgement

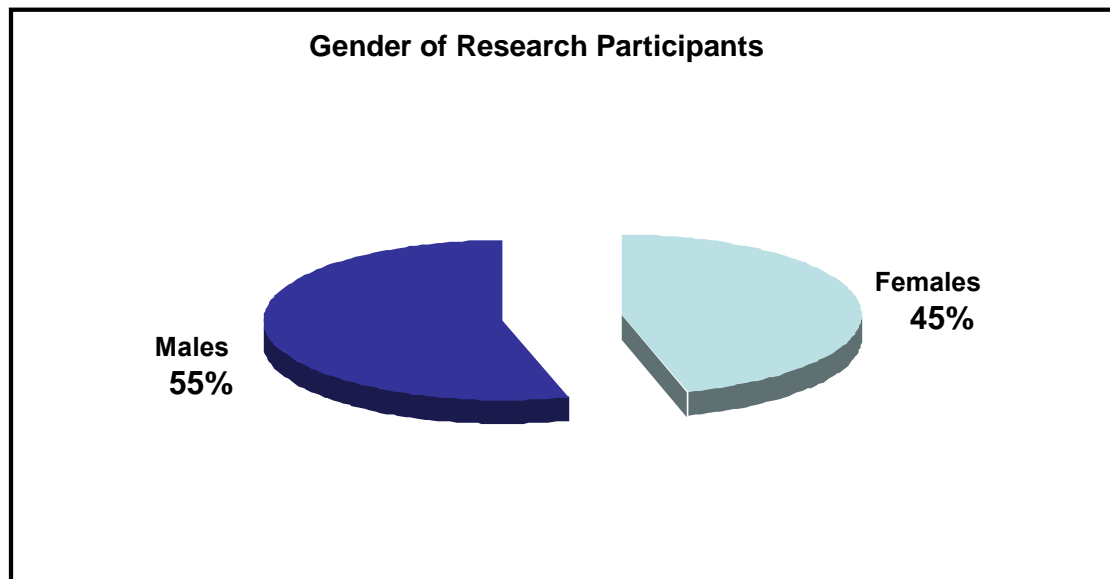
sampling and snowball sampling methods were used. After interview discussions with some of the research participants, especially those who were keen on the study, they identified other senior managers who met the predetermined selection criteria. This method was in accordance with the network or snowball method of selecting research participants.

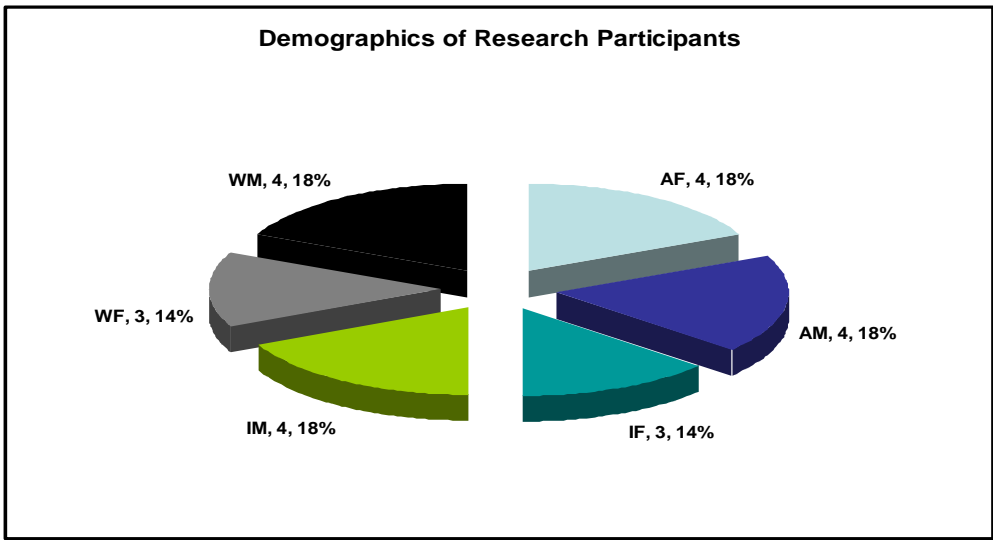
3.9.2 Unit of analysis

Senior managers who experienced the fundamental transformation of the eThekweni Municipality were the unit of analysis for this study.

3.9.3 Composition of Sample

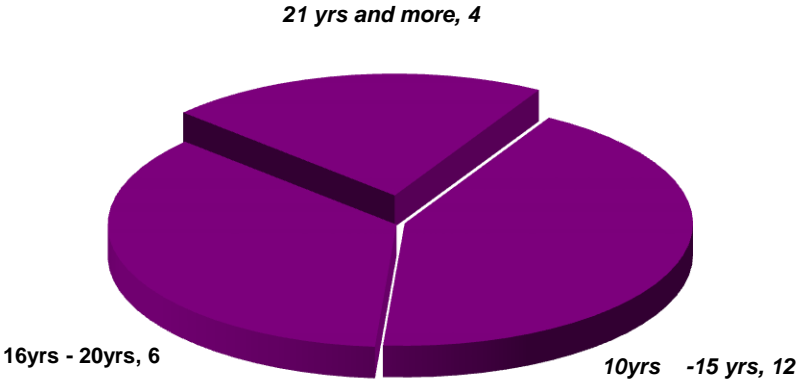
May (2001) explains that the sample characteristics will be the same as those of the population. A non-probability sample consisting of twenty-two senior managers was selected for this study from the target population. This consisted of ten female and twelve male participants. Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) indicate the importance of selecting more participants if the topic is broad and complex, as well as if the type of research is exploratory. The twenty-two participants selected for this study were considered appropriate as the sample was diverse and ensured in-depth understanding as well as validity of the study. A detailed diagram that shows the gender of the research participants as a percentage is illustrated below.



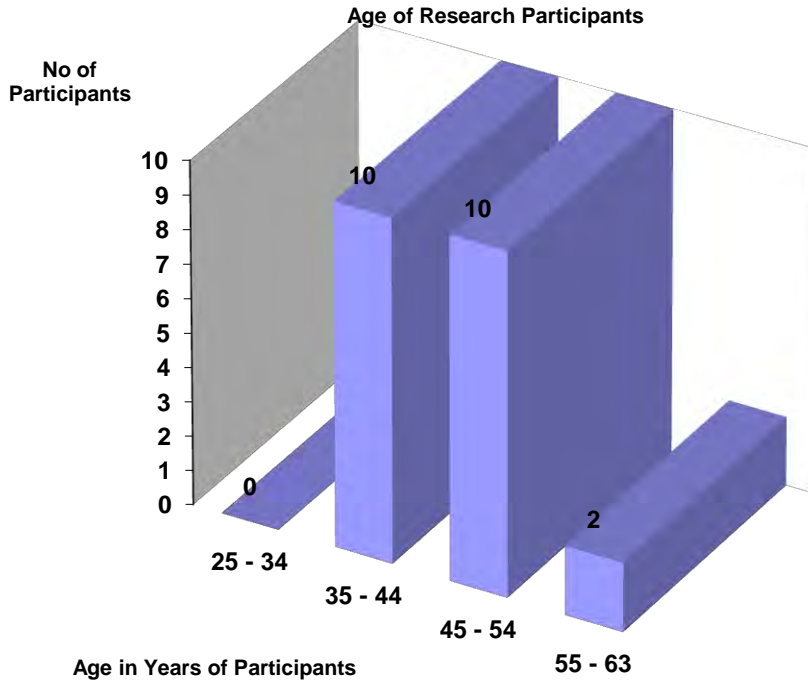


The diagram above shows the racial demographics of the sample in numbers and percentages. This is represented as four African females; four African males; four White males; three White females; four Indian males and three Indian females.

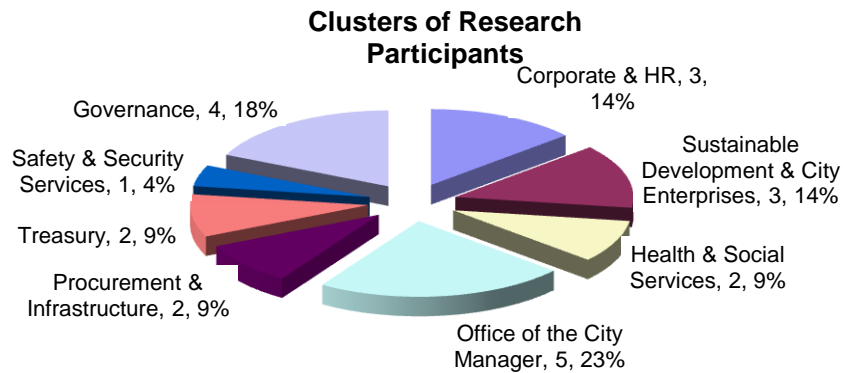
Research Participants: No of Years of Service



The diagram above represents research participants' years of service i.e. 4 senior managers had 21 years' service or more; 6 senior managers had 16 years to 20 years of service; and 12 senior managers had 10 years to 15 years of service with the eThekweni Municipality.



The diagram above represents the age of research participants as follows: 35 years to 44 years (10 senior managers); 45 years to 54 years (10 senior managers), and 55 years to 63 years (2 senior managers).



The number of senior managers interviewed from the eight Clusters is shown in the diagram above. The participants were from twenty different Units within the Municipality. This shows that the sample was diverse, as it consisted of participants from all Clusters and different Units within the municipality.

3.10 Research Instruments

Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) maintain that the interview guide is an ideal research instrument for an in-depth interview, as it guides the interview. Similarly Marshall and Rossman (2011) advocate that the researcher is the research instrument in qualitative research. This is articulated by the presence of the researcher during interviews with research participants. The researcher is therefore the research instrument since he/she listens and reacts to what the research participants says, and at times formulates additional spontaneous questions in response to issues raised by the research participants. In this study, both the interview guide and the researcher were construed as ideal research instruments and were used accordingly.

A semi-structured approach through face-to-face in-depth interviews was used and interviews conducted through the use of an interview guide *Annexure "A"*. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) contend that an interview guide is a set of topical areas and questions that the interviewer brings to the interview. The development of an interview guide is important since it identifies critical issues and enables the researcher to pin-point other critical issues that are likely to be covered by research participants. Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) articulate that the in-depth aspect of the in-depth interviews is important as it reinforces the purpose of gaining detailed insight into the research issues from the perspective of the participants themselves. This reflects the emic perspective i.e. the insider's perspective, which is a fundamental characteristic of qualitative research. Similarly, Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) emphasise the fact that in-depth interviews are knowledge-producing conversations that occur between two parties. During the study, I therefore ensured that a reciprocal relationship existed between the participants and myself. This was essential in establishing meaning of the information gathered from participants. Likewise, Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) point out that in-depth interviews are used to seek information on individual personal experiences and they may be conducted to identify peoples' own beliefs, perceptions; feelings, emotions and the meaning people attach to experiences. Hussey and Hussey (2000) note that the semi-structured interview guide allows the interviewer to probe with a view to clearing vague responses or to ask for elaboration of incomplete answers.

May (2001) suggests that open-ended questions provide participants with a greater freedom to answer the question because they answer in a way that suits their interpretation. The researcher then records as much as possible of the answer, which is analysed after the interview. Creswell (2007) explains that qualitative research questions are open-ended, evolving and non-directional; they restate the aims of the study in more specific terms. He further notes that most of the questions start with a word such as “what” or “how” rather than “why”, and are a few in number e.g. five to seven. Open-ended questions formulated in accordance with the above guidelines were therefore used in this study. The questions were administered through face-to face in-depth interviews with the research participants, as this was considered appropriate for the objectives of this study. Similarly, Babbie and Mouton (2001) argue that in an open-ended question, the respondent is asked to give his or her own answer to the question. With closed-ended questions, which are more appropriate for the quantitative approach, the respondent is asked to select an answer from amongst a list provided by the researcher. May (2001) points out the importance of constructing questions that are unambiguous and clear about what the question is for. Open-ended questions were deemed appropriate for this study as the objective was to gather detailed information from the participants.

3.10.1 Interview Guide

The interview guide contained twelve open-ended questions. The research participants were issued with a copy of the interview guide to follow the questions as the interview progressed. This was also a way of increasing transparency and validity of the data collected.

3.10.2 Structure of the Interview Guide

(i) Section One

This section included an introduction and explanation of the purpose of the study as well as the fact that participation was voluntary. Ethical issues such as confidentiality of the interview and anonymity of the data were highlighted. Clear instructions were also

provided for completing the appropriate sections, such as biographical data on the interview guide. Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) suggest that after the introduction, general questions about the background of the interviewee are included such as the age, educational level, gender etc. These questions are commonly closed questions. In this study, the closed questions were, however, discussed under Section Two below.

(ii) Section Two

This section covered closed-ended questions such as demographic details of the research participants, such as age, race, gender and job title. According to Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011), these background questions enable the interviewer to gain some context about the participant and they begin the process of building rapport in the interview.

(iii) Section Three

This section contained core questions about experiences and perceptions of senior managers regarding transformation and change that took place within the municipality. Key theories and concepts were identified and considered in formulating questions for this study. Open-ended questions were asked as the aim was to explore and understand experiences and perceptions of senior managers about the transformation of the municipality. Probes were also used during this phase of the interview to gain detailed information and to understand issues from the perspective of the study participants. The closing questions were broad questions related to the research topic.

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003) state that opinion variables record how research participants feel about something e.g. how strongly they agree or disagree with a question on a five point rating scale. The last question under this section allowed the research participants to select their choice on the five point scale that was used and to elaborate on their opinion variable. McCormick and Ligen (1980) highlight a scheme consisting of a series of drawings of people's faces with varying expressions, ranging from a broad smile to a deep frown, that was developed by Kunin (1995). The Faces Scale was therefore used in the last question of the interview guide. The faces were labeled as follows: Very Angry; Angry; Neutral; Happy and Very Happy.

In conclusion, the participant was thanked and asked to voluntarily agree to be re-interviewed should the need arise. The participants were also informed that once the research was complete, the results of the research study would be published. Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) contend that questions in an interview guide have to follow a logical order for the interviewee rather than the researcher. The questions for this study were therefore logically constructed to ensure full understanding by the research participants and allowed good quality of the interview data.

3.11 Pilot Testing

A draft interview guide was tested on three senior managers who had been employed by the eThekweni Municipality for over ten years. The participants for the pilot study consisted of three senior managers from different Clusters (names of Clusters withheld to ensure confidentiality). The purpose of the pilot study was to determine the content, composition, clarity and appropriateness of the interview questions. May (2001) comments that piloting aims to see if the questionnaire works and where changes need to be made. In this study, the pilot test provided useful and meaningful input which enabled relevant changes to be made. The changes ensured inclusiveness, appropriateness and clarity in formulating the questions. Relevant comments, suggestions and other input deemed appropriate were noted and necessary amendments made to the interview guide. For example, one of the senior managers interviewed in the pilot study suggested that the questions be reformulated. He suggested asking concise and direct questions to simplify the analysis and interpretation of the findings. The piloting of the interview guide was vital and ensured that valid amendments were made before the actual data collection process got underway.

3.12 Revision and Fine Tuning of Research Instrument

The second pilot test consisted of two senior managers (name of Unit withheld to ensure confidentiality). The participants of the second pilot had also been employed by the eThekweni Municipality for over 10 years and could relate to the transformation and changes that had taken place within the Municipality. The second pilot test clarified

issues to be covered and ensured that an appropriately formulated interview guide was ultimately developed. The analysis of data was also taken into account during the formulation of questions. This ensured inclusion of focused and pertinent information that would uncover information relevant to the study.

3.13 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were central in this study. I therefore ensured appropriate ethical principles were maintained throughout the study. The following ethical codes advocated by Denzin and Lincoln (2008) were adhered to: informed consent; lack of deception, accuracy, privacy and confidentiality. I firstly ensured informed consent by informing participants about the nature of the study. Secondly, no deception prevailed in the course of the study. Deception was not necessary as participants willingly divulged their experiences and perceptions. The third aspect involved confidentiality and privacy. Privileged information was not disclosed. The privileged information that was divulged by participants nevertheless enabled me to gain a deeper level of understanding the phenomena being researched. Hollway and Jefferson (2007) further accentuate the ethical principles of honesty, sympathy and respect. I therefore ensured respect of participants by listening attentively and observing carefully during the research. I also conducted the research and engaged the participants in an honest manner, which meant being open minded. Furthermore, I empathised with the participants and was sympathetic to some situations and experiences that were expressed by the participants. No harm was brought upon participants: this corresponds with the principle of beneficence, whereby the well-being of participants is considered over the benefits of the research. Accuracy is a further ethical code articulated by Denzin and Lincoln (2008), ensuring accurate data, was critical as the objective of the study was *inter alia* to conduct the research in an empirical and ethical manner.

In addition to the above, key ethical considerations espoused by Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) were adhered to in this study and included the following:

- *Respect for others*: participants' welfare take precedence over interests of science and society. Participants were therefore treated with courtesy and respect and participated voluntarily after having been provided with adequate information.
- *Informed consent*: participants were informed about their right to refuse to take part in the study i.e. the voluntary nature of the research.
- *Anonymity*: anonymity of participants was ensured and no personal information was included in the research. Identities of participants were safe-guarded.
- *Confidentiality*: ways of confidential data management and archiving were implemented.
- *Minimization of harm*: the safety of research participants was ensured during the research process.
- *Beneficence*: benefits of the research will be shown for the wider society and potential risks to participants were minimised.
- *Justice*: research procedures were administered in a fair, non-exploitative and well-considered manner.

In accordance with the above ethical principles, all research participants were treated with respect and tolerance, and all their rights were observed. Fair and non-exploitative procedures were implemented during the study.

Du Plooy (2002) accentuates further ethical considerations that need to be upheld: the principle of 'do no harm' (not to cause physical discomfort, emotional stress, humiliation or embarrassment); obtaining informed consent (direct or substitute consent, especially where children are involved), and ensuring legal and cognitive competency of participants.

This research conformed to the above principles and was sensitive to the various dispositions of research participants. Informed consent was obtained and sensitivity and empathy ensured when dealing with emotions such as when participants focused on personal experiences, and considerable challenges that they encountered. Furthermore, I did not divulge confidential information that was obtained from research participants, or

use it for other purposes. The identity of all participants was protected at all times. This was done by not using names of participants; not specifying their exact office location and not stating their exact designation. General job titles were used, such as senior managers. Additionally, quotations, expressions or any other text that could be used to identify a participant were removed from the transcript. During the interview discussions, clarity or information required by research participants was provided in an accurate and truthful manner e.g. the objective of the research, the procedures involved, and reporting of the results and outcome of the research. The views, opinions, experiences, challenges and information shared by participants were reported objectively, in a balanced manner, and for the purpose that they were intended for. Confidentiality of records was also maintained by ensuring that all data was kept confidential at all times. This information was kept in locked cabinets. In terms of electronic transcripts, passwords were used on computers. In the case of confidential information that was divulged by research participants, or obtained by the researcher, that was not supposed to be published, this confidential material was respected and was not used in the study. I also undertook not to mislead the research participants. Finally, this study received ethical clearance from the University.

Considering the fact that the Municipality had undergone a major transformation process, a great deal of sensitivity was required in interview discussions with research participants. Research participants were not forced to take part in the study; participation was voluntary and based on informed consent. Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004) argue that participants must be fully informed about the research in which the interview is going to be used. I further enhanced my interpersonal skills and ensured that rapport was established during interactions with research participants. The research was therefore conducted in a manner that enhanced and ensured confidentiality and integrity of the research. There was no fabrication or plagiarism. Relevant sources were appropriately acknowledged through relevant referencing methods. I also remained committed to the objectives of the study.

3.14 Access to the organisation

Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004) provide a further ethical consideration where organisations also consent to the use of their sites and name. This ethical principle was adhered to in this study, by obtaining approval to use the municipality as a case study. Permission to conduct this study was provided by the City Manager of eThekweni Municipality *Annexure "B"*.

3.15 Data Collection

Data collection is a crucial step in the execution of the research study because the quality of the research is often dependent on the quality of the data collected. The data collection method used for the study included use of data triangulation. Du Plooy (2002) explains that data triangulation entails data collected at different times or from different sources in the study. Secondary data that was collected was interlinked with primary data collected from research participants. The entire process of collecting the primary data through interviewing research participants took a period of about four months because of the busy schedules of senior managers.

3.15.1 Interviews

Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) explain that in-depth interviews are issue oriented. This method was useful as the objective of the research was to gain information and understanding from participants about particular phenomena. Primary data were therefore collected using semi-structured in-depth interview questions. During interviews, direct verbal interaction enabled me to follow-up on verbal leads or vague information, which resulted in greater clarity. The interview guide remained the same. However, some refinement was done during the interviews by probing or following up on some questions asked. This is also noted by Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011), who argue that key issues identified in one interview are used to refine probes in a following interview. In this way, inductive inferences are made that enable deeper understanding of phenomena under study. Additionally, Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) contend that interviewing offers researchers access to participants ideas, thoughts and memories in

their own words rather than in the words of the researcher. This is particularly important when the objective is to gain in-depth understanding of the phenomena under study.

Interviews were conducted with each research participant and finalised before proceeding to the next participant. Some of these interviews were scheduled in the morning and afternoon of the same day and others were scheduled a few days apart, depending on the availability of the research participants. In some instances, interviews were cancelled and rescheduled as a result of non-availability of some of the senior managers. The scheduling of interviews at different times and days allowed proper consolidation of information. A holistic perspective was also reflected for each research participant. This enhanced the validity and ensured that a distinct account was obtained. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003) assert that interviews must be planned such that they allow sufficient time to write up a transcript before proceeding to the next data collection session. Each interview session lasted between one and two hours. Interviews were conducted in the offices of participants or at locations that suited both the respondent and myself e.g. boardrooms and offices. Some of the research participants chose to come to my office. Conducting interviews in participants' offices was useful where corroborating information was immediately available. In other cases, additional information was e-mailed to me or hard copies provided after the interviews. This information proved to be useful as it provided further clarity for some issues that were not covered in secondary data that I had already researched.

The flexible nature of the qualitative method is ideal in that the method of introducing the research study depends on the different research participants. Although I had been given permission to conduct the research, I did not have to produce the letter of approval for using the municipality as a case study for this research. While all senior managers did not request a copy of this letter, a brief explanation was provided for the study during the introductory part. This seemed to satisfy most of the senior managers. Only one senior manager wanted to know how and why he was selected. After explaining the criteria and method used, he was satisfied and the interview proceeded. Some of the senior managers were really enthusiastic about participating in the interview, with one actually

commenting: “...something like this is vital...I am able to vent my frustrations and at the same time destress”. Other senior managers were equally excited as they felt that the study would add value.

The interviews began with an explanation provided to each research participant. The explanation included who I was and where I work. The purpose of the interview and the approximate time that the interview required was also provided. Research participants were then requested to provide relevant demographic details e.g. gender, age, race, job title, and period of employment by eThekweni Municipality. I also requested the research participants to confirm if I should proceed with the interview.

The data collection period was four months. It was necessary to interview some of the research participants twice in order to obtain clarity on some responses that were not clear. In this regard, three senior managers were interviewed for a second time.

3.15.2 Documentation

Secondary data were collected by reviewing academic literature i.e. books, journals articles, and documentary records within the eThekweni Municipality, including organisational reports, policy documents, strategic documents, internet searches, and information from the municipality’s website. Since the case study was of a municipal organisation, it was deemed prudent to examine the local government statutory and regulatory framework as another source of information. This included an analysis of relevant legislation, such as Acts of Parliament and Provincial Gazettes, White Papers, and pertinent policy documents. The secondary data complemented the primary data gathered through face-to-face in-depth interviews. This increased the validity and reliability of the study.

Appropriate measures were utilised to protect collected data through archiving material, using passwords on computer systems used to store data, and locking hard copies in filing cabinets. After the study has been completed, the raw collected data will be disposed of through shredding and deletion from the computer systems.

3.15.3 Identification of Data requirements

Although substantial information was collected through the secondary data collection process, the critical source of information on experiences and perceptions of research participants was gathered through the primary data collection procedures. The in-depth interviews that were used as a method of collecting data generated textual data in the form of written field notes. The textual data was further analysed to enable in-depth understanding of experiences and perceptions of the research participants.

3.16 Data Analysis

Du Plooy (2002) contends that the method used to analyse data obtained through the qualitative design usually centres on content analysis. Marshall and Rossman (2011) suggest that the typical analytic procedures include categorising data, immersion in the data, generating categories and themes, coding the data, offering interpretations, searching for alternative understanding and presenting the study. Miles and Huberman (1994) point out that data analysis consists of three concurrent activities, namely, data reduction, data display and verification. A brief analysis of these processes is provided.

Data reduction relates to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying and transforming collected data. Miles and Huberman (1994) emphasise that data reduction occurs continuously and proceeds to the development of codes, themes and testing. The display is done through the presentation of the findings and verification entails testing the findings for validity. The process of data reduction, data display and data verification occurs through an interactive cyclical process until completion of the research.

The process outlined above is similar to that elaborated by Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011), who argue that qualitative data analysis involves a process of immersion in data through which researchers need to identify, understand, explain and interpret experiences of study participants. Explaining and interpreting human experience involves developing a coherent presentation of people's experiences that reflects the complexity of human behaviour. The interpretive process provides meaning to raw, inexpressive data,

providing a coherent interpretation with related themes emerging from the analysis. This is essential and is further articulated by Patton (2002), who contends that qualitative analysis transforms data into credible findings. The findings are generally unique for each study and enable in-depth understanding of the phenomena under study.

Furthermore, Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1992) explain that qualitative data collection and analysis is derived from the *Verstehen* tradition or empathic understanding, which is gained during data collection and analysis. I therefore empathised with experiences of the research participants and also ensured that at the same time I remained objective in order to achieve an accurate analysis of the data.

3.16.1 Underlying principles of grounded theory

Hennink, Hutter & Bailey (2011) describe the tasks of grounded theory analysis as preparing verbatim transcripts and anonymising data; developing codes; defining codes in a codebook; coding data; describing and comparing; categorising and conceptualising data, and developing a theory.

3.16.2 Preparation of data

The underlying principles of grounded theory analysis were utilised for this study. Commencing with transcribing of field notes, this was undertaken after each interview the focus was on the words, phrases and expressions i.e. the meaning of what was said by participants. Data was then anonymised by removing names, of participants, locations, places of specific information that would easily identify research participants. Anonymising the data is essential as it is in line with the ethical consideration of maintaining anonymity and confidentiality of participants.

3.16.3 Developing Codes

Marshall and Rossman (2011) explain that the term code pertains to an issue, idea or opinion that is evident in data. Codes are therefore issues discussed by participants and identified by directly reading the data. Furthermore, Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) elaborate that some codes are raised by participants themselves (called inductive codes),

while others are prompted by the interviewer using topics or concepts from the interview guide, that were derived from literature and theory (called deductive codes). I developed inductive codes from issues that were repeatedly raised by participants during the in-depth interviews. Correspondingly, key issues derived from research literature that was consulted earlier in the study and the interview guide were formed and developed as deductive codes. This is an important aspect of the circular and cyclical nature of qualitative data analysis.

3.16.4 Coding Data

It is important to note that the process of data coding results in reduction of data. My focus was on significant issues that were repeatedly raised. This resulted in data being refined and reduced. Creswell (2007) explains that central steps for coding data involve reducing the data into meaningful segments and assigning names for the segments, combining the codes into broader themes and displaying the data and making comparisons in the data. This process was cyclical interactive and reflects the core elements of qualitative analysis. Furthermore, Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) articulate that appropriateness i.e. consistency in data coding and integrity of the transcribed field notes are critical in ensuring good quality of coded data. It is important to ensure development of well-grounded data code through retention of expressions, and words that are interpreted by the researcher. This study elicited a number of both inductive codes as well as deductive codes, and these were subsequently used as the themes for the study. I used the same process in coding data that I had gathered. I categorised data and coded it into themes. This process enabled comparisons in the data to be made.

3.16.5 Describe and Compare data

Description forms the foundation of qualitative data analysis and provides the rich detail that is sought in qualitative research. Analysis of coded data is circular and entails moving back and forth. Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) state that a thick description of qualitative data not only describes a particular behavior, but also the context within which that behaviour occurs. This is then fundamental to fully understanding the

meaning of the behaviour or actions in the data that will provide a foundation for later conceptualising and explaining behaviour. Developing a thick description is an inductive process that involves reading the data, and delving deeper into each issue by exploring its context, meaning and the nuances that surround it. Description involves focusing on part of the issues, broader topic processes and particular behaviour.

The quasi-judicial approach was also utilised in the analysis of qualitative data. Hussey and Hussey (2000) articulate that the quasi-judicial approach is concerned with the nature, source and quality of the data, evidence and arguments it supports. Data analysis using the quasi-judicial approach was therefore undertaken as a continuous process. I consequently kept the following questions in mind that are highlighted by Hussey and Hussey (2000):

- *Depth questions:* What is at issue? What happens? How can the issue be described? How does it differ from other issues?
- *Breadth issues:* What other relevant evidence might there be? What is the range of perceptions or opinions? How do these dimensions vary? Is there any pattern to the issues across the data?
- *Context questions:* What is the context of the issue? How do participants discuss the issue? What meaning or explanation is given to the issues?
- *Nuances:* Are the issues discussed differently in different circumstances or contexts? What are these nuances? What reasons are given for differences? Are these nuances linked to particular types of participants?

The emphasis was on the importance of examining and re-examining the data, and seeking explanations within the data. Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) argue that description is an important component of grounded theory. However, grounded theory goes beyond description.

Comparison is another task in the analytical cycle that normally happens when the data has been fully described. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest that comparison is linked

to the data displays. A display is defined as an organised, compressed assembly of information that is used to identify patterns and highlights associations in the data. In this study, a comparison and refinement of the issues identified during the data development process was undertaken by comparing the themes that emerged. A comparison of these issues across the different participants was undertaken. This uncovered distinctions, variations as well as similarities amongst the issues that had been identified in the study. It provided a foundation for explaining and interpreting issues that were raised by participants.

3.16.6 Categorise and Conceptualise data

Categorisation and conceptualisation are distinct and yet closely interlinked processes in data analysis. Marshall and Rossman (2011) articulate that categorising entails identifying codes with similar characteristics and grouping them in meaningful groups. Conceptualisation also relates to developing a conceptual understanding of issues. It is important to ensure that categorisation is well defined and valid as the grouped issues and constructs ultimately form the core components in theory development. The conceptualisation strategy that was used for this study entailed exploring links and relationships between the data and enabled a build-up of a more complete picture of the whole data. This resulted in a deeper, more holistic and high level of understanding of the meanings of issues raised by the participants. Accordingly, Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) advocate that categorisation and conceptualisation begin to move analysis to a higher level of abstraction and provide the conceptual building blocks for theory development.

3.16.7 Theory development

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003) propose that data is analysed as it is collected, to see what patterns emerge and to assist in the development of a conceptual framework which will enable an in-depth understanding of phenomena under investigation. The analysis, explanation and interpretations of the issues explored in this study allowed a broader conceptual understanding of phenomena.

3.17 Limitations

Qualitative data present the disadvantage of low reliability and poor generalisation. Furthermore, interpretation of the results is difficult. The qualitative method is also time-consuming as a vast amount of information is produced. High costs may be involved as there is voluminous information that is collected, and it takes much time to transcribe, sort, analyse and interpret the findings. The complexity of the municipality presented further limitations, since eThekweni Municipality is a large organisation. In this regard, numerous documents, relevant legislation, policies and relevant literature had to be reviewed to fully comprehend the magnitude of the transformation process. A great deal of sensitivity was also needed in obtaining data from research participants. My own subjectivity also had to be taken into account since the research perspective is also informed by the researcher's own paradigm.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the qualitative methodology was the most appropriate approach for this study. The richness of data allowed new insights to be gained and greater understanding of the phenomena under investigation. It is believed that the objective of the study has been met.

3.18 Validity

Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004) emphasise that validation depends on good craftsmanship which entails continually checking, questioning and theoretically interpreting the findings. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006: 62) note the criteria of validity advocated by Kvale (1996): the validity of qualitative data entails validity of craftsmanship, communicative validity and pragmatic validity. Validity of craftsmanship has to do with the perceived credibility of the researcher and the research, its integrity and credibility based on checking and questioning of the research findings. Kvale (1996) notes that communicative validity establishes if participants concur with the findings and pragmatic validity entails issues of power and truth. This relates to the impact that the research findings will have on the wider community and if there is a desire to implement the findings of the study.

Whittermore, Chase and Mandle (2001) accentuate the following key validation criteria: credibility, authenticity, criticality, authenticity, integrity, explicitness, vividness, creativity and sensitivity. A further elaboration of the above validation criteria is provided below:

3.18.1 *Credibility*: relates to the accuracy of interpretations of participants and the study findings.

3.18.2 *Authenticity*: in this study, this relates to the different experiences and perceptions of the research participants that have been incorporated in the study.

3.18.3 *Criticality*: relates to the approach taken in the study whereby the information, theories and other aspects of the study have been presented in a critical manner.

3.18.4 *Integrity*: a key aspect that has been observed in the endeavor to ensure validity of the study, entails being self-critical and conducting the research in a truthful and honest manner.

Validity in this study is distinctively high due to the extensive time spent in the field, the detailed, thick descriptions provided and the critical validation of participants' accounts. Information was validated by rigorously searching for meaning through use of information and communication driven mechanisms. Creswell (2007) points out how the use of multiple and different sources and theories increase the validity of a study. Similarly, this study used various theories and sources of information. Different participants provided additional accounts as corroborating evidence. Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004) argue that validity emanates from being able to get your ideas accepted – to publish them for even broader communication. Once complete, this study will be published, as it is anticipated that by communicating the findings in a broader domain, the study will be further validated.

3.19 Reliability

The inability to ensure replication is one of the weaknesses of qualitative research. Hussey and Hussey (2000) point out that replication is impossible and verification of interpretive research also becomes problematic. Notwithstanding this, the vigorous collection of data, using multiple methods such as interviewing, observations, and note-taking, was introduced successfully to manage the weakness of reliability in this qualitative research. Creswell (2007) suggests that reliability can be enhanced in qualitative research by obtaining detailed field notes, by using a good quality tape for recording and by transcribing the tape accurately. This study ensured reliability through accurately transcribing field notes, while the information that may have been construed as trivial was noted. Additional fieldwork experiences that were observed were acknowledged. These included pauses, comments and other expressions noted during the interviewing process. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) argue that reliability in qualitative research depends on a researcher's insight, awareness, suspicions and questions that are asked. Reliability and consistency of data collected was ensured by rigorously interviewing different research participants at different times and locations. A comprehensive account was obtained and the credibility of responses to the data codes enhanced the reliability of the study. In a further attempt to increase reliability, data were recorded for each interview before proceeding with interviews to the next research participant. This ensured that the perspective of one research participant was not prejudiced by the views of another participant. It is essential to note that generalisation of results from the sample to the population is not the objective of the qualitative method. The qualitative study seeks to obtain rich information and the new insight allows a deeper meaning and understanding of phenomena. This method therefore fulfilled the objective of this study.

3.20 Conclusion

This chapter articulated the research paradigm and research methodology for this study. The qualitative method was shown to be the most suitable method to address the research problem. The small sample that was used was deemed to be the most appropriate. Participants who had experienced fundamental transformation and change of the municipality were able to provide new insight and deeper understanding of the phenomena under investigation. The data collection methods and data instruments used, allowed provision of credible information for the study. Data processing and analysis procedures also ensured presentation of valid research findings in an objective manner. The techniques and methods described in this chapter were deemed appropriate for gathering data for the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The aim of the study was to explore the perceptions and experiences of senior managers with regard to transformation and change within the eThekweni Municipality. The study also highlighted challenges experienced by research participants during the transformation process. Deductive and inductive codes were used to present the findings of the study. Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) explain that deductive themes are derived from theories and concepts in the early stages of the study, and inductive themes are derived from data and issues raised by participants. Accordingly, inductive themes that emerged in this study reflected key issues that were raised by study participants. Furthermore, Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) advocate that inductive themes allow the data to speak for itself. This is critical and reflects the principles of grounded theory.

4.2 Presentation and Discussion of Findings

A detailed analysis of the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the study is presented and discussed below.

4.2.1 Perceptions of Transformation

All twenty-two (100%) senior managers agreed that there was a need to transform the Municipality. This view was based on the fact that radical political change had taken place in South Africa and as such the municipality had to respond to these changes. It had also become imperative for the Municipality to comply with, *inter alia*, the new Constitution and the new legislative framework. In this regard, Section 152 of the South African Constitution of 1996 was highlighted as this prescribes the objectives of local government and its new developmental role. Similarly, key legislation such as the *Municipal Systems Act 2000*; *Municipal Structures Act 1998* and the *Municipal Finance Management Act 2003* were cited as key legislation that fundamentally and radically transformed the municipality. The views expressed below highlight views provided about transformation and change that occurred within the municipality.

First participant: *Changes over the past ten years were needed to balance imbalances of the past and to ensure equitable service delivery especially for the disadvantaged.*

Fourth participant: *The skewed system that existed in the past especially in respect to race levels within the municipality needed to change. The old organisation had whites at top levels of management and blacks mostly at lower levels. This had to change.*

Thirteenth participant: *We definitely needed to transform in terms of the new political dispensation and mandate. We had to realign in order to serve all people. We had to focus on the previously disadvantaged communities, have complete buy in and also mirror the society that we served. We had to embrace transformation, if we didn't transform we would have failed.*

Fifteenth participant: *The period from 1996–2006 had much clear legislation. The Municipal Systems Act 2000 ensured that people were included in the decision-making process. In the past the Municipality never bothered about stakeholders. The Act also introduced the Code of Conduct for councilors and employees, which means there is a shift to better governance and this is good for service delivery.*

Seventeenth participant: *The past organisation was not transparent and responsive to the needs of the communities. It was not developmental. Integrated Development Planning was important as the departments within the past organisation operated in silos. There was therefore a need to co-ordinate the services of departments so as to ensure holistic and enhanced service provision.*

Eighteenth participant: *The past local government was fragmented, ineffective, inward looking. It did not serve all its customers there was therefore a definite need for change.*

Twentieth participant: *The previous local government system was not open; it was based on exclusive racial orientations with whites being the main beneficiaries. Black areas*

had no rates base and were non-functional. There had to be a total overhaul of the local government system. The municipality therefore had to transform.

Twenty-second participant: *The Constitution and new legislation called on municipalities to consult communities and ensure delivery of services in an integrated manner.*

There was general consensus amongst the senior managers that the old organisation had become misaligned with the needs of the community that it served. Its status had to change in order to fit with its new environment. French, Bell and Zawacki (2005) assert that in order to survive, it is imperative for an organisation to be aligned to its external environment. This is also in line with the open systems theory that was discussed earlier in the study. Similarly, Spector (2010) sees an organisation as an open system, an entity that exists in constant interaction with its external environment and its own internal elements. Organisational effectiveness and survival is therefore best achieved when a state of fit or congruence exists between various elements of the open system. The research findings reaffirmed that the municipality had to transform and change in accordance with changes that had taken place within the country. All participants therefore concurred that it was imperative for the municipality to fundamentally transform and change in order to ensure alignment with its greater organisational environment, and to ensure continued success and survival.

4.2.2 Transformation through Amalgamation

Senior managers expressed different perspectives with regard to the amalgamation of the municipality. A brief synopsis of their views is presented below.

Ten senior managers (45%) provided negative responses regarding amalgamation. Some of the views expressed are highlighted below:

Third participant: *I don't believe there was a genuine need to amalgamate. The former local Councils operated better than now. They were more needs-based. Currently, the*

discrepancies are rife due to the diverse and increased geographical area of the Municipality.

Fifth participant: The amalgamation process was a mess. The process started in 2000; there were three phases of transformation. This shows that there was no thought process. We were developing the system as we go instead of following the system. The first phase was through the Unicity Committee; the vision of this Committee was a decentralised municipality with authority concentrated at Head Office. This would not have addressed the inequalities of the past. The second phase was through the Transformation and Restructuring Office. This was about consolidation, transforming and establishing a single municipality that complied with the Municipal Structures Act 1998. The third phase came after the Transformation & Restructuring Office was closed in 2002. This phase brought about the blurring of the Political and Administrative roles within the Municipality.

Fifteenth participant: Amalgamation has made delivery of services difficult. People have to come to the central offices e.g. people from the North, South and Outer West areas, these people have to come to Central Durban for certain services. Centralisation is not working because the municipal boundary is vast and the need to be in touch with people is not happening currently. In theory, amalgamation happened but in practice it is not working.

Sixteenth participant: Amalgamation should have been researched; it just happened without consultation. Previous local councils had different rates e.g. in the Inner West residents paid lower rates and they are now paying higher rates due to the amalgamation. Some staff have to travel long distances to get to work e.g. from Amanzimtoti to Durban. This means they have to pay more for transport although the salaries remained the same. The amalgamation was politically motivated; people's feelings were not taken into account; it was imposed on people without consultation.

Nineteenth participant: *The way the amalgamation was done caused a lot of confusion. The impact and implications of amalgamation on staff were not fully understood e.g. my designation was elevated but not my salary. I have subordinates that report to me but they earn a higher salary than I do. Salaries and other systems should have been sorted out before the amalgamation.*

Twenty-second participant: *I don't think that amalgamation was done properly since the municipality has grown too big. The intentions were good i.e. upgrading both the former rural areas as well as the urban areas, but in reality the urban areas have been neglected. Centralisation of certain services has been negative. In the past the delivery of services was decentralized, effective and more accessible to the communities.*

Only one participant (5%) provided positive views with regard to the amalgamation.

Sixth participant: *The amalgamation was a good thing as the Metro council had more resources e.g. Occupational Health & Safety services are now being shared in the former North and South Local Council areas. These areas never received such services in the past.*

Another eleven participants (54%) provided mixed views:

Second participant: *Amalgamation was good for streamlining functions, but there are a lot of challenges such as lack of equity in terms of job descriptions, pay parity. This has resulted in a lot of unhappiness amongst staff.*

Seventh participant: *Amalgamation was necessary; it was, however, not well managed. The amalgamation could have been handled in a better way.*

Eighth participant: *Amalgamation had advantages and disadvantages. The responsibilities of some senior managers increased without increasing their salaries.*

Eleventh participant: *The amalgamation was necessary but administratively it has been an absolute mess. I don't think the Municipality was prepared; there was no consultation. The Unions have too much power and there is huge dissatisfaction. It has destroyed morale. Amalgamation was handled badly. In principle things look wonderful, but in practice it has been a disaster.*

Thirteenth participant: *The amalgamation was a mess, it was necessary but it was a mess. All former local entities had their own Mayors, their own CEOs (Chief Executive Officers), their own Committees etc. The amalgamation was a takeover by the Durban Metropolitan Council, since it had the majority and had better resources. There was also a lot of political interference.*

Fourteenth participant: *There was a need for amalgamation in order to get rid of the fragmentation. However, there was a lot of inefficiency that came about. The detrimental effect is that there are now vast areas to service. Centralisation of the policy is what was needed.*

Seventeenth participant: *Amalgamation had both positive and negative aspects; the spread of resources, e.g. to the former local councils that had fewer resources meant services are now being shared. On the negative side, other people were not ready to change and wanted to maintain the status quo. Some managers were put in positions that they were not skilled enough to perform; this created a lot of tensions.*

Eighteenth participant: *Amalgamation was necessary because the fragmented structures of the former seven local councils could not be sustained; e.g. there were seven Mayors, seven CEOs; there were too many duplications. The amalgamation was about one city, one tax base; from an administrative and financial point of view it made sense. It intended to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. Amalgamation was, however, a little bit rushed; we were fighting with time because there were timeframes provided in terms of the local government transformation framework timelines.*

Twenty-first respondent: *Amalgamation was necessary but it did not enhance job satisfaction.*

According to the findings highlighted above, the amalgamation process resulted in the following negative views; parity in salaries did not take place, there were different salaries for employees that performed the same duties. The senior managers attributed this to the transfer of employees from different Local Councils who were on different salary scales. According to Provincial Notice 5562 of 2000, the transfer of staff from the former Metropolitan Council and Metropolitan Local Councils and placement into the new structure had to be done. Some of the senior managers stated that the placement of staff was done in accordance with provisions of the Collective Agreement on the Placement of Staff into the new municipal structure of the eThekweni Municipality. They further indicated that this Collective Agreement was concluded in April, 2003 and came to be known as the Placement Policy within the Municipality. The placement of employees in the new organisational structure was therefore a transformation process that senior managers had to grapple with. Generally, senior managers have to deal with issues such as grievances, staff anxiety, and low morale. Experiences of senior managers associated with the placement of staff from different local councils into a new organisation have been highlighted. Most senior managers felt that this should have been resolved before the amalgamation process.

Some of the participants were critical of changes brought about through the amalgamation process. They felt that this was not well-planned, not well-managed and that there was no consultation. Participants also expressed negative views about the distance that some employees have to travel to and from work as a result of relocation of offices due to the amalgamation process. A further concern stated by some of the senior managers was the vast area that was created due to the extended municipal boundary. They felt this subsequently resulted in increased responsibilities for senior managers. Some of the senior managers were not happy about their salaries that were not reviewed despite the additional duties they had to perform. The mixed responses expressed by the participants warrant further analysis of the amalgamation that occurred.

According to the participants, amalgamation was one of the strategies adopted to fundamentally transform the municipality. In this regard, the Unicity Committee Report (2000) articulates that this process involved the amalgamation of seven former autonomous local councils into a single municipal entity. Furthermore, the Local Government *Municipal Demarcation Act 1998* made provision for the demarcation of new boundaries within the municipality. This resulted in extended boundaries for the municipality, and paved the way for the amalgamation of the local councils into a single municipal entity.

Cameron (1998) argues that the party political considerations of Provincial Governments rather than technical factors and the will of the people ultimately shaped the final outcomes of boundary configuration of Metropolitan cities such as Durban, Cape Town and Johannesburg. The negative views and multitude of challenges alluded to by the participants confirm this opinion. Most of the senior managers pointed out that the amalgamation process did not take into account technical considerations and people's feelings. As a result, the amalgamation process was not a success. They felt that instead of ensuring effectiveness and efficiency, it brought about a plethora of challenges in service delivery. This was further cited as affecting morale of employees within the Municipality. Some of the participants pointed out that the new municipal area is 60% rural and 40% urban, and yet it is classified as a Metropolitan City. This was viewed as problematic. A number of participants commented that a metropolitan municipality should be a vibrant economical urban city and eThekweni Municipality as a whole is not. It was also noted that although amalgamation was necessary, the process was not well managed. A few positive comments about the amalgamation process were stated and related to the extended delivery of service to areas that previous lacked services and that resources were now being shared throughout the municipal area. There was, however, consensus that amalgamation had brought about a number of inefficiencies within the organisation.

4.2.3 New organisational structure

Below are some of the opinions that were elicited from the participants about the new organisational structure.

Eight senior managers (36%) were happy with the new structure of the Municipality and their views are reflected below.

Sixth participant: *The structure is good as Clusters focus on their core business and their support functions are provided by other relevant Support Units.*

Fifteenth participant: *There is merit in the new structure because the Units are properly grouped e.g. Community services such as Parks, Libraries and Museums are in the same cluster and there is a link.*

Sixteenth participant: *The structure of the municipality is good and well thought out. There is specialisation. Clusters consist of Units that have similar operations e.g. the Metro Police and Fire deal with safety and security issues. This ensures effective delivery of services.*

The positive comments on the structure were attributed to the Cluster-based system that was viewed as streamlined and structured logically in terms of function; e.g. the Units and departments that provide Infrastructure Services such as Housing, Water, Electricity, etc. are grouped under the Procurement and Infrastructure Cluster. Financial Services and related services are grouped under the Treasury Cluster.

Four senior managers (18%) had mixed views with regard to the new structure. Their opinions are presented below.

Fourth participant: *The Cluster system works well and forces employees to work together. The only cluster that does not work well is X (name of cluster withheld to ensure confidentiality) There is no political oversight committee for this cluster.*

Nineteenth participant: *The structure of the municipality adds value but the mandates of some Units are not clearly defined, e.g. X (name of Unit withheld to ensure confidentiality) functions are not streamlined. Some of the functions have not been resolved and this adds to confusion and frustration, which also impacts on service delivery.*

Twenty-first participant: *There is too much power vested in a few individuals e.g. post of X (name withheld to ensure confidentiality); the post has not been filled and the power is vested in someone else (name withheld to ensure confidentiality).*

Twenty-second participant: *The disjointed operation of most Units has not been changed although the structure has been changed.*

Ten senior managers (46%) were critical, and not happy with the new structure:

First participant: *I do not believe that the current structure of the municipality is correct. It is entrenched in the centralisation of power which in fact is ineffective in that the out-lying areas do not get adequate services. They are negatively affected.*

Third participant: *The structure of the municipality does not have a positive effect on service delivery. The focus is good for some disadvantaged areas where there is huge infrastructure provision. Other areas are, however, ignored; e.g. those that pay more rates. If it were the previous entities, they would be able to focus more in terms of their smaller jurisdiction.*

Seventh participant: *The structure of the municipality is top heavy. Some of the clusters are not grouped properly. The structure is also fluid; e.g. there are some Project Executives with no defined functions. It was a job creation process. In some instances the posts of Project Executives were formed around people. Reporting lines are inconsistent e.g. there are Heads and Deputy City Managers reporting to the City*

Manager. There is no consistency and character with the structure of the municipality. There is a mismatch.

Eighth participant: The structure of the organisation is inappropriate because the structure has become unreasonably flattened at the bottom and remained top heavy e.g. at the levels of Heads, Project Executives, Deputy Heads, etc. At the senior levels and operational level there is an imbalance.

Tenth participant: I was surprised by the structure that has been adopted by the municipality. There was no consultation in the development of the structure of the Municipality. So, many functions are now included within the municipality that are not local government functions. Some of the departments are so big e.g. X (name of Unit withheld to ensure confidentiality). The structure defeats logic in terms of organisational development e.g. what needs to be done and what does not need to be done. A lot of people are doing things that they should not be doing. One of the fundamentals for developing a structure is, do you have the mandate and do you have the funds? Otherwise you end up operating unfunded mandates.

Thirteenth participant: The structure of the municipality is a mess; they have added an unnecessary level. In the past we never had Deputy Heads. The reporting lines are too long; the longer reporting lines means less control. It hasn't been great within the organisation, as it means you are not in touch with the issues going on. The structure is top heavy and impractical; some of the Units are not clustered logically.

Seventeenth participant: The problem is that the structure of the municipality is not properly aligned with the IDP. The IDP has eight Plans and the structure has seven Clusters.

Twentieth participant: The new structure was based around people; it was not created to streamline service delivery and smooth management. The leadership prioritised people in senior positions, based on political affiliation before establishing a cohesive structure.

The structure is not the best; there is room for improvement e.g. Units within a certain Cluster (name of Unit withheld to ensure confidentiality) do not have a political oversight committee that provides oversight and monitors their operations.

The findings presented above indicate how critical some of the research participants were of the unequal size of some Clusters. These Clusters were cited as too big compared to the other Clusters. One of the senior managers commented that “*there are two powerful Clusters, two powerful Deputy City Managers; five weak Clusters and five weak Deputy City Managers*”. A further participant echoed similar sentiments and stated that “*there are a few powerful individuals whose views end up being reflected as if they are views of the entire organisation*”.

Most senior managers (48%) believed that at face value, the structure of the municipality appears ideal; however, upon closer scrutiny, the structure does present a number of gaps and challenges. Some of the participants stated that the organisational structure does not conform to organisational design principles, in that functions were not properly aligned. The bureaucratic nature of the organisation was also criticised. In this regard, Senior and Fleming (2006) articulate that dysfunction within organisations is exacerbated by low motivation and morale, delayed decision-making or lack of quality, conflict, lack of co-ordination, and slow response to changing circumstances. Fincham and Rhodes (2005) also criticise the centralised, bureaucratic organisation for its tendencies to stifle individualism, innovation as well as its inability to respond to changing environments. Senior and Fleming (2006) further argue that rapidly increasing costs e.g. in administrative areas due to long hierarchy, excessive procedures and paperwork, distract employees’ attention away from productive work and require additional employees to administer.

The findings presented show that the organisational structure of the municipality is of a highly bureaucratic nature. This presents a number of negative implications for the municipality as it exists in a turbulent environment. The municipality will therefore not be able to respond rapidly to changes within its environment. Vecchio (2002) argues that

a centralised, tall structured and functional organisation is most suitable for stable environments as it tends to be slow to respond to changes in the organisation's environment. It may also result in less innovation and restricted views and allegiances of the organisation's broader goals. Further views from participants related to the fact that the core mandate of the municipality did not form the basis for restructuring the Municipality. This was evidenced by the large number of Support Units i.e. 30 Units as opposed to 10 Units that provide core operational services within the municipality. In this regard, one participant pointed out that "*there are a number of unfunded mandates within the eThekweni Municipality*". Although some senior managers spoke about the need to align the structure with the IDP, it is actually legislative prescripts that have to be used as a basis for structuring municipalities and not the IDP, as the IDP is a strategy for the organisation.

Gildenhuys (1997) argues that local government was created by legislation with the specific purpose of being a developmental local government. Municipalities are therefore mandated to undertake several functions by law through legislation. This provides a clear basis for structuring the functions of a municipality. Van der Waldt (2007) alluded to the organisation of the administration which is done in accordance with functions performed by a municipality. Most of these functions are also in terms of Schedules 4B and 5B of the South African Constitution (1996), which should form the basis for restructuring the Municipal Administration. Champoux (2000) further argues that the size of the organisation directly affects organisational design, which changes and affects other factors. Organisational design therefore has implications for strategy, external environment, technical process and size. An external environment can change, requiring managers to form a new strategy and respond according to changes within the external organisational system. Champoux (2000) contends that the strategy is carried out by changing technical processes, organisational design or both. This appears to be a reflection of the changes in the municipality's structure.

There were strong views that the structure of the municipality is fluid. As noted by Moodley (2004), when the first page of the Municipality's organogram was approved in

2003, the structure had 6 Clusters and 33 Units. This study, however, revealed that there are presently 8 Clusters and 40 Units. Most senior managers expressed concern about the constant changes to the structure of the municipality. They felt that changes that were instituted were not allowed adequate time to be incorporated. The resultant effect was that this increased uncertainty, demotivation and affected morale within the organisation.

4.2.4 New Leadership

This study only focused on the leadership of the Administrative sphere and not the Political sphere of the Municipality. There were mixed responses with regard to the leadership within the Municipality.

Five senior managers (23%) provided positive views with regard to the leadership within the municipality.

Second participant: *The fact that we receive so many accolades for a whole range of things e.g. the Best Run City; Flagship projects such as the ICC; Vuna Awards, etc shows that there is strong and good leadership.*

Tenth participant: *I like what the leadership has done; in the past the leadership never made decisions. The past leadership had financial backgrounds; the present leader has a planning background. I like the fact that the leadership makes decisions that are good for the city.*

Seven (32%) of the participants provided mixed responses with regard to the leadership within the municipality:

Eleventh participant: *There is lack of communication and the biggest problem is the overriding political interest. We are being let down by political interference. We have wrong people in jobs, people with right skills are not put in jobs. There are a lot of political appointments. I however, do admire the City Manager. He is the first City Manager with a planning background to be appointed within the municipality. In the*

past we always had people with a financial background being appointed as Head of Administration. The City Manager has put positive things for Durban but his political interests are too strong for the organisation.

Seventeenth participant: I liked the City Manager when he came; he was decisive and made decisions despite the fact that they were popular or not popular. The City Manager has done a lot of things; however, the other point is that the leadership should be in a post for not more than five years. Most of the leaders are political appointments or politically connected people. This is wrong, since people must be employed based on merit.

Eighteenth participant: It was unfortunate that we had so much change in leadership during the transformation period, there was a lack of continuity. The present leadership is strong; it has good vision and extensive sound, impeccable, academic qualifications. The leadership has excellent national, international linkages; the networks are very well intentioned. The biggest problem is the inability to energize, mobilise, and enthuse a team of people and to ensure effective communication within the organisation. People are not made to be part of what happens within the Municipality. Communication is also very poor and does not ensure the ability to share the vision.

Twentieth participant: The arrival of the new leadership was embraced. The leadership brought a new way of doing things, there was a new order. The changes, however, became detrimental as time went on. There was no introspection by top leadership; they became complacent. Within the other layers there is a lot of discontent; it is now fine to have a change in leadership.

Ten senior managers (45%) provided negative responses with regard to the leadership within the Municipality.

Third participant: The new leadership is supposed to be administratively orientated; however, their political affiliation interferes with the running of the Administration. This

creates problems of lack of distinction between the administrative sphere and the political sphere.

Seventh participant: There have been three phases of leadership within the municipality since 2000. The first and second phase of leadership was consultative, transparent, client-oriented and visionary during the 2000-2002 period. From 2002, the new leadership created a new culture e.g. the recruitment of certain people was not advertised according to HR Processes. There was, however, one good thing: the leadership during this period was bold in taking firm decisions. This leadership has also left a legacy because they presided over a huge legacy of new infrastructure development.

Eighth participant: The leadership is too politicised; decisions are influenced by politicians, for example, if projects are politically expedient they get done, otherwise they don't and are shelved.

Twelfth participant: The leadership is politically motivated and there is a lot of bias and favoritism. At times, decisions are not made on sound principles.

Sixteenth participant: The leadership has been good for a particular time but afterwards they started to change. Their loyalty now lies with themselves rather than with the organisation. The leadership should be in a position for not more than five years. It must be like the private sector where the CEO serves for not more than five years.

Twenty-first participant: We have a politically-driven Administration. In the past we had a lot of problems but the political and administrative spheres were clearly defined. There is a need to reinforce a strong Political Head and strong Administrative Head.

Twenty-second participant: There is a Strategic Management Team but in reality, this is not the case. This has not resulted in any efficiency as most things are centralised and

done by the City Manager and yet there are Deputy City Managers who have authority to deal with most matters. This does not help with efficiency.

The views presented above indicated that most senior managers were pleased that the leadership was strong, visionary and took bold decisions. Also, they were happy that the leadership had international and national linkages which were cited as being good for the organisation. The fact that the City Manager had sound qualifications and was competent was noted as a positive factor for the organisation. It was, however, stated that some of the leaders were not experienced and competent to undertake their functions. In addition, positive views about the leadership related to the fact that the municipality had won a number of awards. This was attributed to the good leadership within the organisation. Some of the senior managers expressed concern with regard to the blurring of the roles of the Political and Administrative Heads. The strong political links of the leadership was cited as being detrimental to the organisation. According to one senior manager, *“the leaders should serve all citizens rather than listen to a few politicians”*. Another view mooted was that three changes in leadership occurred during the transformation process, with each leader having a different leadership style and focus, resulting in a disjointed transformation process. This was attributed to changes in leadership during the transformation period.

Werner (2007) asserts that leaders do not operate in a vacuum but in relation to their own personality and values, the values and personality of their followers, and a complex compendium of situational factors. Leaders should therefore examine themselves and their behaviours as well as the effect of their behaviours on followers and goal attainment. Werner (2007) further states that principle-centred leaders possess and promote good basic values such as integrity, openness, compassion, humanity, equality, trust, recognition, participation and empowerment. The findings highlighted the importance of these attributes especially during periods of transformation. These attributes ensure that appropriate values are articulated and promoted within the organisation. Such principles also play a fundamental role in guiding the organisation in achieving its objectives. Champoux (2000) further advocates that leaders try to change

organisations while managers sustain and control them. As such an ethical leader confronts moral dilemmas, rewards ethical behavior and builds an ethical organisational culture. Daft (2007) expresses the view that leaders influence cultural and ethical values by clearly articulating a vision for organisational values that employees can believe in, communicating the vision throughout the organisation. The literature review highlighted transformational leadership style as the most ideal during periods of organisational transformation. Furthermore, Fincham and Rhodes (2005) argue that transformational leaders are able to establish direction for their organisations, indicate a vision, inspire and energise employees to overcome barriers. Transformational leaders are also credited with ensuring trust and respect. Unfortunately, the participants of this research could have but did not relate to any of the characteristics of transformational leadership that were highlighted earlier in the study. This suggests that there was no transformational leadership within the organisation during the transformation period.

4.2.5 Change Management

Management of change within the Municipality did not receive favourable views. Only one senior manager (5%) was happy with the way change had been managed. This view was based on the observation that most employees were not retrenched during the transformation and restructuring process, and that CEOs from the former Local Councils were placed in senior positions such as Heads of Units. Other senior employees who had been displaced due to the transformation and restructuring of the Municipality were retained as Project Executives. According to this participant, the skills of these staff were retained and they also played a role in transferring skills and knowledge to the newly appointed senior employees.

Twenty-one (95%) of the senior managers interviewed were not happy with how change had been managed.

Third participant: *The administrative leadership did not manage change well. It allowed the influence of politics to be rife within the Municipality. This was allowed from the onset.*

Seventh participant: *There was no management of change as manifested in the Internal Perception Study of 2007. The leadership did not manage change.*

Eighth participant: *Change was managed by decree; the leadership would consult but do what they want anyway. The Internal Perception Study also showed this. Change management was arbitrarily done in a top down manner.*

Ninth participant: *The conditions within the organisation were unstable and insecure; there was a lot of uncertainty. The consultative process within the municipality was not as good as that undertaken for the external communities and stakeholders.*

Tenth participant: *Change management was not done. The leadership do not value employees and recognise employees' achievements. Instead they try and find fault to justify sidelining certain staff.*

Eleventh participant: *I don't think the leadership has managed change. The transformation process has been a disaster, a total disaster. The biggest problem is political interest. As a municipality we should serve the needs of all people.*

Twelfth participant: *There was no consultation; lots of changes happened without consulting people. Things just happened. Informing people is different from consulting people.*

Thirteenth participant: *Change management has not been managed well. There was a need for more interaction; the change threatened a lot of staff, especially Whites and Indians. The previously advantaged people saw it as Black people taking over their jobs.*

Sixteenth participant: *Change management was bad; there was no consultation, things were done reactively. Problems were not diagnosed before finding the solution; that's*

why there was resistance to change. There was no change management; it was non-existent.

Eighteenth participant: The leadership did not manage change. The transformation and restructuring office started in 2001 and was closed in November, 2002. This office was dealing with issues of organisational transformation and change management. When the Transformation and Restructuring office was closed, the consultative process was stopped. Thereafter we lost focus about ensuring good governance, effective communication, and change management.

Twentieth participant: Change management was handled badly. There was a tendency not to recognise old staff. Only views of a few new staff were considered and yet transformation has to recognise the insecurity of people; there must be a fair measure of security for the new and old people. Some people became victims. Change brings fear and insecurity in people and it is important for assurances. Some of the staff who were leading and managing the transformation process were sidelined or relieved of their duties. During the transformation period, it was a cold environment; many people were unsure of their future.

Twenty-first participant: Change management was top down; there were negative changes e.g. appointments were made without interviews. There was also strong political influence with regard to administrative processes. Change was not managed well.

The views expressed by the participants show that a number of change management principles were not considered. Participants felt that there had been no consultation and employees relied on the grapevine for information. The findings showed that a critical omission in the transformation process was the fact that change management was not done. Hayes (2005) refers to a model that deals with issues that confront individuals during transformation periods such as shock about the change; denial, anxiety, depression, anger, blaming and reflection, testing and internalising. This model was

discussed in detail in earlier chapters and it appears that elements of this model were not addressed within the municipality. Likewise, critical interventions of the macro-organisational and micro-individual change model that was introduced earlier, appears not to have been implemented. None of the participants mentioned elements of this model or something similar, which therefore suggests that factors of the macro-micro level change model were not implemented within the municipality. The inability to implement any change management processes during the transformation period is considered a fundamental flaw in managing a transformation process. Participants also felt that the influence of politics was rife within the municipality. This was indicated as a major concern as it was perceived as negatively affecting organisational members.

Further concerns highlighted related to poor values, low morale and poor communication during the transformation period. One of the senior managers referred to the results of an Internal Perception Study that was published in 2007. The Internal Perception Study Report (2007) had recommended, *inter alia*, improvement with regard to leadership, communication, change management, values and culture within the municipality.

As highlighted earlier in the study, change management is a critical process especially during transformation periods. Managing Beyond the Quick Fix model is another comprehensive model for managing change, presented earlier in the study. French and Bell (1999) suggest that there are five stages in this model: initiating the program; diagnosing the problems; scheduling the tracks; implementing the tracks, and evaluating the results. All five stages are critical in managing change at a macro-organisational level. This model was used to analyse the change management process within the municipality. The study revealed that some of the stages of the model were not implemented. The model thus enabled a clear analysis and understanding of the perceptions of the participants.

A number of senior managers pointed out that another cause of poor change management was the closure of the Transformation and Restructuring Office. According to these senior managers, when the office was closed in 2002, the consultative process and change

management were effectively stopped. The management of change corresponds to similar factors proposed by the organisational development approach that were discussed in earlier chapters. Senior and Fleming (2006) explain that organisational development is an approach that cares about people and which believes that people at all levels throughout the organisation are individually and collectively both drivers and engines of change. Organisational development is considered as a step-by-step process of managing change. This approach is therefore deemed to be crucial in the management of change. It has already been highlighted earlier that Hodge, Anthony and Gales (1996) contend that organisational development change efforts aim to improve social functioning of organisations. The views presented above suggest that the management of change was not done within the municipality and as such explains the negative perceptions of most of the senior managers.

4.2.6 Organisational Culture

French and Bell (1999) present the Burke-Litwin model that proposes that organisational culture is one of the key interventions that result in fundamental change of an organisation. Spector (2010) suggests that organisational culture is composed of the shared values of its members and the resulting patterns of employee behaviour. An analysis of the participants' perceptions about the culture within the municipality was presented against the above paradigm.

Three senior managers (14%) were happy with the organisational culture within the municipality. After critical analysis it was, however, established that these senior managers identified with sub-cultures within their respective Units and Departments rather than the culture of the organisation as a whole.

Ninth participant: *People identify with their Unit's culture. We, however, don't seem to have an organisational culture. We seem to have the culture that appears in the newspapers that is mainly negative.*

Daft (2007) asserts that sub-cultures develop to reflect common problems, goals and experiences that the members of a team, department or unit share. Likewise, Werner (2007) expounds that a dominant culture reflects the core values of an organisation that are shared among most members. Consequently, a sub-culture develops from the dominant culture and reflects common problems, experiences and situations which members are confronted with. This assertion seems to correspond with the views expressed by some of the senior managers; for example, some of the sub-cultures that were mentioned were those of unethical behavior, poor work ethic, corruption, and entitlement. It is therefore suggested that these sub-cultures are a reflection of the dominant culture within the organisation. Some of the participants spoke about being happy with the sub-cultures of their specific Departments and Units. This confirms the assertion highlighted by Daft (2007), that sub-cultures reflect common problems or goals experienced by members of a specific Unit. The importance of sub-cultures is also stressed by Senior and Fleming (2006), who emphasis the fact that sub-cultures of organisations exist within the strongest of cultures. There should therefore be a concerted effort to manage or even change the sub-cultures along with the organisational culture.

Nineteen senior managers (86%) were not happy with the organisational culture within the municipality. Some of the negative responses were attributed to the following beliefs and opinions provided by the senior managers that there is, *inter alia*, a culture of entitlement, laziness, lack of professionalism, and no work ethic. Some of the senior managers strongly felt that the organisational culture within the Municipality was that of corruption, jobs for pals, and a disregard of organisational systems and processes. The views of some of the participants are reflected below.

Third participant: *In the past, the culture has been performance-orientated; now it is based on pleasing political personalities and bodies. The organisational culture within the municipality is not work-driven.*

Fifth participant: *There is no culture. Negative perceptions by staff within the municipality were highlighted in the Internal Perception Study. We still need to develop an organisational culture within the municipality.*

Eighth participant: *The culture is highly politicised; everyone looks over their shoulders.*

Eleventh participant: *The current organisational culture is a disaster. Unions and politicians have a loud voice; there is also racism. Staff morale and good ethics is suffering badly. Organisation means a method and yet there is no method. If most people had other means to support themselves, they would walk out. It's a mess.*

Twelfth participant: *The organisational culture has changed from being ethical and disciplined to being that of corruption and unethical behaviour.*

Thirteenth participant: *We have an unprofessional culture of entitlement; there is no focus on service delivery and no accountability. There is too much political interference as well.*

Sixteenth respondent: *The organisational culture we have is that no one drives the positive thinking; only punitive measures are implemented. No research is done on diagnosing problems; they only come with solutions. This does not work. The unions also impact against our culture; e.g. when management want to implement something new, the unions are always against things.*

Seventeenth participant: *There is no organisational culture; there is a lot of unhappiness and low staff morale. The Internal Perception Study of 2007 revealed that there is poor leadership, poor communication, and poor values. Since we are a government institution, political influence is inevitable, but it is the way these people abuse their power which is a problem.*

Eighteenth participant: *We don't have an organisational culture; we currently have a silo mentality and operate in a fragmented way. It is actually the old organisational culture that prevails within the new structure. We need a new organisational culture. Organisational Culture is a way of life. The organisational culture that we have is characterised by discord. Managers are not happy to go to work; we are not a happy organisation. Unions don't see eye-to-eye with management. There is political influence as well.*

Twentieth participant: *Not all of us identify with the organisational culture. The organisational culture of selflessness, honesty, dedication, and working beyond the call of duty, pride and corporate identity, does not exist because there is no one championing that both politically and administratively. There is a need to have a champion of particular conduct and behaviour; we don't have that. The municipality is a closed institution without a culture.*

Twenty-first participant: *The organisational culture we have is one of unionised workers; Unions are now running the place; we created a monster and now we can't rein in the Unions. There is a culture of entitlement; the work ethic is poor and there is mediocrity.*

Twenty-second participant: *I can't say we have an organisational culture. The culture is not sensitive, open and transparent to community needs. In most cases, reasons are not provided for taking certain decisions.*

Robbins (1993) articulates three factors that play an important part in sustaining an organisational culture: selection practices, top management actions, and socialisation. Selection is important in identifying and hiring employees who fit into the organisation. Furthermore, Fox (2006) professes that the culture of an organisation is the result of its history, environment, selection process and socialisation process. In this regard, socialisation allows new employees to adapt to the organisation's culture. This ensures that the beliefs and customs that are in place are not disturbed. Similarly, Daft (2007) states that a strong organisational culture can have a powerful impact on performance.

Cultural strength therefore refers to the degree of agreement among members of an organisation about the importance of specific values. Daft (2007) argues that if widespread consensus exists about the importance of these values, the culture is cohesive and strong. If little agreement exists, the culture is weak. The findings of this study have unfortunately indicated a weak organisational culture within the municipality. This was highlighted by lack of consensus on the core values and culture within the organisation.

The findings presented above also highlighted the negative views regarding the organisational culture that presently prevails within the Municipality. From the above analysis, it appears that the organisational culture has not been fully developed, clearly articulated and entrenched within the municipality. The research participants could not categorically state the new organisational culture of the municipality. A number of reasons for failure to categorically articulate the organisational culture have been highlighted. Some key examples are lack of development of a new organisational culture, poor selection practices, poor values, politicised environment, highly unionised environment, perceptions of corruption, unethical behavior, poor work ethic, and amalgamation challenges. The findings of this study also revealed that the former local councils had different organisational cultures, practices and systems. The participants suggested that when amalgamation took place, there was no process in place to integrate and ensure cultural compatibility within the new organisation. Fincham and Rhodes (2005) articulate that culture penetrates the essence of an organisation and that it is almost analogous to the concept of personality in relation to the individual. Fincham and Rhodes (2005) further assert that organisations possess the paradoxical quality of being both part of and apart from society. They are embedded in a wider social context, but they are also communities in their own right with distinct rules and values. Culture is therefore substantive; it reflects the beliefs and techniques that characterise specific organisations. Robbins (1993) points out that while a favourable financial statement or product synergy may be the initial attraction of a merger, what actually works may have to do with how well the different cultures match up.

The perceptions and experiences of the senior managers showed that there was no clearly articulated organisational culture within the Municipality. This reflects another fundamental flaw in instituting the Burke-Litwin model of organisational change. French and Bell (1999) express the notion that culture is one of the key interventions that is instituted to fundamentally transform an organisation. Notwithstanding the importance of culture in fundamentally transforming an organization, it is equally important to note that culture is also difficult to change. Senior and Fleming (2006) contend that organisational culture is much less visible and with its many layers, dimensions and types, it is much more difficult to change. This may therefore be attributed as one of the reasons of not having a clearly articulated organisational culture within the municipality.

4.2.7 New Policies

A number of new policies were implemented within the eThekweni Municipality. This study examined views and experiences of senior managers on only two policies i.e. Supply Chain Management Policy and Employment Practices Policy Agreement, which were implemented within the Municipality. These policies were noted as important and cross-cutting in the municipality. Responses provided by the senior managers are presented below.

4.10.1. Supply Chain Management Policy

Nine participants (40%) provided positive views about the Supply Chain Management Policy. Some of the senior managers mentioned that the existence of the SCM policy provided clear guidelines in terms of performance. Another senior manager commented that the policy is clear because of the well laid out procedures.

Only two senior managers (9%) expressed mixed opinions about the Supply Chain Management policy. They explained that the intentions of the policy were good but the implementation was problematic.

Seventh participant: *The Supply Chain Management Policy gives you an element of fairness and transparency in obtaining services you require. The negative aspect is that it has added a lot of time to deliver services.*

Eleven (50%) of the participants were not pleased with the Supply Chain Management policy. Below are some of the concerns expressed by some of the participants.

Fourth participant: *The process to get a service provider is so long and this affects service delivery. It also affects small businesses and poor communities that lose out because of the long and onerous process.*

Eighth participant: *The Supply Chain Management policy has been a nightmare. Not being able to procure decent services and contracts is a problem.*

Fourteenth participant: *Centralisation of the procurement of goods and services is really affecting service delivery and has affected my performance.*

Twenty-first participant: *Supply Chain Management has become a burden; there are three committees. The process is long and cumbersome. The Supply Chain Management Department is not the most efficient department. There are a lot of inefficiencies in the system and this has hindered performance.*

The Supply Chain Management Policy for the municipality was adopted in accordance with the provisions of the *Municipal Finance Management Act 2003*. The supply chain management policy includes, *inter alia*, governing processes and procedures for the procurement of goods and services; disposal of assets and selection of contractors. Participants of this study expressed the view that the Supply Chain Management (SCM) policy was time consuming and cumbersome since there are three Committees that deal with the procurement process throughout the municipality for goods and services that are above R200 000.00. This value was also viewed as problematic for a Metropolitan municipality with a budget of over R30 billion. Most of the senior managers felt that the

Supply Chain Management process was onerous and that it did not fully cater for the needs of the organisation. They explained that more resources were devoted to this process rather than to actual service delivery. It was noted that this was further compounded by the strict budget cycle within which senior managers had to operate, with no roll-over of funds at the end of the financial year. This in turn meant further delays in delivery of services.

4.2.7.2. *Employment Equity Practices Policy [EPPA]*

Mixed responses were provided with regard to the implementation of the Employment Equity Practices Policy.

Seven participants (32%) provided positive views about this policy as shown below.

First participant: *The implementation of the EPPA ensures that everybody is treated equally, more especially those from disadvantaged communities.*

Seventeenth participant: *The EPPA is good as it provides previously disadvantaged groups with opportunities. Managers need to be patient, provide mentoring and training. The issue of skills and experience needs to be addressed.*

Four participants (18%) had mixed views with regard to the implementation of the Employment Equity Practices Policy. One view was that “...*the EPPA was necessary but it was rushed; it should have been phased in, instead of the big bang approach that was used*”. Another comment was that the EPPA had been great in creating an equitable basis, but it would have been better if it had been done on merit.

Eleven (50%) of the twenty-two participants were, however, not pleased with the EPPA policy. They were of the opinion that the EPPA is not applied consistently and the inability to employ suitably experienced and qualified employees was cited as a key challenge. This was thought to have had a generally negative impact on job performance and service delivery.

Ninth participant: *With regards to the EPPA, there is no guarantee that you will be able to recruit people that will be able to perform.*

Twelfth participant: *The EPPA needs to be balanced in terms of gender. It is only applied in terms of race. It has a long way to go.*

Thirteenth participant: *With regards to the EPPA, people are no longer employed on merit; this has made my job more difficult.*

Sixteenth participant: *The EPPA is implemented incorrectly; we don't see its merit; it must not be about colour but also about the skills that people possess.*

Nineteenth participant: *Some policies like the Employment Practices Policy have a negative impact. External candidates of a certain race are considered over the internal employees.*

Twentieth participant: *EPPA needs to take skills into account; in some cases, certain races that are required don't have the skills; this frustrates progress and projects.*

Twenty-second participant: *The EPPA presents similar difficulties of skills and knowledge and also not getting the people that you want. This results in an added responsibility of skilling staff as well as trying to do your own job at the same time.*

The Employment Practices Policy Agreement (2004) aims to ensure that the municipality pursues non-discriminatory practices and to promote an Affirmative Action Policy. Goldenhuys (1997) advocates that municipalities owe it to communities to appoint only the best qualified persons, as appointing incompetent persons in positions they cannot handle adequately is tantamount to committing a crime against them. The Employment Practices Policy Agreement was generally considered to have presented considerable challenges in the recruitment of suitably qualified employees. Some senior managers

mentioned that in most instances, appointments were no longer done meritoriously. This had resulted in a drop in standards and performance. As a result, additional responsibilities had been created for the senior managers, who had to mentor and train staff. Some senior managers also felt aggrieved in that they had been sidelined with respect to promotions, with previously disadvantaged candidates from outside the municipality being appointed over them. They further pointed out that in order to justify such decisions, criticism was leveled against them so as to justify sidelining them. Likewise, Kreitner, Kinicki and Buelens (2002) state that Affirmative action focuses on achieving equality of opportunity in an organisation and is often mandated by national laws. The Employment Equity Plan that the participants of this study referred to appears to be in line with the provisions of Affirmative action. Kreitner, Kinicki and Buelens (2002) mention that Affirmative action interventions aim to correct an imbalance, an injustice, a mistake or outright discrimination. This may, however, result in negative feelings as people appointed on this basis feel stigmatised as unqualified. Further research findings in this regard have, however, shown that the negative consequences are reduced when a merit criterion is included in recruitment decisions.

There were also strong views from some participants that social issues such as high crime rates also contributed to the brain drain. The implications of this, according to the senior managers, was that filling of vacant positions with suitably qualified and experienced personnel had not been easy. The scarce skills shortage and general low competency levels were presented as another challenge that had a negative effect on performance and service delivery. Gildenhuis (1997) argues that municipalities owe it to communities to appoint employees that have requisite knowledge, skills and competencies, as well as other relevant personal and psychological qualities. This would balance the provisions of the Employment Equity Policy.

4.2.8 New Systems and Processes

An examination of views and experiences of senior managers regarding some of the systems and processes that were implemented within the Municipality was undertaken. This study focused on only three systems and processes, namely, the Budget process; SDBIP (Strategic Development Budget Implementation Plan), and Performance Management. These processes and systems were highlighted as critical in reforming administrative systems and processes.

4.2.8.1. Budget Process

As highlighted earlier, the *Municipal Finance Management Act 2003* was promulgated to, *inter alia*, provide management of municipal finances and ensure accountability. The budgetary process within the municipality was shown to be structured in accordance with provisions of the MFMA. The findings showed that the budgetary process was generally identified as a good practice.

Seventh participant: *The budget process is good; the only problem is that Treasury Department is still removed from the operations; they are still inward looking instead of understanding the operations they support.*

The findings revealed that the Municipality had sound finances and had never received a qualified audit from the Office of the Auditor General. It was further pointed out that the Municipality had an excellent credit rating. These positive factors were attributed to the sound financial management principles and good budgetary processes within the Municipality.

4.2.8.2. Strategic Development Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP)

Mixed views were received in this regard. Sixteen research participants (73%) were happy with the SDBIP process. The Strategic Development Budget Implementation Plan was highlighted as an effective system in planning projects and monitoring performance. Most senior managers noted that it enabled clear targets to be set and achieved, thus enhancing performance. Another positive comment was that the Strategic Development

Budget Implementation Plan was a good system as there were clear linkages between projects and the IDP.

Six participants (27%) were, however, not entirely pleased with the SDBIP process, maintaining that although the intentions were good, there was also a challenge in implementation. One senior manager observed that the new systems were good in terms of compliance, but the downside was that there were so many systems being implemented within a short space of time. As a result, too much time was spent in ensuring compliance issues rather than in actual service delivery.

Eighth participant: Some of the processes are imposed top down; there is no consultation although the principles and intentions are good and valid. There is a problem with implementation.

Twenty-second participant: Generally local government is highly legislated; there are a multitude of processes that need to be complied with, and the SDBIP is one of these processes. As a result, we are losing focus on the real act of service delivery.

The other challenge raised with regard to the SDBIP was that it was not aligned to the budget process. Budgets were approved first and thereafter projects were identified for implementation. According to some senior managers, there was therefore inadequate or no funds at all for some of the key projects. There was general consensus that there was no proper alignment of the Strategic Development Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP) and the Budgetary process.

4.2.8.3. Performance Management Process

Sixteen participants (73%) were happy with the new Performance Management process. Some of the comments noted were that the new performance management system provided clear indicators to measure performance.

Ninth participant: *Performance Management system is a good process; this allows planning and there are linkages with your superior and your subordinate.*

Eleventh participant: *Performance Management is a new process; in theory it looks good, but we still need to see its benefits in reality.*

Seventeenth participant: *Performance management will help as the rewards are linked to performance. The intentions are good but because of the many systems and processes there is too much bombardment.*

Six participants (27%) were critical of the new performance management process. A lack of consistency in implementation was cited as a cause of concern within some Units. One senior manager mentioned that “...in some cases there was no consultation with the respective employee when assessing performance”. Other senior managers felt that the performance management system was linked to bonuses which were not fairly remunerated. It was noted that there was also an element of subjectivity. The findings revealed that the Performance Management Balanced Scorecard implemented within the eThekweni Municipality mostly focused on macro-organisational factors. Individual micro-organisational factors did not seem to receive adequate attention. According to some senior managers, although the performance management system is objective it still presented challenges in measuring qualitative performance. This was not perceived as easy and was also not catered for within this process.

4.2.9 Task Grading and Job Evaluation System

The views and experiences of senior managers regarding the TASK Grading and Job Evaluation System indicated that all senior managers (100%) were unhappy with the TASK Grading and Job Evaluation System. The senior managers were of the opinion that implementation of the TASK Grading and Job Evaluation System was a flawed process. As a result, it had demotivated employees, lowered staff morale and increased tensions within the municipality. Participants referred to an Internal Perception Study

conducted in 2007 that had highlighted unhappiness of employees particularly with regard to the TASK Grading and Job Evaluation System.

Second participant: *TASK has impacted on the grades and the timeframes for the grading of posts within the municipality, have long since expired. This has resulted in a lot of frustration and unhappiness among staff. It has been a messed up, long process.*

Seventh respondent: *TASK Grading system is another incredibly unfair process; it is a destroyed system and people-manipulated. It needs to be gotten rid of.*

Ninth respondent: *TASK grading system is not properly managed; the biggest flaw is that this takes quite long; even up to now the TASK grading system has not been finalised. In addition, staff and managers are not consulted in the grading of posts.*

Eleventh participant: *With regard to TASK grading system – what a joke – it makes me sick, I am not even going to talk about it.*

Thirteenth participant: *TASK grading system has been influenced too much by the Unions. Grading is a management function; the Unions should never have been involved in the grading process.*

Fifteenth participant: *Task is flawed in its entirety e.g. posts of Para-Legals are on Task Grade 12; the essential requirement of this post is a six month legal course. On the other hand, there are Engineers that are also on Task Grade 12. The qualification of an Engineer is an undergraduate Degree. This does not make sense. The people that constitute the grading forum are not qualified to grade all posts within the Municipality, so the system is not good.*

Eighteenth participant: *TASK grading system has not been implemented in a correct manner. In fact, all HR processes have not been well researched and well thought out. There is no communication, no guidance; they don't work.*

Twenty-first participant: *TASK has disillusioned employees.*

Twenty-second participant: *The TASK Grading and Job Evaluation system has made it terrible; staff morale is down.*

A number of the participants stated that the different local authorities that were amalgamated into the eThekweni Municipality had different job grading systems. This situation had to be changed after the amalgamation process. According to the TASK Job Evaluation Collective Agreement (2003), TASK, which stands for “Tuned Assessment of Skills and Knowledge”, is a system of job evaluation that uses defined skills level factors to grade all posts in the organisation. In accordance with the South African Local Government Bargaining Agreement, the TASK Job Evaluation System was to be completed within a period of 18 months. According to the eThekweni Municipality Task Outcomes Results Circular, the results were, however, only released in 2007, 4 years after commencement of the process. The timeframe of 18 months envisaged by the South African Local Government Bargaining Council was therefore not met. Some of the senior managers mentioned that the process of dealing with appeals and job grading grievances had not even started. The TASK job grading process was therefore construed as still incomplete.

The unhappiness of senior managers with the TASK Grading and Job Evaluation system highlighted the importance of consultation, transparency, feedback, and the need for adequately researched systems. The need to adhere to stipulated time-frames was also highlighted. It is evident from the views of the participants that the above factors were not considered within the municipality. The other key factor that was stated as a cause of great concern was the involvement of Unions in the grading of posts. One senior manager commented that “...grading was a management function and the involvement of Unions in this process was unwarranted and detrimental to morale within the organisation”. The senior managers views with regard to dissatisfaction with the implementation of the TASK system suggests that organisational development did not take place during the transformation process. Vecchio (2000) advocates that task,

technology, systems and people are strategies and action plans that are normally targeted for organisational development. Additionally, Fox (2006) emphasises that organisational development focuses on various strategies such as consultation, feedback, and involvement of employees. These organisational development processes contribute to the management of change. Unfortunately, participants of this study commented that this was not done within the municipality and as such negative views have been expressed.

4.2.10 Coping with Change

The findings of the study revealed that only 3 senior managers (14%) were not coping with the transformation and changes that occurred within the Municipality.

Tenth participant: *I cope with much medication; when things get to me my anxiety gets to me. I had a lot of time booked off.*

Fourteenth participant: *The changes have stressed me; there was resistance to change. I tried to cope but I don't think I managed. That is why I am going for medical boarding.*

Despite the complex and dynamic environment and the radical changes instituted within the municipality (86%), nineteen of the 22 senior managers that were interviewed appeared to be coping well. Most of these senior managers seemed to have adopted specific coping mechanisms that suited their particular circumstances:

Fifth participant: *To cope, I have developed a system of working within the system. I have accepted change as inevitable and looked at negative change with a positive mind.*

Eighth participant: *In order to cope, I try and adapt.*

Eleventh participant: *I focus on my job; there is so much to do. People don't care about your challenges e.g. shortage of funds and other resources; they just want the work done.*

Thirteenth participant: *I have to be positive and behave like a leader and support the decrees of politicians and top management. I also embrace change and try and see if it works; you can't fight change.*

Sixteenth participant: *I have decided to ignore all the negativity around me that happens. I set my own standards according to the private sector standards.*

Twenty-first participant: *Some changes I have embraced, some are less satisfactory e.g. the blurring of Political and Administrative roles within the Administration.*

The findings presented above suggest that individual differences contribute to particular coping mechanisms chosen by senior managers. Ivancevich and Matteson (2002) suggest that personality and locus of control are key individual attributes that influence behaviour and coping mechanisms. Furthermore, Slocum and Hellriegel (2009) distinguish between two kinds of people, one kind who believe they are autonomous, masters of their own fate, and are personally responsible for what happens to them. These are called internals since they have an internal locus of control. Individuals with an external locus of control in contrast, view themselves as helpless pawns of fate, controlled by outside forces over which they have little or no influence. Participants in this study identified a number of factors that they use to cope with change. These factors correspond with those highlighted by Drafke (2009):

- *Acceptance*: accepting change is sometimes regarded as easy especially where there is focus on positive aspects of change.
- *Learning about the change*: becoming thoroughly familiar with change can increase understanding of change and subsequently the way to deal with change.
- *Participation*: especially in decision-making processes that lead to change, participation is viewed as an excellent way of coping with change.
- *Support and assistance*: this refers to advocating the change to other people, teaching them about the change and about its benefits. This positively assists in coping with change.

- *Utilisation*: this is another way of coping with change and relates to the use of new systems or equipment and removing any fear of the unknown. Utilising change is regarded as an effective way of unfreezing the old methods as the new methods complement or replace the old way.
- *Negotiation*: this is the final way of coping with change. Drafke (2009) states that it involves a process of negotiating the changing part of the change that one cannot cope with.

The majority of participants of this study appear to have adopted some of the mechanisms highlighted above to enable them to cope with changes within the municipality. Similarly, Fox (2006) uses personality to predict and explain differences in behaviour of organisational members. Fox (2006) asserts that individuals with an internal locus of control believe they control their destiny and as such are more satisfied with their jobs. The humanistic-existential perspectives of most senior managers explain their ability to deal with challenges of working in a changing organisation. Nevid, Rathus and Greene (2000) contend that existentialists believe their human-ness makes them responsible for the direction of their lives. Most participants demonstrated the ability to take responsibility of their jobs and well-being. Furthermore, Nevid, Rathus and Greene (2000) highlight the social-cognitive theories which accentuate the role of thinking or cognition. Nevid, Rathus and Green (2000) point out that factors within the person should be considered in explaining human behaviour. The findings of this study suggest that positive factors within the participants enabled them to deal with transformation imperatives. Additionally, the senior managers' positive personalities and attributes enabled them to embrace change, adapt to new changes, ignore all negativity and benchmark their performance with that of achievers. A further factor that might explain the ability of most participants to cope and thrive within a changing organisation could be the positions that the senior managers hold. By virtue of their positions, senior managers are compelled to take control of situations rather than let fate control them. By so doing they are able to motivate others as well as deal with various challenges they experience.

4.2.11 Challenges experienced regarding Transformation

The study revealed that transformation of a huge and complex organisation such as the eThekweni Municipality, presented a number of challenges. All senior managers (100%) spoke about a number of challenges that they experienced during the transformation and change of the organisation.

First participant: *Managing staff during the transformation period was a challenge, as the staff thought that their jobs were at stake.*

Fourth participant: *The challenge is that now people do not respect hierarchy. In some respects there is reverse racism, there is definitely an element of racism.*

Sixth participant: *Dealing with staff that were aggrieved was a challenge. I had ten people when we amalgamated, nine left and one did not want to participate. I had to appoint and train new staff and there was also high turnover of new staff.*

Eighth participant: *My biggest challenge was the raised expectations that the staff at the low levels experienced. I had to deal with their frustrations. There was also increased industrial action.*

Ninth participant: *The challenge I experienced was continuous change and lack of stability.*

Thirteenth participant: *My challenge was the rise of the Unions who are interfering in all areas of management, including grading of posts. Another challenge is the power that has gone to politicians that needs to go to management.*

Sixteenth participant: *I was resisted by staff; I was a Manager but some employees didn't even want to hear about that. Trying to motivate employees resisting change was a challenge, as they would say you don't know what I have been through. Also doing the*

same job with people who were earning lower salaries than mine. They would complain about this. This was a challenge.

Nineteenth participant: *The challenges I experienced were confusion, lack of trust, lack of communication, and lack of transparency.*

The study established that in some cases, the senior managers encountered challenges with their superiors. They nonetheless had to deal with these challenges and still ensure performance and productivity.

Eleventh participant: *I have experienced unprofessional behaviour from my boss who does not have the right qualifications for the job. I have experienced racism, corruption, dishonesty and unethical behaviour.*

Seventeenth participant: *Lack of good leadership was a challenge. There was a lot of uncertainty about a lot of changes. I ended up leaving my profession hoping that I would be happy in another position but this did not happen.*

Twenty-second participant: *My challenge was having to reapply for my job during the restructuring of the municipality. The manner in which the appointments were made also resulted in me taking added responsibilities. Another challenge was managing unhappy staff with different salaries and benefits from the different local councils that had been merged into a single department. These staff performed the same job but earned different salaries. Lack of support from my superior was also a challenge.*

This study revealed that a number of challenges that senior managers experienced were linked to gaps in the management of the transformation process. The model presented by Burke-Litwin highlighted key interventions for fundamental transformation and change. An analysis of the findings highlights that a new culture for the organisation was not developed and instituted. Furthermore, an analysis of the macro-micro level change model that was discussed earlier also shows that change management and organisational

development was not done during the transformation period. Consequently, most senior managers highlighted the following challenges:

- *Human Resources issues*: managing employees with different conditions of service and with different salaries was pointed out as a key challenge. Managing while dealing with increased turnover was another challenge identified. Corruption and unethical behaviour in some departments was also reported as a challenge. Managing employees without adequate skills and competencies was another challenge that was noted.
- *Poor Leadership*: lack of support from superiors was noted as a challenge faced by some senior managers. Being subjected to racism and not being appreciated or recognised by their respective superiors was an additional challenge. Similarly, the blurring of political and administrative roles was cited as a further challenge.
- *Increased Industrial Action*: this related to managing high levels of conflict and grievances during the transformation period e.g. placement grievances and job grading grievances. A further challenge that was reported entailed trying to ensure productivity while also dealing with frustrations of subordinates/employees that were linked to changes within the organisation.
- *Low morale*: managing employees with low levels of morale was noted as an additional challenge. Robbins and Judge (2010) explain that signs of worsening morale are higher rates of absenteeism, tardiness, turnover, strikes, sabotage and lack of pride in work. Some of these factors have already been reported and this reaffirms the low morale that was highlighted within the organisation.
- *Poor management of change*: the long period of finalising transformation and change within the municipality and continuous changes that took place was identified as a further challenge by research participants. Poor management of change, poor

communication, lack of trust, lack of transparency and general confusion are additional factors that were reported as a challenge.

- *Poorly managed restructuring process*: the poorly managed transformation process was identified as a challenge. This was cited as, *inter alia*, causing displacement of employees and others having to reapply for jobs that they were previously appointed to. Lack of support for employees, poor communication and consultation processes were also cited as being problematic.
- *Extended Municipal boundary*: the extended municipal boundary that resulted from the amalgamation process and demarcation of the municipal boundaries was noted as a major challenge. Due to this process, a huge municipality was created and this exacerbated challenges such as limited resources and the increased work load that senior managers had to deal with.
- *Task Job Evaluation and Grading System*: a lack of fairness and equity in terms of remuneration and rewards was manifested as a result of salaries that were not reviewed to match the additional responsibilities. The poorly implemented Task Job Evaluation and Grading System was stated as a key challenge.
- *Resistance to change*: some of the participants spoke about being resisted by some of their subordinates. Resistance to change is manifested in different ways. Drafke (2009) identifies the following six methods by which people demonstrate resistance: absenteeism; decreased productivity; regression; resignation; transfer and sabotage. A number of these factors have been reported as challenges experienced by senior managers. Drafke (2009) mentions that most people choose a less obvious and less confrontational method of protesting change and transformation. Most employees ultimately resign if they experience increased resistance to change.

The challenges presented above needed to be addressed during the different stages of the transformation process. Van Tonder (2004) alludes to the macro-micro level change model which shows four phases of macro-organisational and micro-individual change processes. During the transformation process, relevant interventions are fundamental e.g. supporting staff, communication and involving employees. This ensures change at a micro-individual level. It is also crucial to understand the cognitive and affective responses of individual employees during transformation periods. Since people do not openly refuse to change: they at times choose less confrontational methods of protesting change. Some of these methods were experienced and expressed by the participants of this study. These methods of protesting change were examined and highlighted as challenges experienced by the research participants.

Van Tonder (2004) advocates a timeframe of 60 months for initiating and completing organisational transformation. The timeframe of instituting change within the municipality was, however, significantly long. According to the *Local Government Transitional Act 1993*, the timeframe for transforming municipalities was from 2000 to 2010. This is a 10 year period, and such a long period of transformation presented a plethora of challenges for the municipality. One of the research participants commented that “...the municipality experienced a decade of ongoing changes; performance and service delivery was almost at a standstill within the municipality while the rest of the world was moving”. The findings suggest that employees were subjected to ongoing radical changes during this period. Ironically, there was no evidence of strategies implemented to manage change at a macro-organisational and micro individual level during this long period of transformation. As a result, participants attested to the generally low morale and numerous challenges that they experienced.

4.2.12 Views on participants jobs

All senior managers (100%) were happy with their specific jobs and did not want to change most aspects of their jobs. Some of the senior managers indicated that it was other job facets that caused a great deal of dissatisfaction. Below are some views of some of the participants regarding job elements that they considered needed to be changed.

First participant: *I would change the negative perception of middle management and other lower level employees, since they think that top and senior managers do things for themselves.*

Sixth participant: *I am satisfied with my job; the only thing that I would change in my job is my salary.*

Twenty-second participant: *I would ensure that there is adequate operational equipment and the ability to recruit staff with relevant skills.*

Another senior manager spoke about the confusion that was being caused by the political influence within the municipality. This was highlighted as an area that required change.

Third participant: *I would make sure that I would do away with the political interference, so that we are left alone to do our jobs.*

The importance of a stable environment and the need to ensure proper communication with the Unions was also noted as contributing to improved morale within the organisation. The need to ensure equity with respect to salaries and benefits was also raised as an important factor that would enhance morale.

Ninth participant: *I would ensure a stable environment and ensure equal pay parity.*

Eleventh participant: *I would like to change the way we communicate. Unions protect employees; as a result there is a bad work ethic, this needs to change.*

Seventeenth participant: *I would ensure that there was consistency and equity in terms of salaries, allowances and benefits.*

One of the senior managers also expressed the importance of acknowledging and recognising employees' views.

Twelfth participant: *My job is not a problem; I enjoy my job but what I would like to change is the fact that my views are not acknowledged, especially after being a senior manager for over seven years.*

Most of the senior managers were satisfied with their jobs but stated that it was actually other factors within the organisation that needed to be changed.

Twenty-first participant: *I am happy with my job because I am working in a good Cluster and Unit. It is the organisation that has a poor and bad culture.*

McCormick and Ilgen (1980) argue that the concept of a job is quite complex and consists of many facets. The satisfaction that an individual associates with his job is really the degree of satisfaction with a number of different dimensions of the job. In this regard, McCormick and Ilgen (1980) assert that job dimensions typically considered relevant to job satisfaction are classified as Conditions and Agents. The Conditions include work, rewards and context of the work, and Agents entail self i.e. values, skills and abilities. It also refers to others in the organisation such as supervisors and co-workers, and others outside of the organization, such as customers and family. Every Condition is caused by someone or something and every Agent is liked or disliked because he is perceived as having done or failed to do something.

The views presented by the senior managers are consistent with essential factors highlighted by McCormick and Ilgen (1980) such as job contentment, nature of work, pay, promotion, recognition, benefits, working conditions, supervision and co-workers. These factors clarify why most of the senior managers are happy with some aspects of their jobs, but dissatisfied with others.

4.2.13 Perceived outcomes of Transformation and Change

McCormick and Ilgen (1980) present a rather different scheme of measuring job satisfaction that was developed by Kunin (1995). This consists of a series of drawings of people's faces with varying expressions ranging from a broad smile to a deep frown. The participant simply marks that face which best expresses how he/she feels about his/her job in general. The "Faces" Scale for measuring job satisfaction was adopted and used to reflect the perceptions of senior managers with regard to transformation and change within the Municipality.

Eight senior managers (37%) were angry with the transformation and change that was instituted within the organisation.

Third participant: *I am angry, because when I came to the Municipality I thought I could add value. Now I don't seem to be adding any value. Sometimes I don't feel like coming to work. The environment that was created due to political interference could have been prevented.*

Eighth participant: *I am angry primarily because of the missed opportunities. We could have competed with the best organisations in the world. Due to over-control and in some instances lack of control, so much has been missed.*

Fifteenth participant: *I am angry because transformation was not a carefully thought out process. There were too many short cuts. It wasn't a consultative process; there has been a huge and negative impact on service delivery and staff. I wish they had managed the transformation and change on an ongoing basis and stop treating it as a soft issue.*

The perception of some of the senior managers was that many opportunities had been missed, especially as eThekweni Municipality has sound resources both financially and in terms of staff capacity. The highly politicised environment was viewed as another cause of concern. Some of the senior managers felt they had been badly abused and sidelined.

One senior manager did not even want to elaborate on the extent of abuse she believed she had endured.

Eleventh participant: *I am angry – I just think that I have been abused, so badly abused.*

Twelfth participant: *I am angry – I am not even going to say more.*

Twenty-first participant: *I am angry because the transformation process was an exclusive process. It was a top down approach. We also have bad press image e.g. there is a problem with a lot of things that are not working, like robots, pot-holes...and we currently don't even have a functional bus service.*

Other senior managers felt that they had been in the forefront of change but given the way the municipality had turned out, they felt betrayed, that their time and energy had been wasted. Some of these senior managers felt depressed, saying that when they joined the municipality they thought they would add value, but because of political influence, and poor work ethic and jobs for pals, they battled to cope. The view that the transformation process within the municipality was not properly managed also contributed to the low morale.

Two senior managers (9%) were very angry with the way the transformation process had been managed:

Fifth participant: *I am very angry because fortunately or unfortunately, I was one of the main proponents of transformation but looking at what the municipality has turned out to be, it means we wasted our energy.*

Tenth participant: *I am very angry because if you take away people's aspirations and careers you castrate them. Especially if you do this to an intellectual person, I have been sidelined. I am not happy about a lot of things; there were a lot of opportunities that have been missed.*

Six senior managers (27%) were neutral due to the following reasons: they were not sure of the culture of the organisation and were unable to identify with the organisational culture within the municipality. Another senior manager mentioned that they had hoped that things would improve, but this did not seem to be the case. Some of the senior managers stated that they were neutral because the transformation process had not completed its full cycle. According to these senior managers, the process of transformation and change management had been stopped by the closure of the Transformation and Restructuring office.

Seventh participants: *I am unsure/neutral because of the incomplete transformation process. Transformation was necessary but did not go through the full cycle. The new leadership style and interference of national, provincial government and politicians messed up the transformation process and caused the incomplete transformation of the Municipality.*

Ninth participant: *I am neutral because there are some good and bad things that were a result of the transformation process.*

Thirteenth participant: *The transformation process was a massive challenge; there was a need to change but the process of change was not managed well. The transformation process could have consulted and communicated more with staff.*

Sixteenth participant: *I thought things were going to work but it doesn't seem that way. When you look around the municipality, it is a sad state of affairs. What was meant to be good intentions is not working.*

Another six senior managers (27%) were happy. This number consisted of one very happy senior manager and five senior managers that were happy. One view was that “...the Municipality now serves all its citizens and changes were introduced to address the imbalances of the past”.

Second respondent: *I am very happy with the transformation of the municipality. Everybody had a raw deal in the past. There is room to improve but this is better than being stuck and not moving forward.*

Fourteenth respondent: *It was necessary to transform to get equity to be fair and change imbalances of the past. It is quite a big process to change something as big as the municipality.*

Eighteenth respondent: *I am happy about the transformation because it's now our system and it serves all the people, but it would have been much better if we had completed the management of the transformation process.*

The Faces Scale was very effective in assessing the perceptions of senior managers with regard to the transformation and changes that occurred within the municipality. This was indicated by two very angry faces; eight angry faces; six neutral faces and six happy faces that were marked. Conclusions were drawn by analysing the experiences and perceptions expressed by senior managers. The findings showed that most senior managers were not happy with the transformation process. This was attributed to the long period of the transformation process within the municipality, poor management of change, lack of communication, poorly articulated organisational culture and badly managed transformation process. However, most senior managers were happy with their specific jobs. All senior managers who were interviewed expressed the view that there was a genuine need for transformation and change. The senior managers were, however, not happy with the transformation process. There was also general consensus that the transformation of the municipality was necessary, but had not enhanced morale and performance and efficiency within the organisation.

By critically analysing the research findings, it was evident that gaps in instituting key change interventions and managing change were present during transformation of the municipality. Some key interventions proposed by the Burke-Litwin model were implemented; however, other key interventions such as a new organisational culture was

not developed and articulated within the organisation. It was also established that organisational development and change management was also not initiated during transformation of the municipality. Drafke (2009) articulates that organisational development is a group problem-solving process intended to bring about orderly change for the purpose of improving effectiveness of the entire culture of an organisation. Various tasks and activities referred to as interventions are intended to aid organisational members in adapting to a rapidly changing organisation. French and Bell (1999) assert that organisational development deals with people problems and work system problems in organisations such as poor morale, low productivity, poor quality, interpersonal conflict, intergroup conflict unclear or inappropriate goals, inappropriate leadership styles, poor team performance, inappropriate organisational structure, poorly designed tasks, inadequate response to environmental demands, poor customer relations, and inadequate alignment among the organisation's strategy, structure and processes. The importance of organisational development as a change management initiative is further elaborated by the role it plays in a changing organisation. Drafke (2009) maintains that any organisational problem can be a job of an organisational development practitioner or change agent, who attempts to diagnose specific problems, provide feedback to organisational members related to his or her findings and then assist them in developing strategies and interventions for improving the total organisation.

Another serious gap related to the gap in change management at both the macro-organisational level as well as the micro-individual level. In this regard, Hayes (2002) advocates that micro-level change is synonymous with human resources management. Human resources management or development is also dealt with when implementing organisational development initiatives. French Bell and Zawacki (2005) contend that work settings, organising arrangements, social factors, technology, physical settings are organisational development interventions and that once they are implemented, they cause cognitive change in individuals within an organisation. Thereafter a change in behavior occurs which eventually translates into enhanced individual development and improved organisational performance. The participants of the study could not, however, relate to any organisational development process within the municipality. As such the findings

highlighted that this critical intervention was omitted during the transformation process. This omission partly accounts for the negative perceptions of senior managers regarding the transformation and change process within the municipality. Paradoxically, most senior managers expressed contentment with their jobs notwithstanding the generally high levels of unhappiness with the transformation process. This ironic situation may be attributed to a number of factors. These factors were elaborated earlier and are cognitive factors such as internal locus of control, self-actualisation and humanistic-existential perspectives, and socio-cognitive perspectives of senior managers. As evidenced in the above presentation and discussion, all key questions of the study were answered.

4.3. Conclusion

The findings of the study were presented through deductive themes that were developed from the literature review, and inductive themes that emerged through issues raised by participants. All participants concurred that transformation of the municipality was imperative. Mixed views were, however, presented with regard to the structure, leadership, policies and systems of the municipality. The main finding of the study highlighted a great deal of unhappiness with the transformation process. This was attributed to poor change management during the transformation period, poorly managed amalgamation process and the non-existent organisational culture. Most participants commented that change management was not done during the transformation period. They were also not happy with certain human resources systems e.g. the Task Grading and Job Evaluation System. This system was perceived as unfair and flawed. Further negative views presented were the blurring of the political and administrative roles, a highly unionised environment, perceived corruption, poor work ethic, limited resources, and shortage of skills.

The extended municipal boundary was also cited as a reason for increased responsibilities. As a consequence, most participants were not happy with their salaries. They explained that their salaries had not been reviewed in accordance with their additional responsibilities. The findings presented in the study exposed how senior managers were profoundly affected by change and transformation. Although the majority

of senior managers were happy with their particular jobs, the findings concluded that most senior managers were not happy with the transformation process. The factors highlighted in the study explained the overall negative perceptions and experiences expressed by participants of this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary, limitations and conclusion for the study. In addition, recommendations arising from the study are provided.

5.2 Summary

The objective of the study was to explore perceptions and experiences of senior managers regarding organisational transformation and change within eThekweni Municipality. To achieve this objective, a qualitative methodological approach was used and semi-structured interviews conducted. A non-probability sampling technique that utilised snowball and judgement sampling methods was applied. A sample consisting of twenty-two senior managers was selected from different Units within eThekweni Municipality. The data that was obtained were then qualitatively analysed using thematic analysis.

The theoretical framework encapsulated the following theories and models: systems theory, Kotter's integrative model of organisational dynamics, Burke-Litwins model of organisational performance, and change and perceptual theories. The theoretical framework provided an in-depth understanding of the existence of the municipality within its wider organisational environment and the complex nature of organisational transformation. Kotter's integrative model demonstrated the importance of ensuring alignment of internal organisational dynamics with the external organisational environment. Additionally, the Burke-Litwin model presented key interventions instituted to fundamentally transform the municipality. These key interventions entailed transforming the vision, strategy, leadership, organisational culture, organisational structure, systems and policies. Macro-micro level change models were discussed to stress the importance of change management. A timeframe of five years for instituting and completing organisational transformation was, *inter alia*, highlighted. The theoretical framework concluded by explaining perception theories. This enabled a deeper understanding of the perceptual process and perceptions of study participants.

The findings of the study highlighted that transformation of the organisation was crucial. According to participants of this study, the old organisation had become misaligned with its environment and it could no longer exist in its current state. It was therefore critical for fundamental change to take place. Participants reported that the radical political change that happened in South Africa in 1994 was a main trigger of transformation and change within eThekweni Municipality. Some of the senior managers spoke about how transformation occurred through amalgamation of seven autonomous local councils into a single organisation. To this effect, Cameron (1998) articulates that demarcation of a new municipal boundary necessitated the amalgamation and subsequent transformation of the municipality. Most participants expressed the opinion that the new extended municipal boundary and the amalgamation of different local councils into a single municipality had brought about a plethora of challenges. These included difficulties in managing employees with different conditions of service, low morale due to increased responsibilities, displacement of employees and resistance to change.

Further negative findings presented related to the transformation process that was not well planned and managed. Participants felt that the process unfolded as the system was developed. Some of the participants argued that communication and consultation did not take place. Similarly, the long period of transformation and change within the municipality was cited as another negative factor. The participants reported that the transformation process took ten years; this was construed as ten years of ongoing changes coupled with considerable challenges. The participants explained that the following additional challenges were related to the long period of transformation: high levels of conflict; increase in grievances, increased anxiety levels, inadequate resources, poor work ethic, low morale; high staff turnover and increased job responsibilities for senior managers. The findings also cited the blurring of the political and administrative roles within the municipality as a negative consequence of transformation. The highly unionised environment was also perceived as a negative result of transformation and change of the municipality.

Negative views that were further expressed by the participants related to poorly implemented systems such as the Grading Job Evaluation System. Some poor appointments that were made especially in respect of candidates without adequate skills and competencies were also noted as a concern. This was cited as affecting performance, morale and service delivery within the organisation.

The findings of the study revealed that most senior managers were not happy with the transformation process. It was, however, surprising and interesting to note that although there was general unhappiness with the transformation process, most senior managers were happy and coping well with their specific jobs. This may be attributed the humanistic-existential perspectives that most senior managers were found to possess. The humanistic-existential perspectives highlight the importance of self-actualisation i.e. the tendency to strive to achieve full capabilities and existentialists believe in people taking responsibility for their lives. Most senior managers were also found to possess a number of positive personality attributes. It appears that this enables them to strive and thrive in a changing organisation.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

The research focused on the views and experiences of senior managers only, which resulted in the exclusion of other employees from the study. This was considered a limitation for the study. French, Bell and Zawacki (2005) contend that organisational transformation affects every employee within the organisation that has transformed. It would therefore have been ideal to select participants from across the Municipality. This was not possible as the focus of the study was only on senior managers. The complex nature of the municipality and multifaceted approach for instituting transformation presented further limitations. This entailed an analysis of a number of variables within the organisational system. The time constraints involved in research of this nature also presented further limitations.

Notwithstanding the above, it is believed that the objectives of the study have been met.

5.4 Conclusion

The study highlighted that transformation of the municipality was imperative. The participants, however, felt that transformation of the municipality was poorly managed. This was attributed to, *inter alia*, the fact that change management and organisational development was not done during the transformation period. Negative perceptions that were expressed by participants were attributed to the extended municipal boundary. Earlier in the study it was pointed out that the objective for demarcation of municipal boundaries was to address legacies of the past, such as service delivery backlogs. This, however, did not seem to concern most of the senior managers. Instead they commented that the new municipal boundaries and amalgamation of different local councils into a single municipality had caused numerous challenges, such as increased job responsibilities for senior managers and limited resources. Additionally, poorly implementation systems such as the TASK Job Evaluation and Grading System were cited as a key factor that lowered morale amongst employees within the municipality. The centralised organisational structure and rigid bureaucratic practices within the municipality were also highlighted as affecting efficiency and performance. Furthermore, the study revealed that there was no clearly articulated organisational culture. The findings showed that employees within the organisation could not identify with the organisational values and principles. The above factors contributed to the negative perceptions that were expressed in relation to transformation and change of the municipality.

5.5 Recommendations of the Study

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study:

- Change management must be an on-going process especially during the transformation period.
- An organisational culture based on strong values and a principled work ethic needs to be developed and clearly articulated. This needs to be driven by top leadership.
- Organisational development strategies are critical and need to be implemented as a multi-level, multi-faceted approach, during the transformation process.

- Management of change at a micro-individual level is critical during the transformation period, since transforming an organisation is also achieved through changes at an individual meta-level.

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