

**Autonomous motivation : A structured literature review and
research implication for the business environment.**

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Abstract

Autonomous motivation is a psychological factor that is important to employee performance and creativity. Although existent literature delves on this construct, there are limited studies that have revealed the drivers of autonomous motivation. In this explorative research a structured literature review is conducted to synthesize and interpret different scholarly views about this multi-disciplinary autonomous motivation phenomenon. In this framing, self-determination theory anchored the study with particular focus on the autonomy element. Importantly, this study was aimed at understanding what drives autonomous motivation. As such, a journal driven approach was applied to gather relevant articles to support the study. In addition, purposive sampling over the 18 months period of this qualitative study led to the identification of 55 articles forming the sample.

An inductive thematic analysis was performed to interpret the data. Interestingly, findings revealed that autonomous motivation was driven by intrapersonal factors. There were four enablers (i.e., task factors, organisational factors, social factors and team factors) that stimulated the intrapersonal factors leading to autonomous motivation. Although these enablers were identified as themes in the study, they were enablers in triggering autonomous motivation. Importantly, the environment was embedded in all the enablers and subsequently led to the intrapersonal factors driving autonomous motivation.

This study contributes to self-determination theory and practice by highlighting the role of intrapersonal factors in driving autonomous motivation. Importantly, the key proposition from this study is that autonomous motivation is driven by intrapersonal factors that are induced by social and organisational enablers. As such, determining these enablers assists in understanding employee motivation, performance and creativity. In this view, this study expands the self-determination theory by emphasising the intrapersonal factors that support the autonomy component.

Keywords: *autonomous motivation, self-determination theory, structured literature review, employee performance, creativity*

Declaration

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Evidence Based Management at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

Name & Surname

Signature

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Chapter 1- Introduction

In this chapter the purpose and focus is on discussing the problem and rationale for conducting the structured literature review; an historical context of how the field has developed; shortcomings in other literature reviews; identification of the problem; relevance of the review problem to management and academic need; rationale for conducting the structured literature review; methods used to source papers; the potential contribution of the review and possible directions for future research. As such, in chronological order this section begins with discussing the problem and rationale for conducting the structured literature review.

1.1 Problem and rationale for conducting the structured literature review

In this study a structured literature review (Massaro et al., 2016; Xiao & Watson, 2019)of autonomous motivation construct is performed to deeply understand this phenomenon from an interpretivist qualitative approach. This allows researchers to draw robust conclusions about the research question (Siddaway et al., 2019) to fill identified gaps in the literature. Although, autonomous motivation has been studied extensively(Ashkanani et al., 2022; Dhami et al., 2022; Gagné et al., 2019), the literature falls short in exposing specifically what drives this phenomenon to creativity and performance(Malik et al., 2019). In this view, this explorative study seeks to identify current drivers of autonomous motivation in business(Kraus et al., 2021) through literature study. Business in this study refers (Crane et al., 2018)to a grouping of people (managers and employees) working together towards achieving a particular common purpose e.g., profit making. Although managers are also employees by virtue of signing the contract of employment, the use of the word 'employees' in this study refers to both managers and their subordinates unless otherwise specified.

Due to globalisation, there is stiff competition in the business environment exposing businesses to forces that impact growth, development and stability. Consequently, employee performance is affected under such conditions (Peprah et al., 2022). As such, a conducive business environment is a precondition for effective performance to employees(Good et al., 2022). However, due to the dynamic nature of this business environment, there are many changes that have taken place during the past two decades in the literature field of research(Smith et al., 2022). Such changes have effect on the employee autonomous motivation to performance, therefore they deserve scrutiny. Hence, a structured literature review (SLR) method is needed for this study as it offers a rigorous and transparent process

important in exposing and critiquing(Massaro et al., 2016) current divergent scholarly views on autonomous motivation (Snyder, 2019). This SLR enables identification of current themes or patterns (Vaismoradi et al., 2016)about the construct through in-depth engagement with the relevant body of knowledge. As a result, researchers are able to understand the current state of autonomous motivation in the business literature.

In this outlook, SLR offers clearly defined steps of article search, selection and analysis that can be replicated in another research(Gupta et al., 2020). This assists academics in improving scholarly work and management to improve practice based on research findings. Importantly, this SLR study identifies 'known' and 'unknown' drivers of autonomous motivation to reflect the status quo in this business environment. Although scholars have defined the construct in many ways, what drives autonomous motivation to creativity remains scarce (Gong et al., 2017). Therefore, studying the drivers that lead to autonomous motivation is important to managers and academics as they are able to enhance an understanding of the phenomenon .If this phenomenon is ignored, firms face negative consequences in the form of diminished productivity(Becker et al., 2018) and low sales performance (Good et al., 2022; Homburg et al., 2019). In this framing, the research question reads, **“What are the drivers of autonomous motivation in current business literature?”**

Autonomous motivation is a psycho-social phenomenon that affect decision making of employees in the business environment(Foulk et al., 2019). Although this phenomenon is entrenched deeply in people's minds, it affects their decision making and performance at the workplace(Dust et al., 2021). This implies that employee's work behaviour is influenced by autonomous motivation to creativity (Zhu et al., 2018) and innovation (Guzman et al., 2020). Consequently, employee and organisational performance slackens if employees are devoid of autonomous motivation(Kadous & Zhou, 2019).Regardless, this construct is ubiquitous in many study disciplines, management and business field included. Since the business environment is a crucial field that sustains livelihoods, there is need for a deep understanding of this phenomenon from this perspective.

In this context, the researcher has selected SLR for its rigorous structure and in-depth approach to diverse business literature (Gupta et al., 2020; Merli et al., 2018; Tranfield et al., 2003). Conversely, the researcher could have chosen semi-systematic or integrative literature review method (Snyder, 2019), delphi or meta-analysis method (Gaur & Kumar, 2018), but decided to justify selection of this method due to the nature and intended purpose of this research. Based on that notion, the researcher avoided semi-systematic method since the focus will become too broad thus overshadowing specific aspects of the construct and also the fact that the method has fewer clear steps to follow (Snyder, 2019). In addition the search

strategy for semi-systematic method is not systematic implying that the researcher might exclude important business articles relevant to the study. Likewise, the researcher did not select the integrative method as the method includes books in the sample criteria. Since books are not peer reviewed their inclusion in this study will distort and bias the sample. However, content analysis is a literature review method similar to the chosen SLR method(Gaur & Kumar, 2018). As such, content analysis method involves steps such as the selection of source databases and development of coding schemes (Burton et al., 2020; Gaur & Kumar, 2018; Gupta et al., 2020) .Therefore, the content analysis data collection method and steps involved are synonymous with structured literature review (SLR) methodology. On this note, the researcher will also consider content analysis method in supporting the basic SLR method applied in this study.

1.2 An historical context of how the field has developed

In the last 37 years autonomous motivation has been described primarily as one of the three innate psychological needs (among competence and relatedness) important for self-motivation and mental health(Ryan & Deci, 1985). The authors argued the importance of social contextual conditions in individual motivation for wellbeing and personality development. Their proposition was based on the formulated macro self-determination theory (SDT) they propounded. Over the years, SDT became the main seminal article in the field of human motivation psychology(Donald et al., 2020; Hewett & Conway, 2016; Moran et al., 2012; Nazir et al., 2021; Prentice et al., 2019; Rivkin et al., 2018; Zhao et al., 2022). There were efforts to revise the theory in tandem with the changes in the business operating environment by incorporating cultural conditions(Ryan, 2009), quality performance and wellness(Deci et al., 2017), affective commitment(Rivkin et al., 2018), social environment(Koole et al., 2019), goal framing(Lee & Pounders, 2019), sense of purpose (Nazir et al., 2021)and moral voice(Zhao et al., 2022). In some instances, SDT was holistically subjected to own tests (van den Broeck et al., 2016) and with other theories e.g., protection motivation theory(Menard et al., 2017), whole trait theory (Prentice et al., 2019) and personality systems interaction theory(Koole et al., 2019). However, there are also some studies that applied SDT to contextual differences(Noval & Hernandez, 2019; Ryan & Deci, 2020; Teixeira et al., 2020) .

In the first 25 years since the promulgation of SDT in 1985 (the period 1985 to 2010) researchers have made tremendous work in acclimatising the literature on SDT. The role of social context, individual differences and cultural values in goal attainment and needs satisfaction was echoed by Deci and Ryan (2000) . Interestingly in nearly 16 years later, SDT was tested for validity and relevance to predict psychological growth, internalisation and

wellbeing(van den Broeck et al., 2016:1196). This supposedly was meant to assess applicability of the theory in view of changes that happen in the global research field (p.1196). However, still within the first 25 years under review, SDT was applied on organisational behaviour(Gagné & Deci, 2005), wellbeing (Patrick et al., 2007), mindfulness and vitality (Deci & Ryan, 2008)and socio-cultural context(Ryan, 2009).

In the next ten years (years 2010-2020), there were more research efforts to better understand the SDT. As such, research was made in various aspects of the three universal, innate cognitive needs that comprise autonomy, relatedness and competence and considered basic to humans. In this outlook, a person centred approach was applied to assess organisational factors important for personal growth(Moran et al., 2012).Individual life satisfaction in view of societal poverty was explored(Martin & Hill, 2012). In later studies, metacognitive strategies (da Motta Veiga & Gabriel, 2016)were evaluated with SDT, whilst effect of verbal rewards in complex and simple tasks was researched(Hewett & Conway, 2016).Studies were performed to understand how internalisation of extrinsic motivation impact collaborative learning in cultural context(Hu & Zhang, 2017). This was meant to understand how culture influences autonomy. Relatedly, Deci et al. (2017) took part in a study for the internalisation of extrinsic motivation for high quality performance and wellness(Deci et al., 2017).

Further studies applied SDT to explain human motivation in a continuum structure(Howard et al., 2017). Relatedly, other studies focused on affective commitment(Rivkin et al., 2018), individual beliefs(Noval & Hernandez, 2019), goal framing(Lee & Pounders, 2019) for personality development and wellness(Ryan et al., 2019). In addition, there were efforts to understand collaboration with channel partners through SDT(Mo et al., 2020). Also, studies were performed to explain mindfulness through application of SDT(Donald et al., 2020).However, in the last two years, research focused on sense of purpose(Nazir et al., 2021) and moral voice(Zhao et al., 2022).

In sum, autonomous motivation as embedded in SDT was explored differently over the last 37 years since propounded by Ryan and Deci (1985) . This bears testimony that the research field has grown from nascent to maturity(Edmondson & Mcmanus, 2007). Although this phenomenon was studied in different context and periods, the literature has scarce information on what drives autonomous motivation. Of course, Ryan (2009) hinted on social contextual and cultural conditions as important in basic psychological needs satisfaction, however, what specifically drives autonomous motivation remains a mystery.

1.2.1 Definition of autonomous motivation

Autonomous motivation is defined as an internalised, independent cognitive element that stimulates employee interest and enjoyment in task execution (Good et al., 2022). It is a task-specific motivation that differs from person to person, depending on the situation (Malik et al., 2019). In short, autonomous motivation refers to the internalised intangible, personal desire (Gagné & Deci, 2005) for success in task engagements, thus it is based on personal choice. However, such desire to excel in tasks is not in anticipation or expectation of monetary rewards, but for personal gratification. In the business environment, autonomous motivation improves employee performance (Reizer et al., 2019), participation in tasks (Baswani et al., 2021) and decision making (Kadous & Zhou, 2019). This means such employees are excited to exert effort in a task as they get inherent personal satisfaction (Baswani et al., 2021). Since, self-determination theory (SDT) includes an element “autonomy” as one of three psychological basic needs, this aspect is also a key component of the construct, autonomous motivation. In this regard, SDT anchors this study since literature evidence shows that most articles on the construct apply this theory (Deci et al., 2017; Good et al., 2022; Hu & Zhang, 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2020). In this outlook, this study applies SDT to deeply understand autonomous motivation as it currently stands in the literature.

Some authors suggest autonomous motivation to mean career calling (Yitshaki & Kropp, 2016), creativity (Zhu et al., 2018), spirituality (Zhang, 2020), flexibility (Solberg et al., 2021) and aspirations (Reizer et al., 2019). In this study, the researcher defines “autonomous motivation” as cognitive internalised value attachment to goals and tasks deemed interesting and enjoyable for non-monetary intrinsic rewards. Therefore, autonomous motivation is important to employees and the organisation. On this note, engaging with the mature literature field of autonomous motivation is ideal and conducive for systematic literature review to deeply understand this phenomenon (Edmondson & Mcmanus, 2007; Gupta et al., 2020). In this outlook, the researcher considers different views on autonomous motivation shared by scholars (Dabić et al., 2020; Dembek et al., 2020; Gupta et al., 2020; Merli et al., 2018).

1.2.2 Research anchor theory- self-determination theory (SDT)

The selection of the self-determination theory (SDT) to anchor this research was based on its popularity in the literature of “autonomous motivation” a psychological phenomenon (Good et al., 2022). During the search for high quality articles related to the construct (mostly in Business Source Complete and Google Scholar databases), there was evidence that over 80% of such articles applied SDT as the basic theory anchor. Also of note is the dominance of SDT in the last three and half decades implying its importance and relevance to this

business-related study. Resultantly, the researcher noted three variables of SDT in the literature. These variables (i.e. relatedness, autonomy, and competence) constitute the basic psychological needs that employees require in the business environment (Ryan & Deci, 1985).

Based on SDT literature, the researcher is keen to delve more into the “autonomy” aspect to deeply understand employee motivation. As such, the researcher immersed in the literature searching for relevant information from scholarly work to explain what drives autonomous motivation. This will assist in understanding patterns of autonomous motivation as they relate to organisational factors (Moran et al., 2012). Also, as alluded by the same authors, this allows adoption of “person centred approach” where the focus is on employee as an instrument for organisational performance. As such, SDT provides a platform to better understand employee psychological growth, well-being, and internalisation (van den Broeck et al., 2016). In addition, autonomous motivation through SDT, can be explained by employee values i.e., from cultural perspective enabling the desired creativity at the workplace (Pfister & Lukka, 2019). As such intrinsically motivated employees tend to be creative, indulge in innovative processes and occasionally take risks. However, poverty is an aspect that may psychologically deprive employee needs thus affecting employee autonomy (Martin & Hill, 2012).

Employees experience psychological development when they are intrinsically motivated (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2020). In this view, autonomous motivation, implies a sense of independence of mind and freedom of choice in actions (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Therefore, satisfaction of employee basic psychological needs may improve their performance and wellness. As such self-determination theory, apart from guiding employee practice, improves employee performance (Deci et al., 2017). In summary, selection of the famous self-determination theory was inevitable based on the reasons alluded to. Thus the researcher avoided other motivation theories such as whole trait theory (Prentice et al., 2019), means end fusion theory (Kruglanski et al., 2018), personality systems interactions theory (Koole et al., 2019) and theory of purposeful work behaviour (Foulek et al., 2019). Significantly, the researcher’s selection of SDT is recommended by the authors (Chang et al., 2020; Donald et al., 2020b; Good et al., 2022a; Lin et al., 2019a; R. M. Ryan et al., 2019).

1.3 Shortcomings in other literature reviews

As alluded in [Section 1.2](#) above, great strides were made in studying the autonomous motivation since 1985. However, deep interrogation of the literature reveals scant information on what exactly drives autonomous motivation. Although, the research by Rivkin et al. (2018) concentrated on affective commitment’s importance in daily life experience, the authors did not elaborate on what drives autonomous motivation to wellbeing. Similarly, Noval and

Hernandez (2019)'s study on individual beliefs and motivated reason fell short of explaining what really drives the autonomous motivation. Although the authors confirm the role of social dominance and contextual ambiguity, they were not clear on what drives the motivation. In the same vein, Prentice et al. (2019) did not confirm if traits are the driver of autonomous motivation in their study, although they acknowledge their influence. The same applies for the study involving engagement with the channel partner establishment arrangement program where the driver for autonomous motivation is concealed (Mo et al., 2020). In sum, based on the shortcomings in the studies alluded herein, there is need for researchers to explore what drives autonomous motivation. In this way, employee performance and creativity can be positively influenced by the phenomenon.

1.4 Relevance of the review problem to management and academics

In this section, the relevance of the review problem to the business is firstly explained, followed by importance to managers and employees and lastly, relevance to academics. Consistent with this structure, importance of autonomous motivation to the business is explained in the next paragraph.

1.4.1 Importance of autonomous motivation to the business

Autonomous motivation stimulates "creativity" and desire to innovate products or services in particular business situations (van Knippenberg & Hirst, 2020). Similarly, personal creativity goals of employees are revived through this construct leading to incremental creativity and in some instances radical creativity in business (Gong et al., 2017). In addition, employees' commitment to the organisation is influenced by autonomous motivation thereby affecting organisational performance (Becker et al., 2018). This autonomous motivation may instill a sense of purpose in employees to make societal contributions through the organisation's CSR (corporate social responsibility) initiatives (Good et al., 2018). As such, a sense of purpose is essential for the performance of the organisation. Also, organisational identification stems from autonomous motivation as the employee endeavour to satisfy innate psychological needs at the workplace (Rockmann & Ballinger, 2017). Thus, autonomous motivation of employees creates a conducive work team climate, where the employees can engage in creativity of products or services for the organisation (Zhu et al., 2018).

1.4.2 The importance of autonomous motivation to managers and employees

Autonomous motivation enables managers to curb social loafing (a phenomenon where individuals exert less effort in groups or teams than as individuals) by scrutinising the drivers

of this construct(Chang et al., 2020). As such, managers are able to create a conducive work team climate where all employees are eager to execute tasks(Zhu et al., 2018). In these teams, employees are then motivated to personally excel through creativity (Malik et al., 2019)and innovation (Delavallade, 2021). Therefore, employees derive a sense of freedom (Graafland & Gerlagh, 2019) to express their ideas in decision making. Effectively, such employees will contribute to organisational innovation goals (Suhada et al., 2021) and improved performance (Martinaityte et al., 2019). Furthermore, when organisations embark on product or service rebrand, autonomous motivated employees are bound to adapt to changes (Coreynen et al., 2020). To sum up, organisations derive a competitive advantage from autonomously motivated managers and employees.

1.4.3 The importance of autonomous motivation to academics

On the other hand, autonomous motivation is important to academics in understanding the employee behaviour through SDT in the workplace. Since the construct is psychological and thus cognitive, exploration of different literature provides in-depth understanding of this phenomenon. Therefore, as the research seeks to build theory, SDT is scrutinised and modified based on the study (Corley & Gioia, 2011). This assists in value addition to the autonomous motivation body of knowledge and SDT literature.

1.4.4 Importance of structured literature review (SLR) to this research

The SLR selected enhances practice through improved employee engagement (Burton et al., 2020; Dabić et al., 2020; Snyder, 2019; Tranfield et al., 2003). In addition, the study will advance knowledge by revealing new aspects on “autonomous motivation,” thereby adding to the body of knowledge. Even if the revelation is minor, it still suffices in changing the literature perspective for the benefit of scholars and researchers. This supports the authors who posit that research must either make practical or theoretical contribution to the body of knowledge(Dabić et al., 2020; Gupta et al., 2020; Snyder, 2019). In short, this research is useful to scholars and practitioners in aiding their decision making process (Snyder, 2019; Tranfield et al., 2003).

1.5 Rationale for conducting the structured literature review

Autonomous motivation is an interdisciplinary phenomenon, embedded in a business management field that is disparate and fragmented (Burton et al., 2020; Dabić et al., 2020; Snyder, 2019; Tranfield et al., 2003) .Since this phenomenon cuts across many disciplines,

there is need for the researcher to gather the different views from scholars to deeply understand the trend in the field and possibly identify a research gap (Burton et al., 2020; Gupta et al., 2020; Merli et al., 2018) . This will assist in crafting the foundation for conceptual model and building theoretical framework (Gupta et al., 2020; Snyder, 2019). Thus, synthesising the views of these scholars will identify 'neglected' areas that require further thorough research investigation (Snyder, 2019). As such, there has to be strong justification for the researcher to choose systematic literature review method instead of other methods available.

In this study the researcher adopted (van Looy & Shafagatova, 2016) structured literature review (SLR) method to 'systematically' evaluate and reveal strides that have been made on (Fishbach & Woolley, 2022) autonomous motivation phenomenon in the business field in the past five years (2017-2022). Although this business field is fragmented (Denyer et al., 2003) and trans disciplinary, SLR allows the collation of the divergent views of scholars (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). Furthermore, this method evaluates contributions, analyses, and synthesises data revealing what is known and unknown about autonomous motivation (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). As a result, this method 'systematically' identify research gaps and enables formulating appropriate research questions (Snyder, 2019). Resultantly, SLR leads to (Snyder, 2019) development of knowledge on this psycho-socio phenomenon. In addition, as postulated by Acosta et al. (2020) this methodological approach provides policy makers and practitioners with quality evidence for decision making. On this note, various measures and steps undertaken by the researcher in this study supports 'quality' output. Likewise, this research details a 'quality dominated systematic process' undertaken in understanding the autonomous motivation phenomenon for replication in another study.

1.5.1 Reasons for choosing structured literature review (SLR) method

Understanding autonomous motivation in a mature field of literature requires evaluating the literature review methods available to select the best option (Gupta et al., 2020). On this note, Snyder (2019) postulated literature review methods such as semi-systematic reviews ,integrative reviews, systematic reviews and meta-analysis . Similarly, content analysis and delphi method are also literature review methods (Gaur & Kumar, 2018). Notably, the thoroughness of content analysis method and its broader scope of application is in line with systematic literature review (p.281). However, as the researcher adopts the "systematic" structured literature review (SLR) for this study, content analysis method is also considered to support the study.

Content analysis is a literature review method similar to the chosen SLR method. As such, content analysis method involves steps such as the selection of source databases and development of coding schemes (Burton et al., 2020; Gaur & Kumar, 2018; Gupta et al., 2020). This content analysis method involves methodological rigour and identifies trends in the literature also upholding quality (Burton et al., 2020; Dabić et al., 2020; Gaur & Kumar, 2018; Gupta et al., 2020; Merli et al., 2018; Tranfield et al., 2003). Importantly, this method eliminates researcher's demand bias or recall bias from informants (Pournader et al., 2020; Tranfield et al., 2003). In addition, it allows the conversion of data into specific "coded" themes by following certain set inclusion or exclusion determined criteria (coding rules) (Burton et al., 2020; Dembek et al., 2020; Gupta et al., 2020b; Pournader et al., 2020).

Furthermore, this method involves four distinctive stages (Burton et al., 2020; Dembek et al., 2020; Gaur & Kumar, 2018) with respective detailed steps (Pournader et al., 2020). Interestingly, the content analysis data collection method and steps involved, are synonymous with SLR methodology. In spite of this fact, for both methods reliability and validity is important at data collection and coding stage (Gaur & Kumar, 2018; Gupta et al., 2020). In short, the researcher adopted SLR method and supplemented it with content analysis to enhance the study.

This study deeply engages autonomous motivation literature in the business field. Consistent with SLR, quality measures have been adopted to assist the researcher in this endeavour. On this note, the researcher adhered to quality measures in all identified SLR activities consistent with the research protocol (Gupta et al., 2020). In this framing, the protocol entails the selection of articles to extract data enabling synthesis of results from the reviewed articles. Hence, 'quality centric SLR' aims at minimising error and bias thereby increasing (Acosta et al., 2020) validity of the study. Based on this notion, there is need for a quality checklist(s) with justifiable reasons for inclusion/exclusion of studies (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). Quality implies a uniform assessment of the views of scholars in the research field with the aim of setting or maintaining standards in this literature domain. As such, the researcher embarks on collecting all possible studies related to the topic autonomous motivation (Ahn & Kang, 2018). Apart from drawing interest of the reader (Acosta et al., 2020), the researcher is engrossed in the study focusing on the research question (Snyder, 2019). In this way, the research is replicable through following a transparent review process (Denyer et al., 2003).

Most importantly, SLR aims to minimize bias and provides an audit trail essential for decision making of other researchers (Denyer et al., 2003). Therefore, in adopting and implementing SLR the researcher aims to create a reproducible method that may be easily followed by other researchers in an endeavour to make theoretical contributions (Ahn & Kang, 2018). In short,

as posited by the same authors Ahn and Kang (2018) , SLR includes systematic steps to solve a specific research question.

1.6 A summary of the need for the review

In this study, SLR is needed for synthesis of scholarly views with a focus to filling the identified research gap (refer to [Section 1.1](#)) in the business literature . The researcher assumes an interpretivist approach to obtain first-hand experience on current debates in the literature. This will increase autonomous motivation knowledge and understanding (Acosta et al., 2020). As such, this rigorous SLR methodology will reveal literature trends and patterns(Van Looy & Shafagatova, 2016) on the autonomous motivation phenomenon in this business environment (Dembek et al., 2020). In this outlook, the researcher engages in a comprehensive, exhaustive literature review to understand this phenomenon of interest(Merli et al., 2018). In addition, this SLR method will allow replication of study after a thorough investigation and synthesis of evidence available in the literature (Snyder, 2019). Relatedly, following a clearly defined protocol (Ahn & Kang, 2018) ,SLR will also provide a 'quality audit trail' of the entire process, thus bolstering the replication of research(Gupta et al., 2020). Importantly, the protocol sets boundary conditions to this meticulous study of autonomous motivation in this business context (Hanelt et al., 2021). However, since this business field is perceived fragmented (Denyer et al., 2008) ,the rigour and transparency of SLR produces useful information to management and academics thereby supporting social change(Acosta et al., 2020). On this note, in the next paragraph the impact of SLR on management and academic perspective is explored.

1.7 The context and research aim

Managers expect employees to make an effort in their tasks to improve company performance(Good et al., 2022). As posited in Malek et al. (2020), employees must also be creative in developing new products at their work. On this note, such creativity can either be incremental or radical (Malik et al., 2019) with the main purpose of increasing profitability. In addition, this creativity depends on satisfaction (Yousaf et al., 2022) of an employee's internalised motivation in finding the task interesting or fascinating. According to Shibly and Chatterjee (2020), working in the task personally stimulates employees through the task itself rather than expecting external monetary rewards. In choosing a business setting, the study aims to deeply understand the phenomenon as it applies to this context. In short, the study aims to reveal the drivers of autonomous motivation based on the current business literature,

by applying self-determination theory (SDT). Consequently, this will assist in solving the research question, **“What are the drivers of autonomous motivation in current business literature?”**

1.8 Research question formulation

According to Makadok et al. (2018), a perfect research question must draw the interest of a wide audience thus broad yet narrow enough to be answerable. Similarly, Denyer et al. (2008) alludes the research question must be interesting to capture the attention of the researcher and readers. In this study the research question provides insight (Massaro et al., 2016) into different scholarly views on drivers of autonomous motivation (Pournader et al., 2020). Importantly, in formulating the research question SLR is essential in understanding a phenomenon of interest (van Looy & Shafagatova, 2016). This justifies the need for a well formulated and answerable research question (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). As such, the researcher devised the following research question: **“What are the drivers of autonomous motivation in current business literature?”** In this framing, relevant articles will expose scholars’ views on ‘what is known’ and ‘what is not known’ (Massaro et al., 2016) about what drives autonomous motivation in business.

In investigating the research question, the researcher aims to identify ‘key themes’ that are applied in this current business literature. It is ‘systematic’ in the sense that SLR method adopts a robust, defined approach to finding the research gap. Notably, this initial stage of systematic review provides an iterative process susceptible to adjustments (Denyer et al., 2003). Thus, this process infers ‘quality aspect’ in terms of adopting a detailed procedure in crafting the research question(s). Of course in formulating these research questions, the researcher is informed by the CIMO model propounded by Denyer et al. (2008). This CIMO model recommends consideration of context, intervention, mechanism, and outcome to produce a better systematic review question.

1.9 Methods used to source papers

The structured literature review (SLR) process started with identification of peer -reviewed autonomous motivation articles as reported in top-tier business journals. First, quality measures had to be adhered in selecting high rated 3 and 4 star journal articles that were peer reviewed. Second, the articles had to be ‘strictly business related’ to avoid digressing the research focus since the construct is multidisciplinary. Third, ‘peer-review’ ensured that articles conformed to desired set quality standards as stipulated by the journals and in line with the AJG journal ranking list adopted in this study. AJG provides a benchmark for rating

journals in various research fields. Therefore, for this study the AJG 2021 journal rank list was adopted and used in the selection of 'quality' top-rated articles. Fourth, these top-rated articles were published in the last five-year period (**2017 -2022**) to fairly reflect the status quo in the business field. In a way, the researcher was quality conscious in adhering to that five-year period stipulation. Fifth, the researcher made reference to important seminal articles that provided an essential theoretical foundation for the study. In this case, the SDT postulated by Ryan and Deci (1985) provided an important foundation for the study outlining the phenomenon under review. Lastly, in an attempt to provide a 'quality' sample of articles, the researcher had to filter relevant articles appropriate for this study. This selection was in two-fold, first, selecting reputable databases and then the relevant peer reviewed business articles (Burton et al., 2020).

However, the researcher was mindful of the dynamic nature of the business environment, hence the need to periodically adjust the selection of research articles during the course of the study. This act was aimed at keeping abreast with new scholarly views ,thus producing a 'quality' reflective study on the prevailing status in the business field. In this way, the desire was to conform to quality SLR through 'filtering irrelevant non-business related articles' that could not add value to this study. Due to the multidisciplinary nature of autonomous motivation, the researcher had to exclude such non business articles to avoid digressing the research objective. In addition, the researcher avoided duplication by ensuring that articles selected from reputable databases were not similar. Therefore, the researcher selected top-rated articles before capturing in the **Mendeley** system for ease of citation, referencing and also to avoid duplication. Similarly, the **Atlas.ti** system also provided a repository where the articles were stored before analysis. All these systems provided a platform where identified top-rated articles from reputable journals accessed through Google Scholar, Emerald Insight and Business Source Complete databases, were stored. This act was again in line with desire to uphold 'integrity' of the SLR process in line with 'quality measures.'

However, there were some articles that featured in business journals, but were considered irrelevant to this study. In particular, the article that discussed unethical pro-organisational behaviour by Bryant and Merritt, (2021) and also family motivation by Menges et al. (2017). In addition, workplace spirituality by Zhang (2020) was excluded since the article infers a different dimension that may cloud the focus of autonomous motivation. In all these referred cases, the articles were excluded to avoid digressing and concentrating on trivial elements not related to the central construct of autonomous motivation, in the business context. Concisely, the researcher complied with a strict selection of articles to conform with appropriate quality standards in this rigorous SLR process(Johnson et al., 2020).

Searching and selection of articles from databases

The researcher explored the extant “rich” literature by scouting for high quality 3 or 4 tier rated journal articles (in line with AJG list) from various reputable databases Google Scholar, Scopus, Emerald and UP space (Burton et al., 2020; Pournader et al., 2020). In starting up the search from a ‘broad’ perspective, Google Scholar provided ideal search opportunity. The researcher selected this database because it comprises vast amounts of articles which are from diverse disciplines. Of course, the researcher systematically searched for the term “motivation,” “autonomy” and “self-determination theory” in the Google Scholar database. However, to narrow the search and focus on business and management field, the researcher had to switch to Business Source Complete database. On this note, the researcher perceived the database appropriate to ‘narrow’ the search specifically to focus on the business and management field (Burton et al., 2020). In this vein, the researcher extensively explored Business Source Complete database to identify the desired high quality articles associated with the specific search term “intrinsic motivation” and “autonomy in self-determination theory.”

Once the search was done, many articles dating back to 1960s to date were identified. Since this search yielded “crude” results, there was need to filter the search in line with inclusion and rejection criteria set by the researcher. The reason for this filtering was based on the need to access current articles in line with the research question. As such, the researcher concentrated on articles published within the last five years (2017 to 2022) as they were considered relevant in capturing current scholarly views. Of course, these articles had to come from high rated 3 or 4 star tier journals in line with recommended AJG articles ratings list alluded. This again was in conformance with the set article inclusion and exclusion criteria where researcher has to be quality conscious. However, the researcher made reference to some articles that were beyond the five year stipulation as they were deemed useful to the study. In this case, seminal articles were considered as they provided a basis for understanding the construct, thus inclusion of these articles (Deci & Ryan, 2000, 2008; Ryan, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 1985, 2020) . As a result, trends and patterns (Snyder, 2019) were observed when the data was collated, synthesised and analysed to form themes (Burton et al., 2020; Dembek et al., 2020; Gupta et al., 2020; Pournader et al., 2020).

In summary, SLR involves a meticulous method of sourcing papers characterised with strictness and thoroughness (Snyder, 2019; Tranfield et al., 2003). Moreover, ad hoc co-citation analysis method was applied to improve the quality of the themes generated (Dembek et al., 2020; Gupta et al., 2020; Pournader et al., 2020). Simultaneously, the researcher had to refer to the research question basing on the articles accessed to evaluate adequacy, sufficiency and appropriateness to the study.

The justification for the selection of articles

The selection of autonomous motivation business related articles published in the last five-year period was believed to provide relevant information that could explain the current status of the phenomenon in the business field. More importantly, considering peer reviewed articles in top-tier, rated journals assured quality throughput (Johnson et al., 2020). This allows replication by other researchers as they follow transparent steps outlined in this SLR (Pratt et al., 2020). However, the theoretical foundation laid by seminal articles could not be ignored as alluded. On this note, the work of Ryan and Deci (1985) was included in the study for reasons alluded. In short, the researcher was flexible throughout SLR in adherence to quality measures (Snyder, 2019a) in selecting articles, and alignment with the research question (Dembek et al., 2020). The next paragraph reflects on the quality measures applied in this study.

The applicable quality measures

Quality measures were applied throughout the whole SLR process from design, conduct, data abstraction, analysis and reporting (Snyder, 2019). In this vein, the researcher applied adequate and appropriate measures in selecting articles relevant to the study (Acosta et al., 2020). In this way, quality induced methodology ensured the validity of evidence gathered for the study, thus reducing bias and errors. In addition, adopting an inclusion and exclusion criteria (Siddaway et al., 2019) provided a guideline for replication to researchers (Snyder, 2019a). To sum up, quality was embedded in the whole rigorous SLR process (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009).

1.10 The potential contribution of the review

This study was aimed at understanding current scholarship views on what drives employee autonomous motivation in the workplace context. In particular, this study assists in understanding how autonomous motivation impacts employee performance thereby guiding company policy makers. In this regard, the policy makers need to foremost understand what motivates employees before they craft or implement relevant policies. Therefore, based on this assertion, the study is essential to inform the policy makers in effective decision making. In this vein, this study contributes to self-determination theory and practice by highlighting the role of intrapersonal factors in driving autonomous motivation. Importantly, the key proposition from this study is that autonomous motivation is driven by intrapersonal factors that are induced by social, task, team and organisational enablers. As such, determining these enablers assists in understanding autonomous motivation, performance and creativity. In this

view, this study expands the self-determination theory by emphasising the intrapersonal factors that support the autonomy component.

1.11 Possible directions for future research

Based on the research findings, there is scarce information on how culture as part of the social enablers, promote employee motivation to creativity. Hence, future research should consider how culture influences employee motivation to creativity. Since this study focused on drivers of autonomous motivation, future studies may delve on ranking enablers of the drivers in an effort to understand how they influence employee motivation. Also, as the study faltered in explaining how organisations retain the motivated employees, future research may investigate how much longer autonomously motivated salespeople stay with their employer (Good et al., 2018). In this outlook, there is need to consider the organisation enablers, especially assessing how they impact retention of employees.

On the other hand, future studies may also want to explore how a sense of purpose can impact recruiting efforts as well (Good et al., 2018:290). In this effort, researchers may investigate how the enablers teamwork and task influence sense of purpose. Conversely, future research may examine how leadership style interact with motivation by investigating organisation enablers. This will probe leadership styles and behaviour thereby providing deeper understanding of the construct. In addition, the current study lacks information on team composition and characteristics, thus future research may want to investigate these aspects. In this view, teamwork enablers will be investigated to understand how team composition and characteristics influences autonomous motivation. Furthermore, future research may investigate the role of team communication in autonomous motivation or how does goal orientation influence teamwork performance.

In the study, employees have desire for prosocial activities as they enjoy helping communities as part of social responsibility. Therefore, future research needs to explore differences between those employees who frequently and actively engage in community activities as compared to those who passively engage in community activities(Shin & Perdue, 2022:1101). This means, in this regard the social enablers have to be investigated further to understand how they impact prosocial behaviour. In addition, although this study focuses on employee motivation for performance and creativity, future research may focus on managerial perspectives of creativity (p.1101). In this framing, researchers may investigate organisation and teamwork enablers to understand how they influence autonomous motivation of managers to performance and creativity. Perhaps future studies may include a multi-

dimensional approach to understand perspectives of both the employee and the managers (Shin & Perdue, 2022). This will involve investigating the four enablers (i.e., social, task, organisation and teamwork) to understand both parties. Since the study focused on the drivers of autonomous motivation for performance and creativity, there could be other factors that are important in driving performance and creativity. Therefore, future research may investigate the factors that influence overall firm performance and creativity (Jung et al., 2022). In this view, researchers may investigate how other enablers drive autonomous motivation to performance and creativity.

Chapter 2: Method and analysis

In this chapter the researcher explains SLR method and analysis applied in the study. As such, the chapter is structured as follows, first, the review question or focus for the structured literature review; second, choice of review methodology/ies; third, source identification (academic databases) ; fourth, data gathering process; fifth, sampling method, sampling frame or criteria, and sample size (inclusion criteria) ; sixth, data analysis approach; seventh, coding process; eighth, measures of quality and rigour and lastly, limitations of the research design and methods. In the next section discussions are based on the review question or focus for the structured literature review (SLR).

2.1 Review question or focus for the structured literature review

In this SLR study, the research question is clearly defined to read **“What is the current state of the research on autonomous intrinsic motivation in the business field?”**. In answering this question, the researcher had to focus on the business ,extensively exploring the research arena to understand the divergent views of scholars in that field . In this way, the researcher aimed to improve the standards of autonomous motivation body of knowledge (Acosta et al., 2020). In addition, the study aimed to minimise threat of bias and error in terms of the current literature knowledge on the phenomenon. As Acosta et al. (2020) alluded ,the threats negatively affect data interpretation thereby compromising quality. Therefore, compliance with strict protocols of SLR enabled circumventing such threats, thereby supporting quality standards (Pournader et al., 2020). In this view, a research protocol was deemed crucial in providing a transparent, reproducible quality SLR process (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009).

2.2 Choice of review methodology

The selection of SLR was informed by the ‘systematic’ and rigour associated with the approach, thus providing a suitable approach to understand autonomous motivation in the current fragmented business field. In addition, SLR provided a quality centric approach to the explorative study, thus enabling replication by other researchers in knowledge advancement. As such, quality measures are ingrained in the SLR design through exploring and accessing high rated published research articles in top tier business journals over a five-year period **(2017-2022)** (Henry & Foss, 2015).This was aimed to position the study within an established body of knowledge thus upholding standards (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009).In this outlook, the researcher was mindful of the multidisciplinary nature of autonomous motivation that

warranted a “systematic” way to interrogate. As such, the researcher deeply engaged with inherent literature to evaluate the divergent thoughts of scholars in the business field. On this note, SLR required a narrower focus on the phenomenon in the business context (Burton et al., 2020). Likewise, the approach involved following particular steps in identifying articles suitable and appropriate for the study (van Looy & Shafagatova, 2016). Undoubtedly, the pattern of narrowing the rigorous search from the broad multidisciplinary research field confining to the business field, implied quality standard in following set steps (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). In this way, SLR addresses the research question alluded (Snyder, 2019).

2.2.1 Protocol

The research protocol is a formal document that was produced to clearly show how the review will be conducted (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). In this outlook, the document included important information on the research question formulation, search for articles in databases and selection of relevant articles. Importantly, the review protocol captured the inclusion and exclusion criteria (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009) for selecting articles for the study. In short, as explained in the next paragraph, the research protocol provided a ‘barometer’ for measuring quality in this study.

Adopting a research protocol promoted quality standards, bringing transparency to SLR process (Ahn & Kang, 2018). As defined by Tranfield et al. (2003) a protocol is a plan that describes steps to be taken in SLR study. In particular, the protocol detailed precisely how the review was conducted (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009) through a flexible manner allowing replication by other researchers (Ahn & Kang, 2018). Importantly, this review protocol assisted the researcher with revealing errors or omissions that needed rectification in the study (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). In addition, it provided an audit trail and enabled the review to be updated and appraised in the future (Gupta et al., 2020).

In sum, SLR protocol for this study included setting the research question, searching for articles, the search terms, the search strategy, the inclusion criteria, the exclusion criteria and the quality criteria (van Looy & Shafagatova, 2016). This protocol enhanced quality measures in SLR by clearly outlining the stages to follow and standards to implement, thereby setting the ground for conducting the study. Consistent with the research protocol, the next paragraph discusses search terms.

2.2.2 Search terms

In an effort to compute a reliable sample of appropriate articles (Dembek et al., 2020), there was need to adopt a search strategy (Snyder, 2019). In this endeavour, specific keywords and search terms related to autonomous motivation were applied (van Looy & Shafagatova, 2016). To this extent, the researcher used either words or phrases as search terms to access appropriate articles (Snyder, 2019). As posited by Merli et al. (2018) the unit of analysis in this review is the single research article. Therefore, in all databases the results were limited to “article”. A Boolean search was adopted to explore all leads in identifying relevant articles for this study (Good et al., 2022). As a result, the researcher engaged in exhaustive literature searches (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). In this way, a broad search was conducted in published journals, also including unpublished studies (Denyer et al., 2003; Good et al., 2022). This was meant to broaden the search to access more articles that could assist in the study. However, the researcher had to identify relevant data sources to answer the research question (Gaur & Kumar, 2018). In this framing, the researcher applied truncated terms to narrow the search as depicted in table 1 below:

Table 1: - Search of terms in various databases for the 5-year period (2017 to 2022)

Step	Search term	Google Scholar	Business Source Complete	Emerald Insight	ABI/Inform Complete	Scopus
1	Intrinsic motivation*	171 000	4 415	7 752	15 766	1 243
2	Intrinsic motivation management*	78 100	2 286	7 377	12 785	260
3	Intrinsic motivation business*	60 000	2 094	7 036	12 366	142
4	Intrinsic motivation systematic review*	18 600	1 601	3 211	4 830	12
5	Intrinsic motivation structured literature review*	17 200	1 912	6 062	4 569	1
6	Autonomous motivation or self-determination theory	17 500	947	644	13 502	142
7	Autonomous motivation or thematic coding	17 100	162	55	9 531	0

As illustrated in table 1 above, there were five databases (i.e., Google Scholar, Business Source Complete, Emerald Insight, ABI/Inform Complete and Scopus) accessed by the researcher in searching for the construct under review (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). The titles and abstracts revealed in these databases gave clues to relevant, suitable articles for selection in this study (Dembek et al., 2020). As indicated above, in **step 1** truncated terms (e.g., intrinsic motivation*), and in **step 5** phrases (e.g., Intrinsic motivation structured literature review*) were gradually applied in the different searches. The choice in **step 5** was made cognisant of the importance of structured literature review methodology in this study, thus justifying inclusion as part of the search terms. In this way, to narrow the search (Snyder, 2019), terms intrinsic motivation* structured literature review * were applied in the databases. Importantly, in all the **7 steps** indicated in the table, the researcher was guided by the set inclusion and exclusion criteria (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009).

As such, the search concentrated on articles peer reviewed (Burton et al., 2020) published between **2017 and 2022** (Gupta et al., 2020a). Most importantly, such articles were accessed in reputable journals to maintain quality standards (Henry & Foss, 2015). In **step 6**, the researcher then varied the search term to include self-determination theory since this theory forms the backbone for this study. In analysing autonomous motivation, the researcher had realised that 80% of the articles made reference to self-determination theory (SDT). In this framing, the researcher was convinced SDT was relevant in the study to deeply understand the phenomenon, thus inclusion in the search terms. In addition, the researcher changed the search term in **step 7** to include the thematic coding. This change was again informed by the approach of this study where the researcher intends to perform an inductive thematic analysis of the literature as data analysis.

As shown in [Table 1](#), Google Scholar database has a sharp decrease in number of articles from **171 000** in **step 1** to **17 100** in **step 7**. This was mainly due to the variations in search terms during the rigorous search process as illustrated in the table. Similarly, Business Source Complete database showed the same trend reporting **4 415 articles** in **step 1** and **162 articles** in **step 7**. Conversely, there were mixed results in ABI/Inform Complete and Scopus database. However, the researcher decided to use a final sample of **55 articles** identified in Emerald Insight database after activating advanced search option. This decision was informed by the meticulous process followed in **step 7** and the subsequent comparison with results from other databases.

Although Business Source Complete database had **162 articles**, the researcher was convinced that narrowing the sample size to **55 articles** in Emerald Insight database will ensure validity, hence credibility of the study. Moreover, selecting a sample of **55 articles** will

enhance this study since these articles were closely related to the research question and they also focused on inductive thematic coding which is part of this study. Consideration of a small sample was consistent with the qualitative research methodology adopted in this study and specifically the recommendations for a small sample (Mason, 2010). As such, the purposive sample method adopted, yielded a final sample size of **55 articles** that were deeply investigated to obtain first-hand experience on existing scholarly debates on the construct. In this way, the final sample of **55 articles** provided the desired current literature on autonomous motivation in the business field, thus answering the research question for this study (Hiebl, 2021).

In conclusion, due to the interdisciplinary nature of autonomous motivation in the business field, the researcher noticed duplication of articles in different databases. This duplication was especially prominent in Google Scholar database as illustrated with the statistics in [Table 1](#). Therefore, the researcher was cautious to include only relevant studies whilst avoiding duplication in the process (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). In short, the researcher considered a sample of **55 articles** after 'filtering' irrelevant articles in compliance with the set inclusion and exclusion criteria (Dabić et al., 2020) as part of this SLR. In the next paragraph, the researcher will elaborate source identification through databases.

2.3 Source identification through academic databases

As alluded by the researcher in [Table 1](#), intrinsic motivation phenomenon is prevalent mostly in the Google Scholar database. This database was expected to provide maximum coverage of the phenomenon as was proved by the results in that table (Pournader et al., 2020). Notably, peer-reviewed journal articles published between **2017-2022** and written in English, were targeted in the database searches (Burton et al., 2020). However, since autonomous motivation is interdisciplinary, there was need to refine the search to 'business' field in all the five databases alluded (Burton et al., 2020; Gaur & Kumar, 2018). In this context, Emerald Insight database provided most useful information on suitable articles for this study (Dabić et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, other databases such as ABI/Inform Complete, Scopus, and Business Source Complete were important to provide useful business articles for this study. Relatedly, psychology journals were also accessed to gather sufficient data on the phenomenon. This approach was made after the researcher realised that some quality articles on this psychosocial phenomenon were embedded in these journals. In this vein, the researcher was quality conscious and mindful of different search protocols applicable in (Gaur & Kumar, 2018) the respective databases. In short, in conformance to quality tenets in SLR, the researcher

considered the following in accessing databases i.e., year of publication (2017 to 2022), (Snyder, 2019) language of the article (English), (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009) type of article (peer reviewed)(Burton et al., 2020), and (Good et al., 2022)top tier rated journal. On this note, in the next section the researcher will briefly explain exclusion and inclusion criteria.

2.4 Data gathering process

As alluded by the researcher, relevant keywords and appropriate search terms were essential for this study (e.g., refer to [Section 2.2.2](#)). In this framing, detailed explanation of the search strategy allows replication of the search (Denyer et al., 2003). However, this search plan must be in line with the set criteria for article inclusion and exclusion as alluded. Importantly, the 'systematic' search plan will lead to an appropriate sample. On this note, in the next section the researcher will explain the sampling method, sampling frame or criteria, and sample size (inclusion and exclusion criteria).

2.5 Sampling method, sampling frame or criteria, and sample size (inclusion criteria)

The non-probability purposive sampling method was deemed appropriate for this study as the researcher had discretion in selection of articles based on personal experience. Although, SLR entails a 'systematic' process of selection and analysing data (the articles in this case), the researcher had the personal discretion in choosing articles identified as relevant and appropriate to the study. This is consistent with the qualitative research methodology where there is researcher subjectivity in understanding phenomenon(Onwuegbuzie et al., 2010). All the articles that are business related, peer reviewed and from quality journals constitute the sample frame. Based on this notion, a final sample of **55 articles** was identified by the researcher. Therefore, an outline of this section involves the researcher explaining first, inclusion and exclusion criteria; second, sample formulation; third, filtering and extracting data and lastly, final sample size. In this order, the next paragraph details the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Inclusion

Although the researcher concentrated on peer reviewed published articles (Dembek et al., 2020; van Looy & Shafagatova, 2016) in the database search, consideration was also made for unpublished articles and other 'grey literature' or seminal articles (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). This was aimed at accessing prospective sample articles from a broad sample frame. In this case, the researcher avoided concentration on published articles, mindful of the

possibility of useful articles that were not yet published. However, the researcher had to discern on what makes sense before choosing an article. In this way, the researcher's subjectivity was essential, especially when backed with experience, in the selection of suitable articles for the study. On this note, Denyer and Tranfield (2009) argued that studies that comply with the inclusion and exclusion criteria must be included in the review. In this framing, the researcher adopted the following 'quality conscious' inclusion criteria :

- Considered top tier rated journals- 3 star and 4 star- according to AJG rating guideline 2021
- Selected articles belonging to – scholarly and trade journals focusing on autonomous motivation (van Looy & Shafagatova, 2016)
- Focused on business related articles- this selection was based on title, keywords and abstract(Good et al., 2022; Gupta et al., 2020)
- Accessed reputable databases – Google Scholar, Business Source Complete, Emerald Insight , ABI/Inform Complete and Scopus
- Selected articles with publication date from **2017 to 2022** (i.e., limited to 5 years from date of publication)
- Considered peer reviewed articles after a review process of screening for quality(Gupta et al., 2020).
- Considered grey literature and seminal articles
- Considered search terms confined to the following context: intrinsic motivation in business*, intrinsic motivation structured literature review*, autonomous motivation or self-determination theory, autonomous motivation or inductive thematic coding. As such, the inclusion decision was based on title, keywords and abstract(Gupta et al., 2020).
- Considered articles written in English language(Good et al., 2022)

However, there were some articles that failed to meet the inclusion criteria and were 'cautiously' excluded from the study. Cautious in the sense that the researcher had to be careful in excluding these articles as they could have some useful input to the study. However, the excluded articles failed to meet the expected quality standard(Denyer et al., 2003). On this note, the exclusion criteria covered the following:

2.5.1 Exclusion

As highlighted in [Fig. 1](#), Emerald insight database was selected out of the five databases identified because the final sample came from this database. As such, the detailed process of the articles excluded is unfolded in this section. Firstly, consideration was made for the title

and abstract before thoroughly reading the text as part of excluding articles deemed irrelevant to the study.

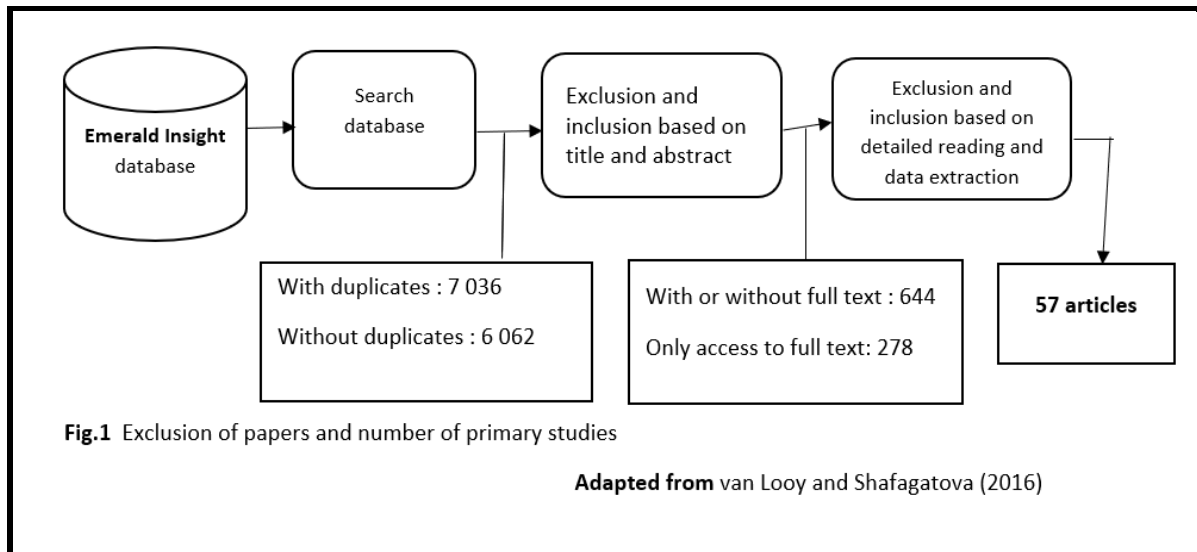


Figure 1: Inclusion and exclusion of papers

As depicted in **Fig.1**, the researcher concentrated the search in Emerald Insight database through the steps indicated. Significant was the filtering of articles from **7 036** to **6 062** trimming duplicates based on compliance with the exclusion criteria(Dembek et al., 2020). Subsequent steps included further “filtering “ in line with the inclusion criteria alluded. As a result, the exclusion of papers in the Emerald Insight database was ‘systematically’ performed adhering to the set inclusion criteria. This whole effort led to a **final sample of 55 articles** that were vetted to ensure the following were excluded:

- Non business related articles i.e., there were **974 articles** that were not related to business, thus were excluded from this study(van Looy & Shafagatova, 2016).
- The researcher removed editorials and letters (Gaur & Kumar, 2018).
- Also excluded were newspaper articles because they lack peer review process (Dembek et al., 2020)
- Book reviews, comments and replies were excluded since they (Dembek et al., 2020) lack peer review .
- Duplicated articles (Dembek et al., 2020)

However, the researcher was careful not to completely exclude articles based on for example ,difference of research methodology. Of course, there were some useful information in some of these articles . Although Good et al. (2022)used meta-analysis in their study, this method also involves selection of articles based on inclusion and exclusion criteria similar to SLR

(Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). Therefore, in deciding exclusion and inclusion of articles the researcher was objective and thorough to uphold (Acosta et al., 2020)desired quality standards in the SLR. In sum, once the researcher set the parameters for inclusion and exclusion of articles, the process of SLR unfolded.

2.5.2 Sample formulation

As alluded by the researcher, articles from the business field comprise the final sample having complied with the desired set criteria. In this framing, articles were selected based on the 'fit for purpose' criterion (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). Importantly, SLR minimised the selection bias in this literature review on autonomous motivation (Pournader et al., 2020).

2.5.3 Filtering and extracting data

The list of **4 415** articles found (**refer to [Table 1](#)**) in the Emerald Insight database was filtered by deleting duplicates (van Looy & Shafagatova, 2016). In this way, the researcher was quality conscious in all stages leading to a trustworthy final sample of articles. This was meant to ensure that data validity and reliability were followed to allow replication by other researchers.

2.5.4 Final sample- size

Based on the process followed as illustrated in table (**refer to [Table 1](#)**) , a **final sample of 55 articles** was identified by the researcher. In determining this final sample Gupta et al. (2020)advocated for adoption of necessary quality control checks by the researcher as. Since a sample was identified, in the next section there is a discussion of data abstraction and analysis.

2.6 Data analysis approach

Due to the qualitative nature of the study, the researcher was immersed in the literature in exploration for scholarly views on autonomous motivation. These views were captured as codes, categories and then themes. Therefore, thematic analysis method was deemed appropriate to understand the drivers of autonomous motivation in the current business literature. However, frequencies on the codes were analysed descriptively. In other words, the researcher adopted thematic analysis supported with descriptive quantitative analyses of databases. This method was perceived relevant to understanding autonomous motivation through the structured literature review approach adopted in this study. In the next paragraph, thematic data analysis is explained.

2.6.1 Thematic data analysis

The researcher followed an inductive approach in thematic coding as part of data analysis for this SLR(Gaur & Kumar, 2018). In this vein, the inductive process stems from the coded data to categories and themes adopted by the researcher (Gioia et al., 2013). This thematic data analysis process will assist in theory building thus advancing knowledge on self-determination theory (SDT) in business(Corley & Gioia, 2011).

As illustrated in the diagram above, there are six autonomous motivation themes identified by the researcher. These themes were produced from coded data (the articles) and **categories** as shown(Vaismoradi et al., 2016). Coding was the most important stage where the researcher had to design appropriate codes(Gaur & Kumar, 2018) and sub-categories. The **Atlas.ti** system assisted in this thematic coding process thereby meeting the desired quality expectations of SLR. In short, the thematic coding method assisted the researcher to identify more popular (Pournader et al., 2020) and less popular research themes(Gupta et al., 2020). Thus, the thematic analysis process adopted was transparent and appropriate for SLR as it unfolded the known and unknown aspects of the autonomous motivation phenomenon in the business field(Snyder, 2019a).

2.7 Coding process

In sum, the coding process was thoroughly performed to gather the views of scholars on autonomous motivation. This meticulous and iterative process was crucial since obtaining poor codes would lead to poor categories and themes respectively. Although the coding process was labour intensive and time consuming, the researcher was patient and diligent in the whole process(Saldaña, 2014). In this way, the researcher's experience in literature review was important in interpreting the articles and creating codes. Consistent with the quality aspirations for this study, the researcher ensured that codes were carefully created to reflect the views of scholars(Elliott, 2018). In some instances, the researcher had to write opinions on scholars views through memos(Saldaña, 2014). In this way, the researcher could recall important notes in the formulation of categories. Considering the volume and number of articles involved, the process was at times confusing. Under such circumstances, the researcher had to document the articles in the MS Excel and in Mendeley system. This method was useful in tracking the progress and in avoiding the duplication of articles. Regardless, the coding process remained systematic and in accordance with the quality aspirations(Elliott, 2018).

2.8 Measures of quality and rigour

In this study a holistic 'quality conscious' approach was applied throughout all SLR stages as alluded in previous sections. Quality focus was perceived fundamental to this study to allow replication by other researchers (Johnson et al., 2020). As such, the article search process, selection and formulation of the final sample involved quality compliance (Acosta et al., 2020). Therefore, quality conformance was observed throughout the whole coding process from article search to data analysis as revealed in later chapters (Elliott, 2018; Saldaña, 2014).

2.9 Limitations of the research design and methods.

In this study, there are certain limitations that one needs to take note of. Although SLR revealed autonomous motivation themes in literature, it does not show if these themes practically improve employee performance (Dembek et al., 2020). Also, the fragmented nature of the business field made the study difficult in collating divergent views from scholars (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). Therefore, challenges were faced in locating and integrating information sources from many subfields thus made it difficult to synthesise the review results (Denyer et al., 2008). In addition, the screening process in the selection of articles is an expensive, labour-intensive task (Hiebl, 2021) that required sufficient and appropriate resources e.g., access to electronic databases.

The multidisciplinary nature of autonomous motivation made it difficult to only focus and access business related articles as the researcher had to refer to other disciplines e.g., psychology. This implied that SLR may not be the best strategy when dealing with a broad construct that is multidisciplinary (Snyder, 2019). Moreover, in the SLR protocol, some useful articles might have been excluded due to oversight on the search term (Gupta et al., 2020). Also, when SLR solely considers citation-based inclusion criteria, then useful low cited articles might be excluded from the study (Hiebl, 2021). Furthermore, concentrating on peer-reviewed published autonomous motivation articles might exclude grey literature (Hiebl, 2021) that may be important to this study (Adams et al., 2017). In the next section, the researcher reflects on the SLR experience.

2.9.1 Critical reflections of the process

As alluded in the previous chapter of this study, the researcher adopted SLR method due to its rigour and clearly defined steps in understanding the current status of autonomous motivation in the business literature (Snyder, 2019). Importantly, the researcher made the stance having realised the need to be flexible and quality conscious in all the research steps.

This SLR transparent process allows replication by another researcher. In this outlook, the researcher had to be flexible in striking a balance between subjectivity and objectivity to minimise bias. Consequently, a valid and relevant research report was produced to inform academics and practitioners in improving their decision-making (Denyer et al., 2003).

Chapter 3- Literature review

Employees have to make effective decisions that will defend and grow the business from competition. In this important role, the employees have inherent internalised factors that drive a desire towards attaining targeted goals i.e., intrinsic motivation. When such employees have liberty to express their perceptions, feelings, experience, beliefs, interest and aspirations, they have autonomous motivation. This autonomous motivation can be broadly classified into six distinctive themes i.e., intrapersonal, task, organisational, social, environmental and teamwork drivers. In this way, the themes assist in answering the research question **“What are the drivers of autonomous motivation in current business literature?”** There is need for literature review because the research will reveal what is known and what is not known about the autonomous motivation construct.

Of course, the researcher is under the impression that scholarly work in this field has not exhausted the autonomous motivation body of knowledge, hence the need for continuous research. On this note, there is need for more literature on autonomous motivation because it affects everybody in business (Malek et al., 2020). As such, the structure of this paper involves defining the term autonomous motivation before scrutinising the six themes to understand the current debates in the business field. In this vein, to demystify the themes, the researcher will first provide a summary of a theme in each section before delving into constituent categories and subsequently the related codes.

3.1 Autonomous motivation at the workplace

When a person has pure interest in a task (Baswani et al., 2021), there is an internalised desire to perform the task not for monetary extrinsic benefit (Robson et al., 2019), but for personal gratification. Such individuals, enjoy the task because they have interest in the task, hence consider the task interesting (Ashkanani et al., 2022; Gagné et al., 2019; Hewett & Conway, 2016). In other words, the person finds the activities associated with task meaningful. This element of meaning places a personal value (Tóth-Király et al., 2021), commitment and attachment to the task (Reizer et al., 2019). If a task is interesting, then there is a sense of enjoyment that a person derives from the task (Malek et al., 2020). At this point, the person is interested with the inherent reward that stems from the task. In this case, the person has pleasure in the task they consider interesting and enjoyable (Cangiano & Parker, 2021; Jungert et al., 2018; Vecchione & Schwartz, 2022). Importantly, the task is considered personally important as the person takes ownership and accountability for actions (Tóth-Király et al., 2021). Therefore, a task can be interesting or enjoyable (Kuykendall et al., 2020) due to the value placed on the task (Lin et al., 2019; Reizer et al., 2019) and the expected

pleasure(Roussillon Soyer et al., 2022). The aspect of value placement on tasks was further elaborated in defining autonomous motivation(Baswani et al., 2021; Hewett & Conway, 2016). In sum, autonomous motivation is defined as the internalised personal desire (Gagné & Deci, 2005) to attach a value to a specific task and to perform that task considered interesting, enjoyable and pleasurable.

There is a sense of volition (Ripoll & Breugh, 2019; van der Hauwaert et al., 2022)when individuals engage in tasks for the purpose of reaching goals (Zhou et al., 2022)such as creativity in products or services(Robson et al., 2019). This volition creates a sense of self(Zhou et al., 2022) that identifies an individual's character, essential in accomplishment of creativity initiatives(Robson et al., 2019). It is important to note that individuals desire to achieve internalised specific goals(Fishbach & Woolley, 2022) through passion and self-identity(Zhou et al., 2022). They have internalised aspirations (Creed et al., 2022)aimed at achievement of personal goals(Zhou et al., 2022) . Importantly, in the task engagements, the individuals have internal locus of control (Ripoll & Breugh, 2019; Zhou et al., 2022)and perceived locus of causality(Hewett & Conway, 2016). As such, they have to be persistent in applying effort(Ashkanani et al., 2022) towards the activity they consider valuable(Kuykendall et al., 2020). In this way, they are able to fulfil activities (Seymour & Peterman, 2018)and in helping others(Gagné & Deci, 2005). On the other hand, apart from the curiosity and eagerness (Baswani et al., 2021)in task engagements, individuals desire leisure in their task engagements. In sum, autonomous motivation is described as the desire for achievement of internalised goals to fulfil aspirations based on inherent satisfaction derived from the task itself and not for monetary rewards.

Based on the literature reviewed in this section , the researcher adopted the definition of autonomous motivation to mean independent ,internalised cognitive value attachment to goals and tasks deemed interesting and enjoyable for non-monetary intrinsic rewards. In other words, autonomy implies personal independence or freedom of choice in task engagements. Therefore, autonomous motivation means employees behave freely in decision making and task executions. This definition sets the tone for describing the outcomes of autonomous motivated employees as perceived by employers and companies.

Companies need autonomous motivated employees for competitive advantage through higher performance(Jungert et al., 2018). Since the motivation is behaviour induced, this increases employee productivity in adaptive selling(Good et al., 2018). At this point, the employees are expected to be committed and loyal to the company i.e., job satisfaction is important to them and the company(Jungert et al., 2018; Tóth-Király et al., 2021). As Tóth-Király et al. (2021)claimed, autonomous motivation leads to psychological wellbeing essential for work

performance through employee commitment and job satisfaction. As such, the employees have increased feeling of vitality and happiness (Cangiano & Parker, 2021) leading to loyalty and longer retention (Chung et al., 2022). This loyalty stems from positive energy generated (Cangiano & Parker, 2021) by the employees that may volunteer to benefit teams or clients (Cho & Jiang, 2022), through enhanced performance (Herhausen et al., 2018).

In addition, autonomous motivation of employees enables achievement of shared team goals (Gu et al., 2020). In this framing, repeat businesses from customers (Chung et al., 2022) targeted by team members, increases profitability. On the other hand, the company may engage in social contributions (Cho & Jiang, 2022) through motivated workforce. In this way, they can provide social innovation (Zhou et al., 2022) through enhanced products or services. Therefore, autonomously motivated employees are agents for innovation and creativity (Robson et al., 2019). On this note, technological innovation stems from employee's willingness to co-create thereby adding value to the company (Baswani et al., 2021). This willingness to co-create depends on work satisfaction and job complexity (Tóth-Király et al., 2021). However, autonomous motivation implies reduction of anxiety and depression for employees (Reizer et al., 2019). Depression and anxiety are some of the threats that undermine autonomous motivation, in the next paragraph there are more factors.

Cash rewards threaten autonomous motivation (Shibly & Chatterjee, 2020) as employees are depended on these rewards thus an external factor controls their behaviour. This external monitoring (Pfister & Lukka, 2019) undermines intrinsic motivation and autonomy. In other words, external tangible rewards (Pfister & Lukka, 2019), financial rewards (Malek et al., 2020) or monetary incentives (Xu et al., 2022) put pressure on the employees (Hewett & Conway, 2016) thus control their desires and behaviour. As a result, time pressure (Gagné et al., 2019) threatens employee autonomous motivation.

In sum, this section made reference to the literature in defining autonomous motivation, describing the outcomes of autonomous motivation and the associated threats. In the next section, the researcher explores deeply the literature to identify what is known and what is not known about the construct. In this way, the researcher will be able to understand what drives autonomous motivation in the current business literature. As illustrated in [Fig 2](#), there are various codes that represent the data grouped based on meaning. Such codes were formulated as the researcher interrogated literature, identifying the views of different scholars. These views formed codes that were later grouped into unique categories based on similarity. As a result, the researcher was able to create themes based on grouped identical categories. In this way, six themes were produced from the iterative process as shown in [Fig 2](#).

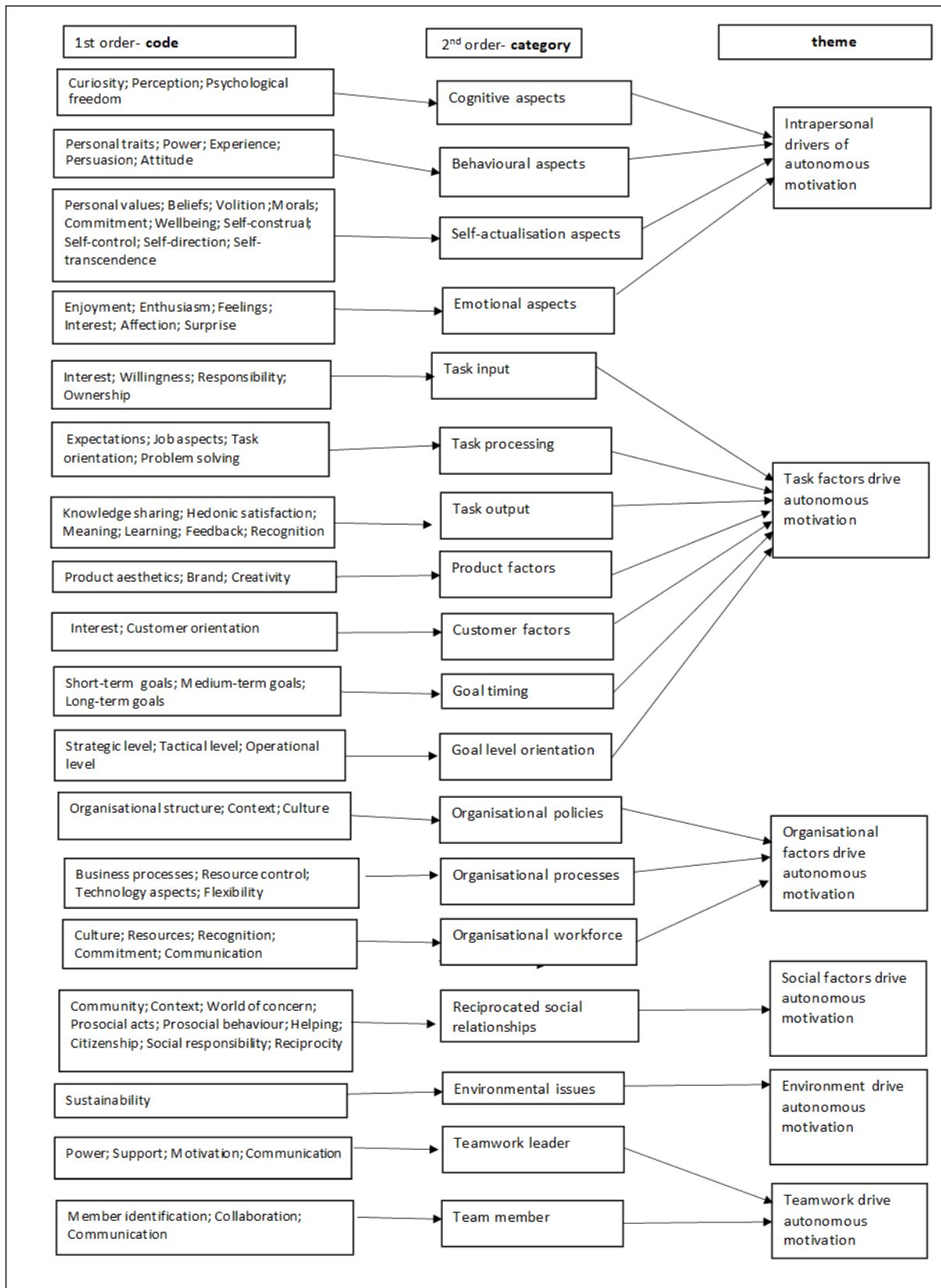


Figure 2: Conceptual map illustrating drivers of autonomous motivation

As captured in [Fig 2](#), the researchers had to investigate the phenomenon by immersing in the literature to get the reality of current state of autonomous motivation in the business field. It is

important to note that deep engagement with literature reveals the hidden unknown aspects that drive autonomous motivation. In this view, the themes are explained in greater detail in the following sections.

3.2 Theme 1- Intrapersonal factors drive autonomous motivation

People have intrapersonal factors that create a desire to engage in activities for pleasure, enjoyment or fun. In this framing, the internalised personal factors include cognitive, behavioural, self-actualisation and emotional factors (see Fig 3). Since people are different in ideology, their perception and approach to tasks also differs. Therefore, there is need to scrutinise the categories mentioned to understand the drivers to autonomous motivation. In this vein, cognitive factors that are indisputably essential in decision making are explained in the next paragraph.

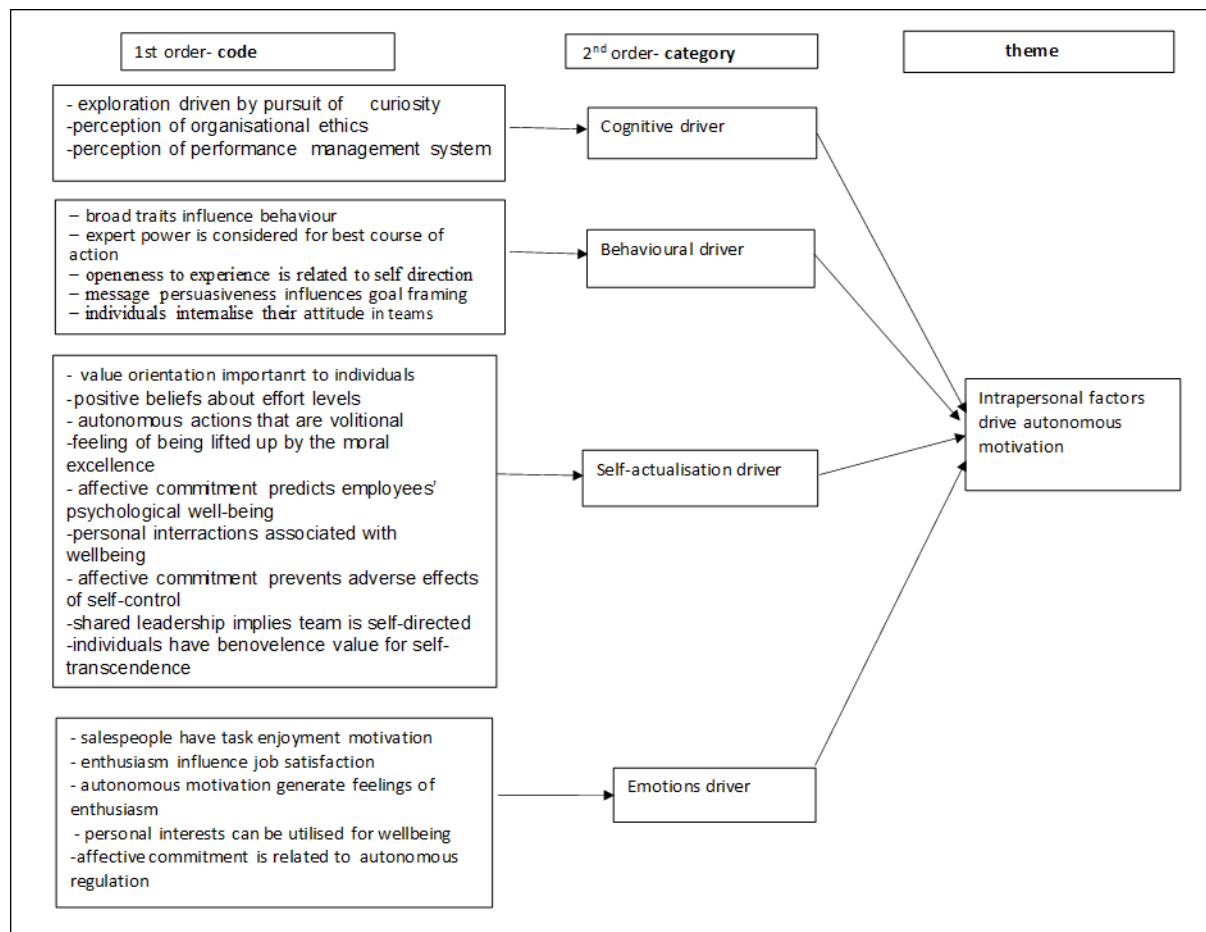
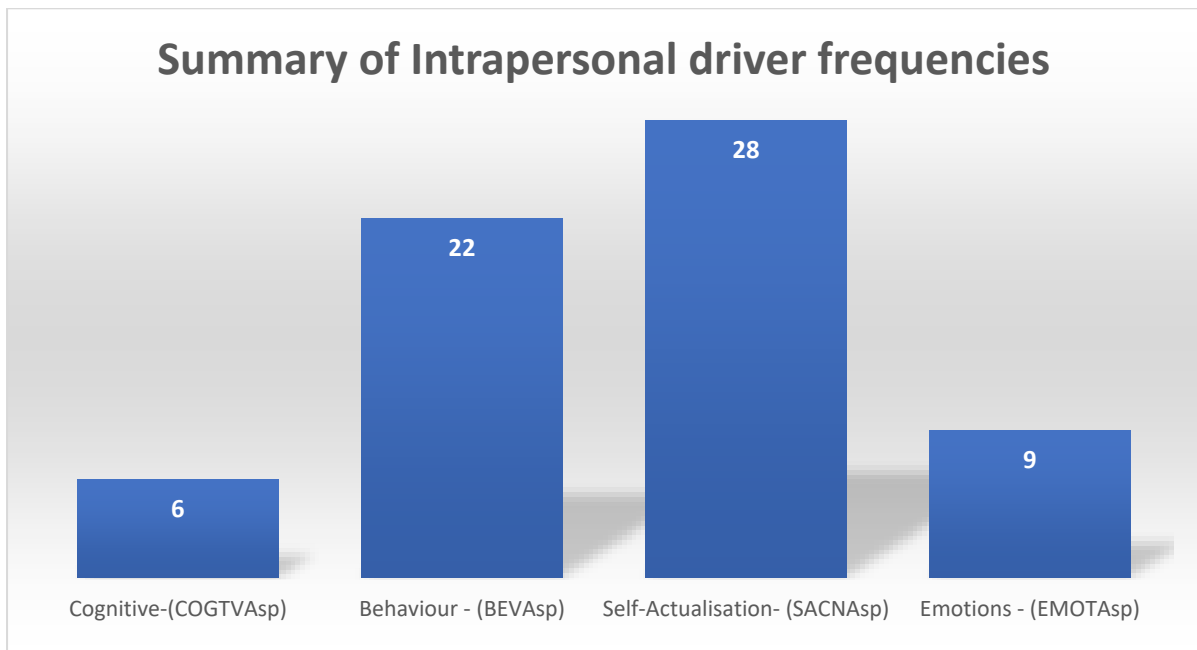


Figure 3: Mind map of Theme 1- Intrapersonal drivers of autonomous motivation

As illustrated in Fig 3, self-actualisation driver had the highest number of codes that stimulate the intrapersonal factors to autonomous motivation. This suggests that of the four drivers

under the category section, self-actualisation had the most influence on intrapersonal factors. However, further investigations showed that apart from self-actualisation factors, behaviour factors also had a significant impact on the intrapersonal factors. A summary of the frequency distribution for theme 1 in [Table 3](#) shows how the four aspects identified in the literature were capable of influencing intrapersonal factors to drive autonomous motivation.

Table 2: Summary of frequency distribution for Theme 1- Intrapersonal drivers of autonomous motivation



In [Table 2](#), the names of authors who were prominent in advocating particular aspects of intrapersonal behaviour were identified. This stage was crucial in understanding the current debates on the construct in this business research field. Notably, as depicted in the table, the aspects were grouped in their order of importance starting with the self-actualisation, behaviour, emotion and cognitive aspect respectively. There were prominent voices that argued the importance of self-actualisation in autonomous motivation (Creed et al., 2022; Kuykendall et al., 2020; Rivkin et al., 2018; Vecchione & Schwartz, 2022; Zhao et al., 2022). However, other scholars claimed the influence of behaviour on autonomous motivation (Chiu et al., 2022; Creed et al., 2022; Malik et al., 2019; Vanstraelen, 2019; Zhou et al., 2022). On the other hand, some authors posited that emotions were essential in driving behaviour towards autonomous motivation (Hoang et al., 2022; Lin et al., 2019; Reizer et al., 2019; Robson et al., 2019; Shin & Perdue, 2022). Yet, there were some that argued the effect of

cognitive factors on autonomous motivation(Cho & Jiang, 2022; Fishbach & Woolley, 2022; Lee & Pounders, 2019; Malek et al., 2020; Shukla et al., 2022).

Table 3: Frequency distribution for Theme 1- Intrapersonal drivers of autonomous motivation

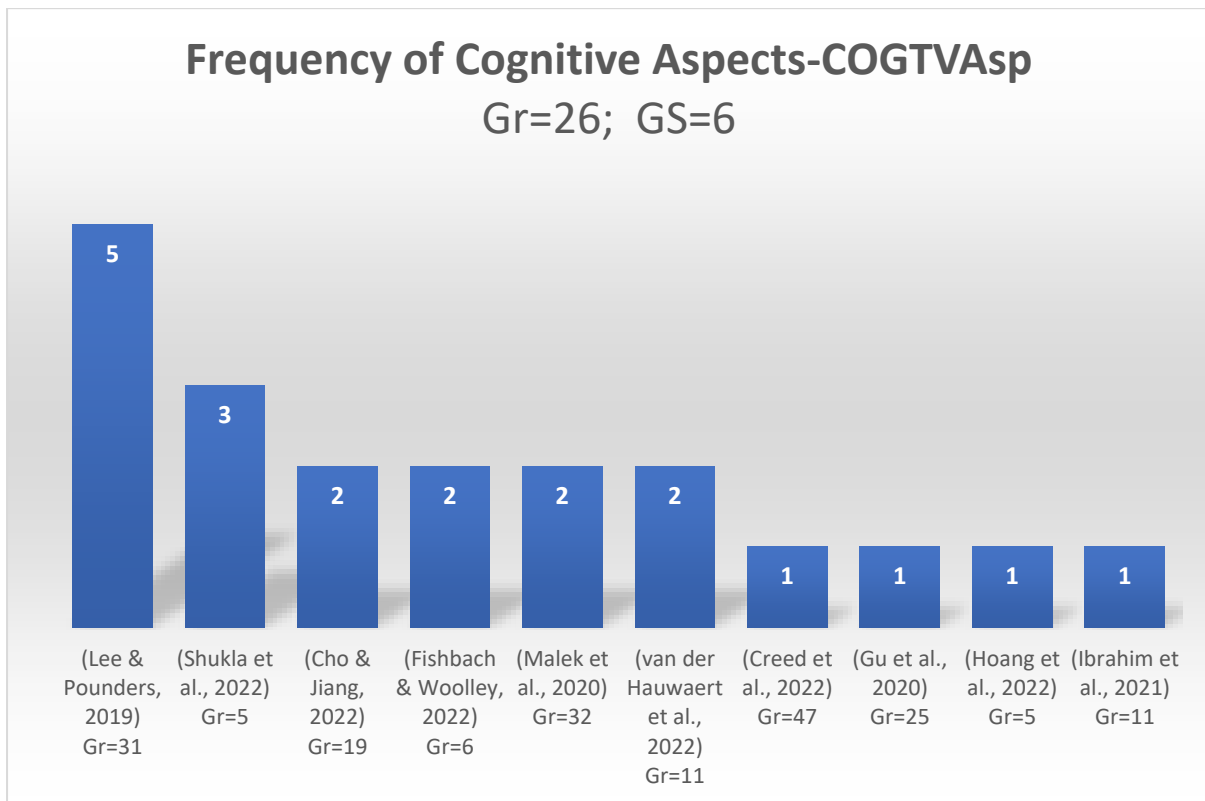
	Self-Actualisation Aspects- SACNAsp Gr=84; GS=28	Behaviour Aspects- BEVRAsp Gr=67; GS=22	Emotional Aspects- EMOTAsp Gr=68; GS=21	Cognitive Aspects- COGTVAsp Gr=26; GS=6	Totals
(Ashkanani et al., 2022)Gr=13	0	4	3	0	7
(Baswani et al., 2021)Gr=19	0	3	1	0	4
(Chang et al., 2020)Gr=32	1	1	2	0	4
(Chiu et al., 2022)Gr=23	0	12	0	0	12
(Cho & Jiang, 2022)Gr=19	2	0	0	2	4
(Creed et al., 2022)Gr=47	9	5	3	1	18
(Fishbach & Woolley, 2022)Gr=6	0	0	0	2	2
(Gagné et al., 2019)Gr=21	3	0	0	0	3
(Grant & Shandell, 2021)Gr=23	1	0	2	0	3
(Gu et al., 2020)Gr=25	2	1	2	1	6
(Herhausen et al., 2018)Gr=14	0	2	3	0	5
(Hoang et al., 2022)Gr=5	0	0	4	1	5
(Ibrahim et al., 2021)Gr=11	4	0	2	1	7
(Jungert et al., 2018)Gr=22	3	0	1	0	4
(Kuykendall et al., 2020)Gr=9	6	0	0	0	6
(Lee & Pounders, 2019)Gr=31	2	4	0	5	11
(Lin et al., 2019)Gr=17	0	1	8	0	9
(Malek et al., 2020)Gr=32	0	2	0	2	4
(Malik et al., 2019)Gr=52	1	7	0	0	8
(Pfister & Lukka, 2019)Gr=25	4	1	0	1	6
(Reizer et al., 2019)Gr=25	1	0	12	0	13
(Ripoll & Breaugh, 2019)Gr=24	3	2	2	0	7
(Rivkin et al., 2018)Gr=10	5	0	0	0	5
(Roberts & Yoon, 2021)Gr=5	0	2	0	0	2
(Robson et al., 2019)Gr=23	2	0	4	1	7
(Roussillon Soyer et al., 2022)Gr=1	1	0	2	1	4
(Shibly & Chatterjee, 2020)Gr=7	0	1	3	1	5
(Shin & Perdue, 2022)Gr=18	0	1	4	0	5
(Shukla et al., 2022)Gr=5	0	0	0	3	3
(van der Hauwaert et al., 2022)Gr=	1	1	0	2	4
(Vanstraelen, 2019)Gr=27	3	5	0	0	8
(Vecchione & Schwartz, 2022)Gr=1	6	3	1	0	10
(Zhao et al., 2022)Gr=23	5	0	1	1	7
(Zhou et al., 2022)Gr=36	5	5	2	0	12
Abbreviations					
Gr	Groundedness of codes (number of quotations coded by a code) or documents (quotations created in a document)				
GS	Number of documents in a document group or number of codes in a code group				

As shown in [Table 3](#), self-actualisation aspect had the highest number of quotations coded as depicted in Gr= 84. In addition, the aspect also recorded highest number of documents Gs= 28 in this code group i.e., half of the documents, 28 out of 55 sampled, made reference to self-actualisation. This proves popularity of the aspect in current business literature. Behaviour aspect trailed behind with Gr=67 and Gs=22 proving that the aspect is equally famous in the literature. Emotional aspect (Gr=68 and Gs=21) was at the same level with behaviour aspect suggesting that scholars had similar perception on the influence of these factors on autonomous motivation. However, the cognitive aspect (Gr=26 and Gs=6) was the least popular as depicted in the table. Perhaps, this was due to failure by researchers to understand this psychological phenomenon deeply entrenched in the psychology discipline.

3.2.1 Cognitive factors

The human mind is a powerful engine that creates ideas and thoughts before decision making and indulging in action. In this regard, this cognitive human element is composed of aspects such as curiosity, perception, and psychological freedom. Importantly, the aspects alluded provide a cognitive mental framework that creates a desire to autonomous motivation. As shown in [Table 4](#), the authors who are familiar with the cognitive factors are captured in this table. However, this table provides a summary of the top 10 scholars that advocated for the aspect out of the **55 sampled**.

Table 4 : Frequency distribution for Cognitive aspect in Theme 1- Intrapersonal drivers of autonomous motivation



It is important to note that, as depicted in [Table 4](#) recent scholarly work was considered in the study to engage in current debates that are essential to understanding the phenomenon. There were five quotations recorded in Lee and Pounders (2019) and three quotations in Shukla et al. (2022) article proving the relevance of this evidence in substantiating the claim that cognitive aspects have effect on autonomous motivation. However, two quotations were recorded by each of the four authors, indicating their views were also important to the study (Cho & Jiang, 2022; Fishbach & Woolley, 2022b; Malek et al., 2020; van der Hauwaert et al., 2022).

3.2.1.1 Curiosity

As such, curiosity infuses a personal desire to explore new product or services in the business (Fishbach & Woolley, 2022). The aim is to satisfy this curiosity through engagement in activities that complement the inherent desire. However, curiosity can be positive or negative depending on the personal desire (Shukla et al., 2022). Regardless of the difference, curiosity differs per individual and when complimented with personal interest, the end result is creativity (Ibrahim et al., 2021). However, people can have preconceived ideas (perceptions) that again differ from person to person. On this note, perception deserve scrutiny in understanding their influence on autonomous motivation.

3.2.1.2 Perception

Perception about a product infers that it meets a certain standard or satisfies a particular purpose. There is a perception that alterations to a product packaging will improve competitiveness through increased sales (Shukla et al., 2022). On the other hand, when performance management systems are revamped, there is a perception that employee performance will increase sales (van der Hauwaert et al., 2022). In this outlook, the perception is that sales results will be stimulated thereby deriving a competitive advantage (Pfister & Lukka, 2019). However, organisational ethics must be considered to ensure all the employee effort upholds integrity and transparent ethos. Therefore, employees have a perception on organisational ethics in their quest for expressing ideas through moral voice (Zhao et al., 2022).

In some cases, team members have perceptions in new product development motivated by the desire to gain recognition or status in the organisation (Malek et al., 2020). Such team members apply their skills and experience in the task for personal gratification and expectations of recognition from their managers (Creed et al., 2022). When managers provide financial rewards to the team members in recognition of their effort, the autonomous motivation is threatened (Malek et al., 2020). This may imply that self-construal aspect is important in classifying the team members and determining their motivation in task engagement (Lee & Pounders, 2019). In this regard, self-construal influences goal framing. If the team members decide to change their perception, this will affect idea generation and consequently performance (Robson et al., 2019).

3.2.1.3 Psychological freedom

Regardless of the circumstances, employees must have passion in their aspirations for creativity as they associate with perception (Koslow et al., 2022). A strong feeling of passion

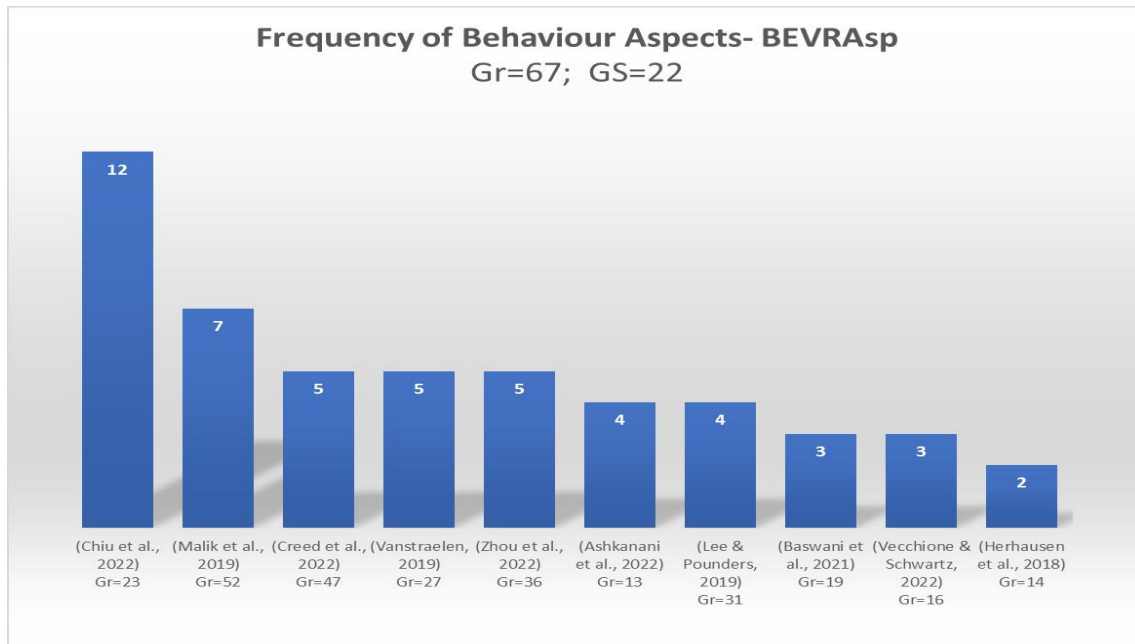
in value preference expresses intentions and behaviours that support the creativity(Cho & Jiang, 2022). Relatedly, the employees have a feeling of freedom to engage in activities they consider valuable(van der Hauwaert et al., 2022). In this case, the employees can decide to accept the activities based on their beliefs and capabilities (Gu et al., 2020). Maybe there is need to consider their lived experience or shared feelings in understanding their beliefs and being(Hoang et al., 2022). If the activity is considered interesting psychologically (Shibly & Chatterjee, 2020b) and not financially rewarding, perhaps it is a calling for the employees in support of their values and preferences(Cho & Jiang, 2022). Therefore, there is need to understand behavioural aspects that influence autonomous motivation. In the next section, behavioural factors are examined.

3.2.2 Behaviour factors

Similar to cognitive aspect, employee behaviour that drives autonomous motivation differs from person to person. In this section, behaviour aspects that will be discussed include traits, power, experience, persuasion and attitude. Since employees are expected to act responsibly in the best interests of the organisation, their behaviour is important. More important is to understand how the internalisation of behaviour influences autonomous motivation for performance(Herhausen et al., 2018). As such, sense of responsibility triggers employee's desire for responsible behaviour(Zhou et al., 2022). In this endeavour, employees consider social ties and opinion of peers at the workplace important in achieving wellbeing(Chiu et al., 2022). As illustrated in [Table 5](#), the names of authors that raised scholarly voice and argued for behaviour aspect in autonomous motivation is noted. There must be intention that drive this behaviour towards achievement of set goals(Lee & Pounders, 2019). Ideally, information processing behaviour is essential for quality output (Vanstraelen, 2019). In this line of inquiry, personality traits have an effect on behaviour to yield quality output.

Frequency distribution for Behaviour aspect

Table 5: Frequency distribution for Behaviour aspect in Theme 1- Intrapersonal drivers of autonomous motivation



3.2.2.1 Personal traits

Noteworthy, goal orientation is an important personality trait (Malik et al., 2019). In this context, trait activation will assist in processing goal motivation (Aksoy & Bayazit, 2022). Ashkanani et al. (2022) assert that trait intrinsic motivation drives behaviour towards engaging in task for inherent interest and satisfaction. In this view, traits relate to conscientiousness and emotional stability as they impact employee performance (Roberts & Yoon, 2021). Importantly, traits are classified as broad and situation specific. Whereas intrinsic motivation is associated with broad traits, cognitive absorption describes situation specific (Baswani et al., 2021). Conversely, personality traits show patterns that include thinking, feeling and behaviour. In addition, such personality traits embody cognitive and behavioural tendencies (Roberts & Yoon, 2021).

3.2.2.2 Power

Although internal frame of reference drives autonomous motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2020), there is also the need to consider internal locus of causality. However, in this internalisation of externally initiated behaviour, there is a sense of freedom as individuals relate with the task (van der Hauwaert et al., 2022). Remarkably, there is a force of power that internally drives the mind to behave in a certain way to meet goals. In particular, self-enhancement values of

power and achievement drive autonomous motivation for status, prestige and social approval (Vecchione & Schwartz, 2022). As for leaders in the organisation, expert power drives autonomous motivation in strategy formulation and implementation. In this outlook, collaborative efforts with stakeholders are considered important (Chiu et al., 2022). Nevertheless, the same authors postulated that prestige or social power drives CEO's autonomous motivation in decision making and control purposes.

In taking risk, CEOs have a sense of control and confidence that activities can be accomplished. In addition, strategic leadership in organisations have equity power that drives autonomous motivation to strategic business ventures (Chiu et al., 2022). Although some of the ventures like business process reengineering are met with resistance from subordinates, equity power neutralises the effect. As such, CEOs by virtue of their 'ownership position', drive the equity-based wealth creation for the company. This implies that sharing power through shared leadership drives autonomous motivation among team members (Gu et al., 2020).

3.2.2.3 Experience, persuasion and attitude

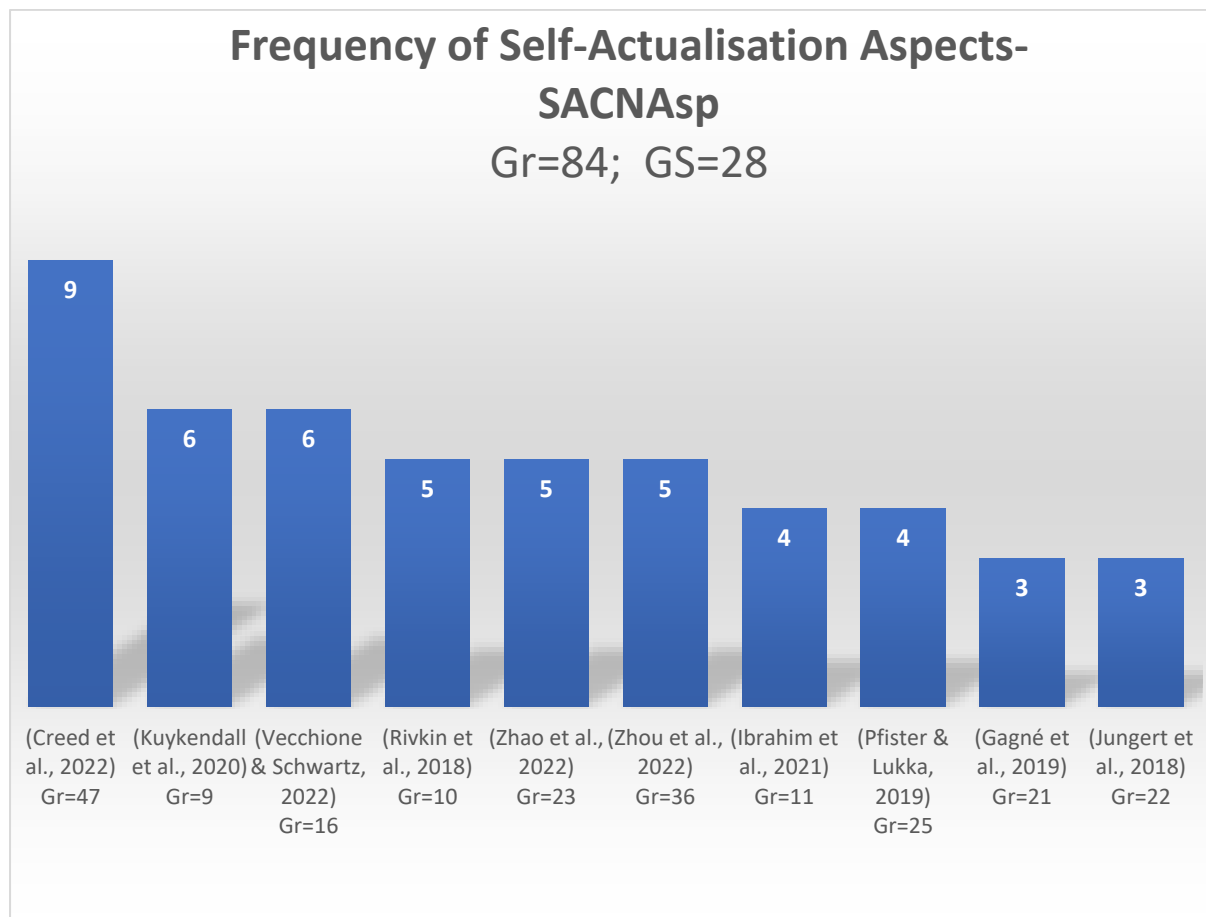
Opening up to experience enables employees to have self-direction where personal values that drive autonomous motivation can be evaluated (Vecchione & Schwartz, 2022). The feeling of autonomy influences task performance and execution (Jensen & Bro, 2018) cognisant of the 'sense of self' that drives the motivation (Pfister & Lukka, 2019). In some cases, a 'sense of control' in tasks emanates from the desire to ownership which may depend on the experience ingrained in the person (Ahmadi et al., 2022). In this view, personal experience drives autonomous motivation in institutional processes especially interpersonal experiences (Creed et al., 2022).

However, there is need to consider inner experience of the employees as this depends on years of work engagement and exposure to external environment. This inner experience assist in social networks and effective communication (Zhou et al., 2022). Based on the personal experience, employee's willingness to take risk drives autonomous motivation to radical creativity through individual disposition (Malik et al., 2019). Maybe there is a persuasive internalised force that drive this motivation to goal framing (Lee & Pounders, 2019). Regardless, personal attributes are important in driving autonomous motivation for employees seeking innovation and enjoyment (Chang et al., 2020). It is important for such employees to have the right attitude of behaviour (Herhausen et al., 2018) in their performance for effective task execution (Malek et al., 2020).

3.2.3 Self-actualisation factors

Self-actualisation refers to internalised factors that enables an individual to realise potential through applying personal effort. These factors as they influence autonomous motivation include, personal values, beliefs, self-esteem, commitment, self-transcendence, belonging, self-satisfaction, self-promotion, self-control, self-direction, moral, well-being and volition. As shown in [Table 6](#), self-actualisation aspect was popular with scholars based on the number of codes recorded under each scholar. The highest number of codes (nine) were recorded in Creed et al. (2022) whilst six were recorded in (Kuykendall et al., 2020; Vecchione & Schwartz, 2022). Interestingly, there were articles that recorded five (Rivkin et al., 2018; Zhao et al., 2022; Zhou et al., 2022) and four self-actualisation codes (Ibrahim et al., 2021; Pfister & Lukka, 2019). This bears testimony that self-actualisation aspects have a role in autonomous motivation basing on the frequency of codes alluded.

Table 6: Frequency distribution for Self-Actualisation aspect in Theme 1- Intrapersonal drivers of autonomous motivation



Since [Table 6](#) revealed the popular names of scholars that argued for self-actualisation aspect, in the next paragraph detailed explanation of the associated factors will provide better understanding of how they drive autonomous motivation.

3.2.3.1 Personal values and beliefs

Employees have different basic personal values that may influence autonomous motivation to creativity and performance (Vecchione & Schwartz, 2022). Personal value orientation implies the employees have a competence that may provide an advantage to the business (Zhao et al., 2022). However, these values are rooted in the personal beliefs that may impact actions or practices (Creed et al., 2022). In this framing, the beliefs and employee capability drive autonomous motivation to creativity (Gu et al., 2020). Normative beliefs are linked to social norms to influence motivation (Dhami et al., 2022). On the other hand, spiritual beliefs have a connection to personal values and are important in stimulating motivation at the workplace (Malik et al., 2019).

3.2.3.2 Volition and morals

Regardless of the situation, employees have volition induced motivation driven by willingness to take ownership by behaving in a particular way in task execution (Lee & Pounders, 2019). The sense of volition depends on the desire for needs satisfaction (Jensen & Bro, 2018). In this vein, employee's actions are driven by volition and self-initiation (Ibrahim et al., 2021). However, moral identity is a self-concept that infers internalisation of values and norms by the employee (Ripoll & Breugh, 2019). It includes moral integrity where employees have consistent regard for morals in complementing the organisation's ethical policies (Zhao et al., 2022). Further, moral voice motivation stems from the moral identity and moral integrity as driven by psychological need to behave in an acceptable way consistent with the values and norms of the society. In addition, moral elevation drives employee autonomous motivation to ethical behaviour (Grant & Shandell, 2021).

In summary, employees have personal values, beliefs, volition and morals that are essential elements of self-esteem. These aspects influences the desire to autonomous motivation in creativity and performance. However, self-satisfaction is key to trigger autonomous motivation of employees. In the next paragraph elements that are associated with self-satisfaction are discussed, these include commitment and wellbeing.

3.2.3.3 Commitment

Affective commitment of employees drives autonomous motivation to psychological wellbeing(Rivkin et al., 2018). The authors allude there are levels of employee commitment that stabilise with time. In this vein, employee commitment to the organisation entails personal cognitive and emotional investment in tasks(Chung et al., 2022). However, organisational commitment. In contrast, organisational commitment involves affective reactions between the organisation and job satisfaction(Rodrigo et al., 2022). When employees are committed to the organisation, there is a reduction in employee turnover in addition to saving on training and recruitment costs(Cho & Jiang, 2022). In a way, this boosts performance as the organisation prides in motivated and committed workforce(Reizer et al., 2019). Also, there is sharing of knowledge as employees commit to the organisation(Gagné et al., 2019). However, employees may also commit to public good, dedicating time to serve the society in the interest of the public (Ripoll & Breauh, 2019). Whilst commitment infers a sense of belonging(Pfister & Lukka, 2019) to the organisation, wellbeing is equally important.

3.2.3.4 Wellbeing

Wellbeing is a choice of personal interest that stimulates autonomy in work engagements(Ibrahim et al., 2021; Zhou et al., 2022). Once an employee has wellbeing, there is higher engagement and work satisfaction(Jungert et al., 2018). Consequently, the employee becomes creative in designing novel products to gain recognition or reputation(da Motta Veiga & Gabriel, 2016). Therefore, autonomous work motivation have effect on wellbeing, job satisfaction and performance(van der Hauwaert et al., 2022). In reality, wellbeing drives autonomous motivation to meet aspirations(Creed et al., 2022). In this context, there is value infused in social arrangements and practices as part of this wellbeing. Notable is the fact that psychological wellbeing leads to self-satisfaction when basic needs are provided (Rivkin et al., 2018).

3.2.3.5 Self-construal

Self-actualisation entails self-concept and self-esteem in employee career development for performance, wellbeing and satisfaction (Zhu et al., 2022). In this view, Jung et al. (2022) alludes that self-esteem depends on the environment in which the employee operates. However, Pfister and Luke (2019) posits that perception of task through sense of self drive autonomous motivation to task execution. Therefore, self-esteem drives employee's autonomous motivation to performance.

3.2.3.6 Self-control

Self-control is an important component of self-actualisation. As such, it involves behaviour that may have an effect on performance and career development (Zhou et al., 2022). When making decisions in task engagement, self-control entails professional scepticism (Vanstraelen, 2019). This prevents misjudgement on the task, avoiding errors and misstatement. Therefore, self-control involves perception of the task (Pfister & Lukka, 2019) and making appropriate decisions before task execution. In this framing, employees derive self-satisfaction in collective work engagement (Chang et al., 2020). This sense of satisfaction must be supported by transformational leaders to motivate autonomous behaviour of employees. As a result, this allows effective task engagement to meet targets (Jensen & Bro, 2018). In sum, sense of control in tasks depends on how challenging the task can be (Ahmadi et al., 2022) and the perceived locus of causality (Pfister & Lukka, 2019).

3.2.3.7 Self-direction

Self-direction is an outcome of self-actualisation that leads a person to determine destiny based on self-reflection. Self-direction applies when an employee is conscious of a calling and thus committed to the organisation (Cho & Jiang, 2022). In this framing, self-direction implies autonomy of thought and action in creativity or innovation (Vecchione & Schwartz, 2022). The same authors allude that employees have both self-direction and self-transcendence values. In this outlook, the need for self-direction and self-transcendence drives autonomous motivation of team members in tasks (Gu et al., 2020). Perhaps there is need to scrutinise the self-transcendence aspect in detail as explained in the next paragraph.

3.2.3.8 Self-transcendence

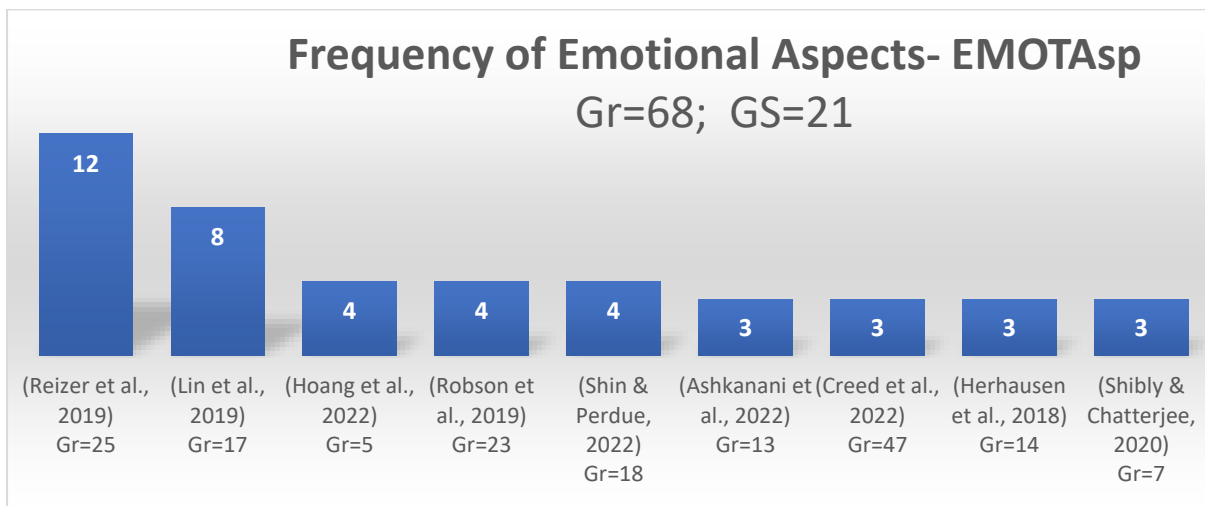
Employees have self-transcendence desire to exceed personal boundaries in their performance at work. In the same way, they also have self-esteem and ego that drive autonomous motivation to exceed beyond capabilities (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Therefore, Robson et al. (2019) alludes that ego and self-recognition are essential to innovation. In this case, employees are also expected to share knowledge as they seek recognition (Gagné et al., 2019). However, it is the self-promotion desire that influences autonomous motivation (Robson et al., 2019). In this case, employees strive to satisfy customers, through positive interactions and performance supportive of the goal (Chung et al., 2022). Their work contingent self-esteem is important for performance (Kuykendall et al., 2020). In sum, the desire for self-transcendence drives employee autonomous motivation towards certain behaviour (Vecchione & Schwartz, 2022).

3.2.4 Emotional factors

In understanding employee behaviour there are emotional aspects that influence autonomous motivation. Although employee emotions influence motivation, they fluctuate daily affecting job performance(Reizer et al., 2019). In view of this, emotions are dynamic leading to different attitudes (Ashkanani et al., 2022) and behaviours. Although emotions are cognitively ingrained in the mind of a person, they are expressed physically in tasks. This infers that positive emotions drive employees to meaningful task(Reizer et al., 2019). In the same way, there is an emotional connection for customer creativity(Robson et al., 2019). Therefore, emotions can influence the work performance(Roussillon Soyer et al., 2022). Thus, shared belief in teamwork and emotional support from others drives autonomous motivation to task completion(Gu et al., 2020). Most importantly, social and moral emotions drive autonomous motivation to organisational processes(Creed et al., 2022). As a result, emotions drive autonomous motivation (Reizer et al., 2019)to broad consumer behaviour processes(Shibly & Chatterjee, 2020). On this note, emotional factors to be discussed include enjoyment, enthusiasm, feelings, interest, surprise and affection.

In the business field, there were popular scholarly voices that argued for emotions aspect as an important factor that influences behaviour to autonomous motivation. Based on Table 3.3, the loudest voice came from the article Reizer et al. (2019) that recorded 12 codes and eight codes from Pfister and Lukka (2019)respectively. However, there were some articles that recorded four codes (Hoang et al., 2022; Robson et al., 2019; Shin & Perdue, 2022)whilst some had three(Ashkanani et al., 2022; Creed et al., 2022; Herhausen et al., 2018; Shibly & Chatterjee, 2020).

Table 7: Frequency distribution for Emotions aspect in Theme 1- Intrapersonal drivers of autonomous motivation



As illustrated in [Table 7](#), there is a growing scholarly voice arguing for emotional factors as a driver to autonomous motivation. In the next sections, these scholarly views are scrutinised to better understand the phenomenon.

3.2.4.1 *Enjoyment*

Hedonic motivation involves employees engage in helping for pleasure. As posited by Chung et al. (2022) a sense of enjoyment influences behaviour towards autonomous motivation in helping. In this case employees have intrinsic enjoyment goal that leads to creativity(Robson et al., 2019). Therefore, it is this enjoyment that drives employee autonomous motivation in task involvement to meet targeted goals(Aksoy & Bayazit, 2022). In actual fact, employees have a personal enjoyment in task leading to goal achievement(Ashkanani et al., 2022). In sum, the employee's desire to enjoy task experience drive autonomous motivation to engage in tasks like community work(Chung et al., 2022).

3.2.4.2 *Enthusiasm*

Related to enjoyment is enthusiasm were employees affectionately commit to tasks because they are interested in the taking part for personal gratification. Enthusiasm triggers autonomous motivation behaviour that enables employees to interact with customers (Shin & Perdue, 2022). In this way, employees support their values and interests through appropriate behaviour and performance (Zhao et al., 2022). However, there is need to understand how feelings motivated employees in task engagements. In the next paragraph, feelings are discussed to understand what drives employee autonomous motivation.

3.2.4.3 *Feelings*

Feelings are an important aspect that explains human personality and behaviour. In view of this, employees have feelings towards their work thus, they behave differently depending on circumstances. Since feelings can either be positive or negative, the positive aspect infers a desire to feel good in task engagement(Lin et al., 2019b). It seems there is a structure of shared feelings or affective contours that have effect on employee motivation(Hoang et al., 2022). As such, it is advisable to future researchers to investigate further how feelings influence employee motivation. However, for the sake of this study the assumption is that feelings may influence the employee autonomous motivation.

3.2.4.4 Interest

As part of emotions, interest is also an important component that deserves consideration in this study. When employees have inherent personal interest in customer orientation this may lead to autonomous motivation (Herhausen et al., 2018). As such, they desire to pursue own interests to task performance (Jungert et al., 2018). In this vein, the employees aim to exceed self-interests (Jensen & Bro, 2018). The personal inner interest in activities is a reflection of commitment (Zhou et al., 2022). This interest in task as alluded by Grant and Shandell (2021), drives autonomous motivation to performance thereby adding value to the product. As a result, employees behave in a particular manner in conformity with their personal interests (Ibrahim et al., 2021).

3.2.4.5 Affection and surprise

Affection is an emotion that employees show when they are interested with a task, it is a state of mind. Surprise is related to affection were a person apart from being interested with a task, receives unexpected results. The results can be either positive or negative thus they surprise the employee. Affection has been linked to episodic helping (Lin et al., 2019) when employees engage in tasks they are interested in and have commitment. Similar to surprise, affection can be positive or negative depending on the circumstances. Affect which has an effect on individual performance varies per individual (i.e., transindividual) (Hoang et al., 2022). As such, Lin et al. (2019) argues that positive affective experience influences individual behaviour in helping to provide positive reinforcement of the actions. However, pervasive affect also influences employee behaviour in task engagement (Hoang et al., 2022). On the other hand, in emotions surprise is an element that also influences employee motivation in task engagement (Shibly & Chatterjee, 2020).

3.3 Theme 2- Task factors drive autonomous motivation

Since employees are assigned tasks for execution to meet the objectives of the organisation, there must be a driving force behind these tasks. It is therefore important to consider the task aspects that drive employees' autonomous motivation. As the employees require liberty in execution of these tasks, they ought to have an internalised force that drives this autonomous motivation. Further, a dissection of the task reveals three levels important to employees in their performance and to meet set objectives. The three levels are task input, task processing and task output as shown in [Figure 4](#). However, the product aspects also have to be considered as they define the objective of the task. In this vein, since customers are the end result targeted by the task and the product offered, there is need to analyse how these

customers drive employee autonomous motivation. Importantly, since goals are related to the task, they may have effect on employee autonomous motivation. In this outlook, the goal timing and goal level orientation will be scrutinised. In the next section, the influence of task input factors on employee autonomous motivation is discussed.

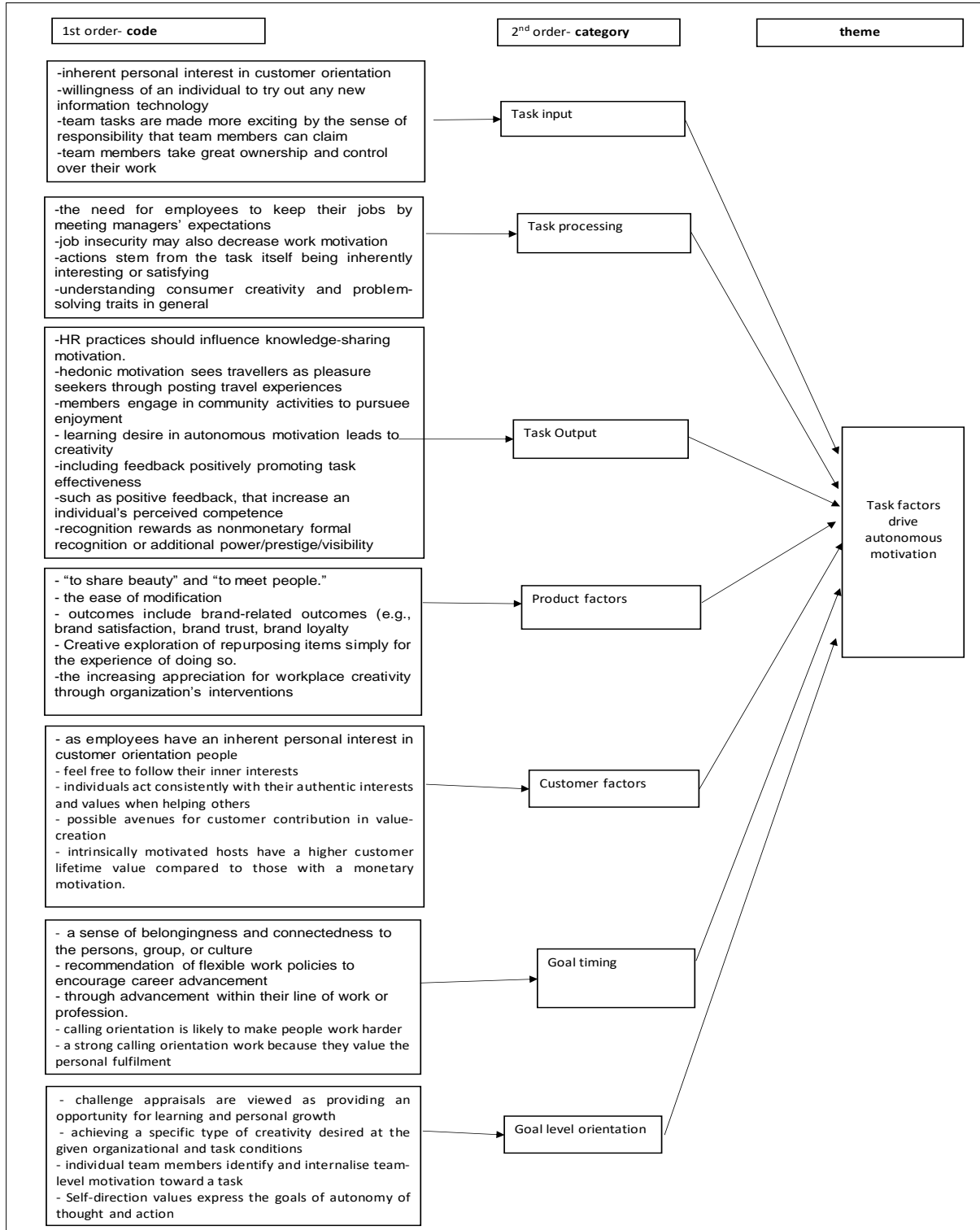


Figure 4: Mind map of Theme 2- Task factors that drive autonomous motivation

Literature engagement has revealed the names of scholars famous in advocating for task factors in driving autonomous motivation. As shown in [Table 8](#), the names of the scholars, year of publication, the number of quotations in each article (**Gr**) and number of documents (**Gs**) in each code group are illustrated.

Table 8: Frequency distribution for Theme 2- Task factors that drive autonomous motivation

	CSTO- Customer orientation Gr=10; GS=7	GOLN- Goal achievement Gr=39; GS=16	GOTMAsp Gr=16; GS=8	PRDT- Product Gr=8; GS=5	TSKIAsp Gr=41; GS=8	TSKOAsp Gr=65; GS=21	TSKPAsp Gr=53; GS=25	Totals
(Aksoy & Bayazit, 2022)Gr=12	0	2	1	0	0	0	1	4
(Bastida et al., 2022)Gr=22	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
(Baswani et al., 2021)Gr=19	1	0	0	0	2	4	1	8
(Chang et al., 2020)Gr=32	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	5
(Chiu et al., 2022)Gr=23	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	4
(Cho & Jiang, 2022)Gr=19	0	4	5	0	0	3	2	14
(Chung et al., 2022)Gr=16	2	0	0	2	0	3	0	7
(Creed et al., 2022)Gr=47	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
(da Motta Veiga & Gabriel, 2016)	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	3
(Farrell et al., 2022)Gr=5	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	3
(Gagné et al., 2019)Gr=21	0	0	0	0	0	5	8	13
(Good et al., 2018)Gr=22	1	6	0	0	0	3	4	14
(Grant & Shandell, 2021)Gr=23	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	4
(Gu et al., 2020)Gr=25	0	1	0	0	4	2	0	7
(Herhausen et al., 2018)Gr=14	4	0	0	0	3	1	1	9
(Ibrahim et al., 2021)Gr=11	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
(Jensen & Bro, 2018)Gr=12	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
(Jung et al., 2022)Gr=19	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	5
(Jungert et al., 2018)Gr=22	0	1	0	0	1	2	3	7
(Koslow et al., 2022)Gr=8	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	4
(Lee & Pounders, 2019)Gr=31	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	9
(Malek et al., 2020)Gr=32	0	0	0	1	2	9	2	14
(Malik et al., 2019)Gr=52	0	2	0	0	3	0	9	14
(Pfister & Lukka, 2019)Gr=25	0	2	2	0	3	1	4	12
(Ripoll & Breaugh, 2019)Gr=24	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5
(Robson et al., 2019)Gr=23	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	5
(Ryan & Deci, 2020)Gr=47	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	6
(Shin & Perdue, 2022)Gr=18	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	4
(Shukla et al., 2022)Gr=5	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
(Vecchione & Schwartz, 2022)G	0	1	0	0	1	3	0	5
(Zhou et al., 2022)Gr=12	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	7
(Zhou et al., 2022)Gr=36	0	1	5	0	3	2	0	11
Abbreviations								
Gr	Groundedness of codes (number of quotations coded by a code) or documents (quotations created in a document)							
GS	Number of documents in a document group or number of codes in a code group							

3.3.1 Task input

In task engagement, there are various reasons that motivate employees. When employees perform a task, it is important to ascertain if they have inherent interest in the task and willingness to accomplish the task. Perhaps, the employees have a sense of responsibility thus they take ownership of the task. As they engage in tasks the extent to which they are responsible in taking ownership is worthy scrutiny. Therefore, there is need to analyse the influence of interest, willingness, responsibility and ownership in ascertaining what drives employee's autonomous motivation in task engagement. In the next paragraph, interest in the task is discussed as it sets the tone for the task engagement.

3.3.1.1 Interest

When employees engage in tasks, they ought to have inherent personal interest in the task (Herhausen et al., 2018). As such, their inner interests in the task influences task engagement (Zhou et al., 2022). However, since the employees have individual values and interests in the task, this has an effect to their performance(Reizer et al., 2019). Significantly, the personal interest may lead to application of data driven techniques in task execution(Ibrahim et al., 2021). In this case, the personal interest is dedicated to serve the community thereby earning reputation and recognition to the employee (Baswani et al., 2021). Similarly, prosocial interest aims to engage in tasks that serve the community (Lin et al., 2019). Proactivity in these task drive autonomous motivation to apply risk assessed behaviour (Wu & Parker, 2017). Therefore, personal interest in the task drives autonomous motivation to behaviour that accomplish the interest(Jungert et al., 2018). Perhaps this interest in the task stems from traits that define employee behaviour in task performance. In this outlook, trait intrinsic motivation is essential to task performance(Ashkanani et al., 2022). Thus, the desire for pleasure in tasks drive autonomous motivation to execution of tasks considered interesting(Roussillon Soyer et al., 2022).

3.3.1.2 Willingness

Although employees have an interest in tasks, having the willingness to take part in task execution is equally important. Willingness means the readiness of employees to execute a task for various personal reasons. As such, employees may want to try new information technology on tasks, thus have autonomous motivation to innovation(Baswani et al., 2021) . In this outlook, they have willingness to take risks as they strive to creativity(Malik et al., 2019). Employees may also engage in tasks if they perceive shared leadership support to task ownership and control(Gu et al., 2020). Conversely, passion in task engagement drive autonomous motivation to creativity and task completion(Malek et al., 2020). However, willingness implies application of expert power in the task leading to acceptance of risk tolerant tasks(Koslow et al., 2022) . In sum, intrinsic task motivation depends on willingness to take part in tasks performance for personal gratification (Malek et al., 2020).

3.3.1.3 Responsibility

In spite of interest and willingness to take part in tasks, employees have a sense of responsibility that drives their motivation. It then means employees have a desire for responsible behaviour driving autonomous motivation in task input(Zhou et al., 2022). Specifically, a sense of accountability and responsibility in tasks influences CEO's autonomous motivation for appropriate strategic decisions for the organisation(Chiu et al.,

2022). The positions of authority possessed by the employees require their utmost performance. As such, the employees are expected to act responsibly and account for their actions in task engagement. Therefore, CEOs and managers have a desire to act responsibly, thus driving their autonomous motivation to task engagement. In most cases, there must be due regard for the institutional processes as the employees take responsibility in task performance (Creed et al., 2022).

3.3.1.4 Ownership

Even if employees have interest and willingness to take part in tasks, as they act responsibly, they take ownership for their actions. The fiduciary relationship between employees and the employer implies trust and integrity. Therefore, employees are always expected to act within the confinement of their contract. Any actions that contravenes the duty of trust bestowed on the employee is susceptible to civil or criminal implications. In this framing, employees have the desire to take ownership in their tasks as they have an obligation to account. Therefore, cognitively the employees have a sense of ownership that infuses a desire to perform a task. Of course, the employees are also interested in getting recognition for their effort and consequently better reputation from peers. In this vein, taking ownership in tasks drive CEO's autonomous motivation to task execution gaining prestige and status (Chiu et al., 2022). Ultimately, the sense of task ownership drive autonomous motivation to task performance in fulfilment of personal interest (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

3.3.2 Task processing

If an employee has interest, willingness to be responsible and sense of ownership, the task trajectory requires understanding the task process aspect. In this view, factors that drive employee autonomous motivation are related to task process's expectations, job aspect, task orientation and problem solving. In the next paragraphs, these aspects are analysed to ascertain how they drive autonomous motivation of the employees.

3.3.2.1 Expectations

When employees indulge in a task, they perhaps have certain personal or social expectations that drive them towards fulfilment of the task. In this view, employee expectations in tasks drive autonomous motivation to task engagement (da Motta Veiga & Gabriel, 2016). Good et al. (2018) argues that employees have a desire to enjoyment in tasks as a driver to their autonomous motivation. If enjoyment in the task is the main interest, then the extent to which the employees get the enjoyment is worth considering. It therefore means, the employees can

have a short lived pleasure through the experience for the sake of just starting the task even though they may fail to accomplish it. Therefore, the interest in the task ought to be deeply attached to the task such that even when there is failure to meet the goals, the employee enjoys the task. It sounds realistically odd that an employee will get personal gratification when the task fails even though they were enjoying the task.

It implies that enjoyment of the task is a holistic approach that transcend the whole task process from inception to conclusion. In this view, a sense of fun and enjoyment is associated with the task processing and drives autonomous motivation to performance (Cho & Jiang, 2022). However, besides expectations of fun and enjoyment, Grant and Shandell (2021) allude that employees have internalised social expectations . These social expectations relate to tasks that have concern for the society i.e., tasks that alleviate livelihoods in communities. Such tasks are driven by the desire to serve the community through altruistic initiatives for recognition or reputational purposes. In sum, employees engage in tasks for fun, enjoyment and social expectations thus influencing autonomous motivation to task performance.

3.3.2.2 Job aspects

Consideration of nature of the job has a bearing on employee task motivation and performance. Whilst employees have expectations as alluded, the job setting influences motivation. Gagné et al. (2019) posits the importance of work design in sharing knowledge in tasks. It depends on the structure of the work design for effective knowledge sharing . When employees are exposed to jobs where there is a closed structure and high power distance, the knowledge sharing is perceived difficult by employees. However, an open and flexible work structure is ideal for knowledge sharing because of low power distance. However, employees require job security to effectively engage in long term tasks and to exert full capability. The fact that employees have a fear of job loss may instil a negative perception in the employee mindset leading to mediocre performance. As alluded by Ripoll and Breaugh (2019) job security is important in task engagement and have an influence on employee performance. On the other hand, job security must be complimented with job safety. Whilst employees have personal and social expectations, they also are concerned about their personal and emotional safety at the workplace. In line with government regulations, employers are mandated to provide a conducive safe working environment where employees can thrive. As confirmed by Grant and Shandel (2021), working safe is essential for employees in their task engagement. Even though safety is guaranteed by the employers, the employees desire to work smart for competitive purposes. Working smart entails adoption of better ways to performance and execution of tasks through innovation and creativity. This informed by the dynamism in the

contemporary business environment calling for novel ways to remain viable. Therefore, 'working smarter' drive autonomous motivation to task performance(Grant & Shandell, 2021).

3.3.2.3 Task orientation

Since expectations and job aspects have been considered, then justification for the task is equally important to employees. In this outlook, the nature of the task deserves scrutiny to understand what drives employees to take part in the task. Jungert et al. (2018) states that employees have the desire to improve skills through tasks. It implies that the task is considered an important instrument to assess skills. The task engagement allows the employee to apply technical and conceptual skills in execution of the task. Interest in assessing the skills through testing drives autonomous motivation to task performance. There ought to be a personal value attached to the task if the employees are to successfully perform the task (Reizer et al., 2019). It could be that the employees require identification with the task foremost as a platform to share knowledge (Gagné et al., 2019). Importantly, the employees must have a sense of value associated with the task to drive autonomous motivation to performance(Pfister & Lukka, 2019; Ryan & Deci, 2020).

In the task engagement the employees diligently execute their mandate avoiding failure (Aksoy & Bayazit, 2022). When employees apply effort to the task, they have personal curiosity and willingness to succeed in task performance(Ryan & Deci, 2020). As alluded by Baswani et al. (2021), task effort drives autonomous motivation to task achievement. On this note, a sense of commitment from the employees is essential in the application of effort in the task engagement. This sentiment is echoed by Cho and Jiang (2022) who allude the influence of employee commitment in driving autonomous motivation to task performance. Subsequently, the task performance have an impact on the productivity of the organisation. Pfister and Lukka (2019) propose that commitment to task orientation drive autonomous motivation to productivity. Regardless of the commitment, there is need for personal interaction in tasks through teamwork to accomplish tasks (Malek et al., 2020). However, a sense of task interdependence enables knowledge sharing(Gagné et al., 2019).

3.3.2.4 Problem solving

In the business tasks are normally performed as projects that aim to solve an identified problem (project scope). The motivation for performing the task lies in the desire to solve a particular problem. In this view, the problem solving quest influences autonomous motivation to task performance(Robson et al., 2019). Perhaps, there is need to consider the problem solving traits of the employee as alluded by the scholars. However, Malik et al. (2019) argue

that employee's need to solve a problem influences autonomous motivation to creativity in task engagement. In this case, the desire for creativity also drive autonomous motivation to task performance(Malik et al., 2019). Besides problem solving, the employees are also interested to share knowledge in tasks (Gagné et al., 2019). On the other hand, the search for meaning in tasks drive autonomous motivation to task performance(Ashkanani et al., 2022).

3.3.3 Task output

Whilst performing a task involves input and processing stages, the task output aspect is crucial to assess achievement of set goals. What is more important is to understand how task output drive autonomous motivation of employees. In this context, the aspects that influence task output are knowledge sharing, hedonic satisfaction, meaning, learning, feedback and recognition. These aspects will be discussed in greater detail in the following paragraphs.

3.3.3.1 Knowledge sharing

Although tasks provide solutions to problems at hand, they enable sharing of knowledge. As employees engage in tasks, they are interested in finding meaning and solutions to problems. This allows innovative products or services to be provided to customers thereby satisfying needs. That is to say employee's desire to gain knowledge drive autonomous motivation to study and learn about the product or service (Vecchione & Schwartz, 2022). Nevertheless, the work design is crucial to this knowledge sharing (Gagné et al., 2019). It is therefore important that work design is conducive to effective communication and personal interaction of employees in sharing this knowledge. On the contrary, the task results will attest to actions that help customers in meeting their needs. In this way, the desire to share information instils a sense of helping the customers (Shin & Perdue, 2022). Alternatively, a sense of shared leadership is created as employees engage in task performance(Gu et al., 2020).

3.3.3.2 Hedonic satisfaction

If the outcome of a task provides enjoyment and pleasure to employees, this suggests that the purpose of deriving this pleasure is related to hedonic motivation. It follows that, the pleasure is not only personal gratification for successful completion of the task, but the realisation of the impact of the task output. In this case, the task will impact the employee personally in their performance or the targeted end user i.e., customer. In other words, the beneficiaries of the task output are stakeholders that have a direct or indirect interest with the organisation. According to Chung et al.(2022), hedonic motivation influences autonomous motivation to community engagement. It is therefore important to note the important role of

employees in transforming livelihoods in communities through task deliverables. As such, employees are expected to be committed to tasks and willing to act in the best interest of the organisation to derive a competitive advantage.

3.3.3.3 Meaning

When employees attach a sense of importance to the task and consider it vital, then they have personal interest and dedication of performance towards execution of the task. As claimed by Cangiano and Parker (2021) , this sense of vitality drive autonomous motivation to results oriented task. What then is important is to note the search for meaning that drives the interest towards task performance. As such, the task output must provide the desired meaning to offer solutions at hand. In this view, it infers that tasks are performed as a solution to an identified problem at hand. Besides providing pleasure and fun, the task output must provide meaningful solutions to the problems. In this case, as alluded by Ashkanani et al. (2022) , the search for meaning drive autonomous motivation to task performance. The same sentiments were echoed by Good et al. (2018) who allude the meaning to refer to a sense of purpose ingrained in the employee's mind.

3.3.3.4 Learning

While the task output must provide meaning, what lessons that can be drawn from the outcome is essential to drive autonomous motivation. The purpose of the task is to solve a problem identified and to transform livelihoods as alluded, however, the lessons drawn from the task is equally important. In this view, Robson et al. (2019) confirms that learning desire drive autonomous motivation to creativity. Therefore, the task outcome is a platform to employee creativity where knowledge through ideas is shared amongst employees. It implies that employees continue to learn from the task outcome, this further refines their knowledge and reinforces their skills acumen. However, a conducive workplace environment condition is one factor critical to this learning trajectory. In this line of inquiry, Jung et al. (2022) suggests that workplace environment drives autonomous motivation to learning and personal growth.

3.3.3.5 Feedback

Researchers have explained the importance of feedback on task performance in driving employee motivation. In this same framing, the task output must be tied to feedback that acknowledges completion of set goals. It means positive task feedback reflects confirmation that set objectives have been achieved. Therefore, when positive task related feedback is provided, this has an effect to employee performance(Baswani et al., 2021; Malek et al., 2020).

As such, the feedback influences autonomous motivation to share knowledge(Gagné et al., 2019). On the other hand, as posited by Pfister and Lukka (2019) , feedback drives autonomous motivation to task effectiveness. What is important to note is that feedback through verbal reinforcements influences this autonomous motivation to value addition in tasks(Good et al., 2018).

3.3.3.6 Recognition

Whilst employees obtain knowledge, meaning and feedback from tasks, they desire recognition for their efforts in the task outcome. In other words, recognition provides a reason for employees to personally engage in tasks. However, the type of recognition and the purpose thereof is a contentious issue deserving scrutiny. This issue matters because it justifies the autonomous motivation of employees based on recognition of their effort in task engagement. Whilst recognition comes in monetary and non-monetary forms, perhaps the non-monetary is intrinsic and has far reaching satisfaction to employees. Monetary rewards fail to quench the insatiable desire of people as the propensity to consume and spend always rises with access to more money. Therefore, non-monetary rewards like personal gratification from recognition and hedonic enjoyment may have a lasting influence on employee minds.

However, the non-monetary recognition depends on perceptions of managers, peers, customers and other concerned stakeholders. In this view, Cho and Jiang (2022) contends that manager's perception on subordinate's work influences autonomous motivation to achieve organisational goals. Interestingly, perception can be negative apart from being positive in most cases. Negative perceptions are bound to cognitively affect employees who will consequently fail to effectively perform their tasks. Assuming positive perception, there is reputation associated with successful completion of a task. In this view, Chung et al. (2022) confirms that pursuit of reputation drive autonomous motivation to engagement.

As employees get a sense of recognition this impacts task performance(Gu et al., 2020). In this case, the recognition will drive autonomous motivation to task performance. Besides recognition feeling, the employee self-esteem is boosted by successful accomplishment of the task. Therefore, recognition reward drive autonomous motivation to team collaboration in new product development(Malek et al., 2020).

3.3.4 Product factors

Employee performance is flawed if the product is not considered as the driver to autonomous motivation. Therefore, there is need for evaluation of the product factors that influence the

autonomous motivation. In this outlook, product aesthetics, brand and creativity are considered.

3.3.4.1 Product aesthetics

A beautiful product has high chances of appeal to customers meaning they are more interested and willing to buy the product to satisfy their needs. If employees decide to create a beautiful product, then their desire to enhance the appearance of the product (aesthetics) will satisfy the customer's needs. According to Malek et al. (2020), the need to create a new product that is useful and interesting to customers drives autonomous motivation to creativity. It means employees will have to design a product that is unique and customer centric to achieve meeting customer's needs (Shukla et al., 2022). The same sentiments were echoed by Chung et al. (2022) who allude the relationship between product offering and customer satisfaction.

Most importantly, the products or services offered must be innovative if they are to attract or satisfy the customers (Baswani et al., 2021). However, novelty must not impede product functionality or complicate the ease of use. In this case, Robson et al. (2019) alludes ease of product modification drives autonomous motivation to innovation in a way to improve the product offering. In view of this, product novelty is one way of proving organisational innovation(Ahmadi et al., 2022). As postulated by Zhou et al. (2022), the pursuit of novelty in activities drive autonomous motivation in tasks perceived creative and interesting. In addition, this product novelty is connected to employee's personal interests(Ibrahim et al., 2021).

3.3.4.2 Brand

A scrutiny of the product brand may assist in understanding what drives autonomous motivation for employees. Product brand is the means through which customers identify what the company offers. In other words, the brand cognitively draws the attention and stimulates desire for purchase by the customers. However, how then this product brand influences autonomous motivation is crucial in understanding the aim of this paper. In this view, Shin and Perdue (2022) argue that employees have a desire to protect a brand justifying their autonomous motivation to customer relationships and value co-creation. It follows that employees are the vanguard for the product brand, they need to guard jealously the reputation of the product from competitors. As the employees associate with the brand, they are bonded to the product and have a holistic duty to market extensively this brand to the customers. It therefore infers that, the need for employees to associate with product brand drives

autonomous motivation to provide value to customers and to satisfy their taste and preferences(Farrell et al., 2022).

3.3.4.3 Creativity

The creativity aspect in tasks mostly refers to product creativity although workplace creativity is also important to understand the drivers of employee autonomous motivation. Employees embark on creative exploration (Robson et al., 2019), as they are willing to take risks associated with this creativity(Koslow et al., 2022). In product creativity, the set goals drive employee autonomous motivation to engage in advertising to remain competitive(Koslow et al., 2022).However, the workplace creativity desire drives employees to engage in radical or incremental creativity(Malik et al., 2019). Interestingly, employees exposed to stressful work environments, have solace in escapism. In this outlook, Robson et al. (2019) claims that desire for escapism drives employee autonomous motivation to creative exploration. Perhaps the creativity is more inclined to customer recognition purposes. This sentiment is shared by Shukla et al. (2022) , they allude that customer recognition drives employee autonomous motivation to provide creative packaging to draw customer's attention.

3.3.5 Customer factors

3.3.5.1 Interest

In tasks customer focus is important to understand if interest has effect on employee autonomous motivation. As posited by Herhausen et al. (2018), employees have inherent personal interest in customer orientation. This sentiment is also shared by Zhou et al. (2022) who further claims the personal inner interest in activities drives employee autonomous motivation to task engagement. In all these circumstances, employees desire to gain reputation or recognition through providing customers with products that meet their expectations(Baswani et al., 2021).

3.3.5.2 Customer orientation

On the other hand, customer orientation may provide clues to the drivers of employee autonomous motivation. In this line of inquiry, employees aim to satisfy the customer's needs (Chung et al., 2022; Good et al., 2018b)by providing new products(Baswani et al., 2021). As the firm commits to serve the customers through unique products, employee performance (Herhausen et al., 2018) is expected to foster good client relationship(Koslow et al., 2022). In this way, there is higher customer lifetime and loyalty (Chung et al., 2022). Alternatively, the

consumer relationship can be strengthened through using social media platforms e.g., Instagram(Farrell et al., 2022). In sum, employees have a desire to satisfy customers' needs through offering novel products and they are also motivated to nurture cordial relations with the customers.

3.3.6 Goal timing

Although focusing on the task, product and customers is important, the timing of goals is more important in understanding the drivers of employee autonomous motivation. In this view, timing of goals is categorised into long-term, medium-term and short-term. Goal timing is crucial since poor timing may have dire consequences to the employee, organisation or customers. In the next paragraph, goal timing is explained further to understand how they can influence autonomous motivation.

3.3.6.1 Short to medium-term goals

As employees engage in tasks, they are in the short term motivated by a sense of belonging to the organisation(Pfister & Lukka, 2019). This quest is extended in the medium to long term as employees embark on opportunity seeking desire to engage in entrepreneurship (Zhou et al., 2022). In this framing, autonomous motivation influences employee commitment to task that are considered difficult in an endeavour to find long term solutions through action(Aksoy & Bayazit, 2022).

3.3.6.2 Long term goals

However, in the long term the employees are concerned with meeting future aspirations through implementing strategies to realise long term goals through performance(Creed et al., 2022). Although entrepreneurship desire persists, the employees are inclined to accomplish the business vision i.e., there is more value attached to entrepreneurship which is perceived a necessity(Zhou et al., 2022). Likewise, employees focus on their job calling as they aim to advance career goals in the long term (Cho & Jiang, 2022). Relatedly, the desire to explore career options drive autonomous motivation to achieve firstly, short term goals, drawing excitement and interest to reach long term goals(da Motta Veiga & Gabriel, 2016). On the other hand, organisational policies are considered flexible in meeting the medium to long term goals(Bastida et al., 2022).

3.3.7 Goal level orientation

Since goals are made at the strategic, tactical and operational level in the organisation, it is important to understand how they influence autonomous motivation (Herhausen et al., 2018). Regardless of the level, goals are important in defining the purpose of the business. In this case, the behaviour and actions of both employees and the organisation is influenced by the goals they aim to achieve.

3.3.7.1 Strategic level

Senior managers and executives are vested in crafting strategies to develop and grow the business. However, in this endeavour the executives have collective sense making choice that drives autonomous motivation in new product development(Malek et al., 2020). Conversely, Lin et al. (2019) alludes the managers have citizenship pressure that instils autonomous motivation to help co-workers and communities. It means the managers have prosocial motivation that stimulates helping behaviour(Grant & Shandell, 2021).

3.3.7.2 Tactical level

Middle level managers aiming to achieve results from tasks implemented in executing organisational objectives, strive to control these results(Pfister & Lukka, 2019). Obtaining desired results provides these managers a sense of achievement, influencing autonomous motivation to more creativity(Malik et al., 2019). Also, the managers have a desire for self-direction that drive autonomous motivation to creativity and innovation(Vecchione & Schwartz, 2022).In addition, they have intrinsic enjoyment goal that drive autonomous motivation to customer creativity(Robson et al., 2019). As such, they feel obligated to share information that help others(Shin & Perdue, 2022).

However, middle level managers require feedback to reform service design(Shin & Perdue, 2022). In this vein, Jung et al. (2022) suggests that challenge appraisals motivate learning and personal growth of the managers and their subordinates. Therefore, a perception on performance measurement system drive autonomous motivation to managerial performance(van der Hauwaert et al., 2022) .

3.3.7.3 Operational level

Employees at operational level (clericals) in most cases constitute the majority of the workforce. These employees also have autonomous motivation in task engagement as driven

by various factors. First, these employees desire to help customers personally though in line with their job requirements (Jung et al., 2022). As stated by Chung et al.(2022) , they enjoy helping in task engagements to gain personal growth. It seems they have autonomous motivation driven by helping in team performance(Lin et al., 2019). Second, the feedback they receive from middle and top level managers influence autonomous motivation to share knowledge(Gagné et al., 2019). Important is the goal oriented feedback they receive empowering them to achieve more goals(Hewett & Conway, 2016). In addition, the clerical employees receive positive verbal reinforcements as feedback thus driving autonomous motivation to add value in activities(Good et al., 2018).Third, the clericals internalise stretch targets to performance(Pfister & Lukka, 2019). In this vein, they desire to make change through innovation(Shin & Perdue, 2022). Fourth, as alluded by Koslow et al. (2022), the employees have sense of enjoyment infusing autonomous motivation to more task involvement for meeting performance goals. Lastly, the operational employees once they have been positively appraised, feel gratitude and appreciation driving autonomous motivation to customer creativity(Grant & Shandell, 2021).

3.3.7.4 Strategic, Tactical and Operational level

Regardless of the level, goal timing is important to all employees in the organisation. Therefore, the need for self-direction drives autonomous motivation of team members in tasks(Gu et al., 2020). In this regard, the employees have freedom to make a choice to wellbeing(Kuykendall et al., 2020). The feedback they receive from tasks drive autonomous motivation to task effectiveness(Ryan & Deci, 2020). Importantly, positive task related feedback drive autonomous motivation to performance(Baswani et al., 2021; Malek et al., 2020). As result, the employees have interest and enjoyment in task execution adding value to the business (Grant & Shandell, 2021).

3.4 Theme 3- Organisation factors drive autonomous motivation

Autonomous motivation of employees depends on organisational factors relevant to the employees. In this section, a deeper understanding of the autonomous motivation phenomenon is focused on organisational policies, organisational processes and organisational workforce as shown in [Figure 5](#). Organisational workforce has the greatest number of codes indicating the importance of this aspect in driving autonomous motivation. Nevertheless, organisational policies and processes are also important as they trigger employee autonomous motivation.

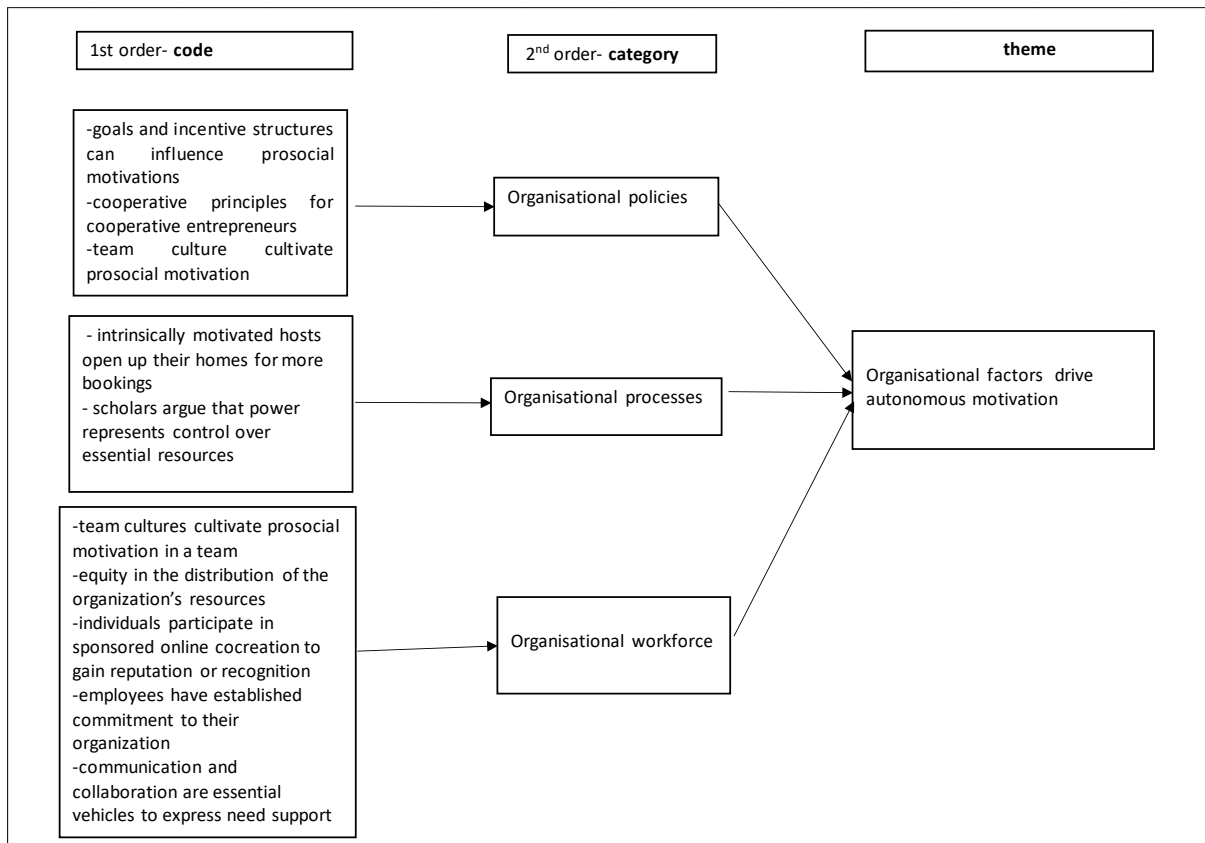


Figure 5: Mind map of Theme 3-Organisational factors that drive autonomous motivation

In [Table 9](#), the researcher has compiled a table showing familiar names that have argued for organisational factors. Important to note is the contribution of organisational policies and workforce to autonomous motivation.

Table 9: Frequency distribution of Theme 3- Organisational factors that drive of autonomous motivation

	Organisational Policies Aspect- ORGPLAsp Gr=34; GS=17	Organisational Processes Aspect- ORGPRAsp Gr=14; GS=6	Organisational Workforce Aspect- ORGWFAsp Gr=38; GS=12	Totals
(Bastida et al., 2022)Gr=22	10	1	0	11
(Chang et al., 2020)Gr=32	1	0	2	3
(Chiu et al., 2022)Gr=23	2	2	2	6
(Cho & Jiang, 2022)Gr=19	0	0	4	4
(Chung et al., 2022)Gr=16	0	1	2	3
(Creed et al., 2022)Gr=47	2	1	0	3
(Farrell et al., 2022)Gr=5	0	1	0	1
(Good et al., 2018)Gr=22	0	1	2	3
(Grant & Shandell, 2021)Gr=23	2	0	1	3
(Gu et al., 2020)Gr=25	0	0	3	3
(Malek et al., 2020)Gr=32	1	0	6	7
(Malik et al., 2019)Gr=52	3	0	2	5
(Pfister & Lukka, 2019)Gr=25	0	1	0	1
(Reizer et al., 2019)Gr=25	2	0	1	3
(Rivkin et al., 2018)Gr=10	0	4	2	6
(Rodrigo et al., 2022)Gr=5	2	0	1	3
(Roussillon Soyer et al., 2022)Gr=12	0	2	2	4
(Ryan & Deci, 2020)Gr=47	3	0	0	3
(Zhao et al., 2022)Gr=23	2	0	0	2
Abbreviations				
Gr	Groundedness of codes (number of quotations coded by a code) or documents (quotations created in a document)			
GS	Number of documents in a document group or number of codes in a code group			

In the next paragraphs, the researcher will interrogate the organisational policies, organisational processes and organisational workforce in depth to understand this phenomenon.

3.4.1 Organisational policies

Organisational policies aim to regulate the conduct of employees in the workplace. In particular, the policies are implemented through the organisational structure. Such policies have specific context as they are incorporated into the organisational culture. Therefore, the discussions will be centred on context, organisational structure and culture. In the next paragraph context is evaluated to understand if it drives employee autonomous motivation.

3.4.1.1 Context

If organisational policies have effect on employee autonomous motivation, then organisational climate must be considered (Zhao et al., 2022). In this framing, employees must have a sense of value and respect to the organisational policies. As alluded by Malik et al. (2019), organisational contextual policies drive autonomous motivation to creativity. Furthermore, as employees strive to comply with the policies, they desire to meet deadlines when participating in tasks (Baswani et al., 2021). On the other hand, Zhou et al. (2022) states the environment as a contextual factor that drive autonomous motivation to wellbeing. However, Reizer et al. (2019) claims that social context oriented organisational policies influence employee behaviour at the workplace. In this view, employee's self-determination varies with the contextual framing and organisational structure. Based on this notion, the next paragraph explains the role of organisational structure in employee autonomous motivation.

3.4.1.2 Organisational structure

The organisational structure provides a framework for employees to adopt when performing tasks to meet set goals of the organisation. It infers that a robust organisational structure is essential to motivate employees in their task engagements. Therefore, employees are expected to act in utmost good faith in serving the organisation's interest. This means that at all the times organisation's interest are prioritised, therefore employees must desist from conflict of interest. In this view, the board of directors is the supreme organ that controls the organisation. Employees have fiduciary obligations to the board, Chiu et al. (2022) suggests this may drive autonomous motivation to task engagement by directors. However, there is need for cooperative principles to govern this board structure (Bastida et al., 2022) . On the

same note, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) as a board member have a desire for controlling the company thus implement contextually strategic policies (Chiu et al., 2022).

In creating robust organisational structure, flexible organisational policies (Bastida et al., 2022) are important to drive employee autonomous motivation. Such policies can be inclined to socio-cultural concern, influencing employee motivation to prosocial behaviour. However, Grant & Shandell (2021) suggests that incentive structure drive autonomous motivation to prosocial motivation. Conversely, Bastida et al. (2022) argue that organisational non-discriminatory policies, reconciliation policies and employee equality policies may drive employee autonomous motivation to social behaviour.

In sum, the organisational structure provides support to employees by reducing e.g., job stress (Zhao et al., 2022). Related to this structure are the organisational values for good governance (Bastida et al., 2022) to drive autonomous motivation to performance. However, Creed et al. (2022) advises on instances where there is need to change the institutional policies to enhance employee performance and behaviour.

3.4.1.3 Culture

Culture refers to the norms, values, ethos and morals that define a grouping. On this note, organisational culture must complement social norms to produce good employee behaviour. In this view, employees belong to different cultures thus they differ in thinking and actions. However, it is the onus of the organisation to create a conducive culture appropriate to bind and define the organisation. As alluded in the previous section, employees must always prioritise the organisational interests. In this view, Rodrigo et al. (2022) posits that employee interest drive autonomous motivation to organisational commitment . It is also important to have organisational team culture that drives employees to prosocial behaviour(Grant & Shandell, 2021).

3.4.2 Organisational processes

Employee autonomous motivation may require consideration of organisational processes that complement the organisational policies discussed in the previous section. As such, this section discusses aspects such as business processes, resources control, technology and flexibility issues. These aspects assist in understanding how employees are autonomously motivated by the organisational process. In the next paragraph, the business process aspect is explained in detail.

3.4.2.1 Business processes

Once a business is established expectations are that it will operate on a going concern principle. However, exposure to different negative factors in the operating environment threatens the business. Factors such as the political, economic, social, technical and legal have an effect on the business operations. As the business struggle for survival due to external threats, there is need for the organisation's leadership to apply appropriate strategies. In this effort, the leaders may apply business continuity strategies to defend their organisation's position from competitors. In this vein, Chung et al. (2022) allude that business continuity desire by the leaders drive autonomous motivation to defend and serve the customers.

3.4.2.2 Resource control

In support of the business processes alluded, adequate resources must be availed to assist employees in their performance. Such resources must be relevant and useful to employees to enable performance and task execution. On this note, Roussillon Soyer et al. (2022) posit that availability of adequate resources influence autonomous motivation to achievement of goals. Perhaps when employees perceive fairness in resource distribution, they are motivated to task effort (Roussillon Soyer et al., 2022). Therefore, employees require a sense of control over resources to drive autonomous motivation behaviour (Chiu et al., 2022).

3.4.2.3 Technology aspects

The dynamic nature of technology has transformed business operations. Organisations are technology savvy to keep abreast with the global trends. In a similar way, employees strive to conform with technology. It implies that the social media platform have effect on employee autonomous motivation (Farrell et al., 2022). If employees are personally interested and willing to adopt social media, then their performance will improve. In this view, the employees make efforts to devise creative and innovative ways to serve the customers. However, the employees must not over rely on technology as this leads to retrenchments in the future threatening job security.

3.4.2.4 Flexibility

In order to be effective and useful to employees, organisational processes must be flexible. This flexibility will enable employee autonomy in their task engagement. As such, Rivkin et al. (2018) argues that day-specific flow experience in the business operations drive employee autonomous motivation to affective commitment. Therefore, Bastida et al. (2022) explains

further that flexibility of work time and place drive autonomous motivation. In sum, the flexibility of business processes and resource mobilisation and deployment are critical in the organisational processes. This assists in understanding the drivers of employee autonomous motivation.

3.4.3 Organisational workforce

Whilst organisational policies and processes have been scrutinised, equally important is organisational workforce. Understanding organisational workforce assists in determining the drivers of employee autonomous motivation. As such the aspects that are covered by organisational workforce include culture, resources, recognition, commitment and communication. These aspects will be assessed in the following paragraphs.

3.4.3.1 Culture

Culture defines the way of life followed by the employees in an organisation through beliefs, norms and values. Ethics which is part of culture refers to the morals that are considered appropriate to a group of people. Therefore, the organisation and the society have ethics as part of culture. In this framing, Ripoll and Breugh (2019) posits that, the desire for employees to uphold ethics in the organisation drive autonomous motivation to commitment in public good. Importantly, employees are motivated to engage in prosocial activities in compliance with team culture (Grant & Shandell, 2021). In this case, the employees are also motivated by the perceived shared leadership in the team (Gu et al., 2020) .

3.4.3.2 Resources

In order to perform effectively and to execute task, employees require sufficient and appropriate resources. When employers ensure equitable resource distribution, employees derive a sense of leadership support. In this view, the support rendered influences autonomous motivation to performance(Roussillon Soyer et al., 2022). However, where employees have high resource dependence their sense of control weakens, thus stifling autonomous motivation to task performance(Chiu et al., 2022). In sum, organisations must provide employees with relevant and adequate resources to motivate their performance.

3.4.3.3 Recognition

When employees complete tasks they deserve recognition for their efforts to motivate their performance. Whilst the employees comply with organisational policies and processes in

execution of tasks, they expect recognition from the employers. As part, of this recognition appraisal systems have been formed and are applied to assess employee performance. In this framing, a workforce appraisal system that is perceived equitable by the employees, drive their autonomous motivation to performance(Jung et al., 2022). However, manager's perception on subordinate's quality of work influences motivation to job performance (Cho & Jiang, 2022). It follows that, employees must receive recognition rewards for new product development efforts (Malek et al., 2020). This will drive their autonomous motivation to team performance. As a result, employees get self-esteem when they receive feedback in recognition of their task performance (Good et al., 2018). In a way, the positive feedback provided gives employees power to repeat performance or aim high (Cho & Jiang, 2022).

Notably, when employees engage in tasks serving the community, the recognition they receive motivates their performance (Baswani et al., 2021). However, in some cases where extrinsic rewards are received, employees may decide to internalise these rewards as they embark on performance for creativity (Malek et al., 2020). On the other hand, the pursuit of reputation and status in community engagement, drive autonomous motivation to engage in prosocial activities(Chang et al., 2020).

3.4.3.4 Commitment

Employees have to comply with organisational policies and processes during their engagement . In this regard, they commit their support through task performance. In view of this, the employees have affective commitment to performance(Rivkin et al., 2018). Such commitment enable effective knowledge sharing(Gagné et al., 2019). In this way, they derive satisfaction from the task engagement (Reizer et al., 2019). Importantly, the employees must make commitment to the organisation pledging their loyalty through effective performance (Cho & Jiang, 2022).

As they commit to the organisation, the employees realise their job calling (Cho & Jiang, 2022). Resultantly, this commitment drives autonomous motivation to task performance(Cho & Jiang, 2022) and job satisfaction(Rodrigo et al., 2022). To sum up, organisational commitment influences autonomous motivation to performance(Rivkin et al., 2018).

3.4.3.5 Communication

Effective communication is important to employees for compliance with organisational policies and processes. Importantly, employers must provide moral support through effective communication channels. In this framing, (Jungert et al., 2018) claims the desire to support

co-workers drive autonomous motivation to effective team communication and collaboration among employees. As a result, the employees desire for personal interaction for creativity(Malik et al., 2019).

3.5 Theme 4- Social factors drive autonomous motivation

Organisations operate in an open environment where they interact with the community. There is a symbiotic business relationship (characterised with reciprocity)that exists between the organisation and this community (refer to [Figure 6](#)) . As such, companies provide products and services to this community in return for labour and financial investment. However, mindful of this relationship, employees that work in companies belong to this community. Therefore, the employees are affected by the social aspects that happen in their communities. Based on this view, it is interesting to understand how the social factors influence employee autonomous motivation at the workplace. In this framing, the social aspects have been classified broadly as reciprocated social relationships.

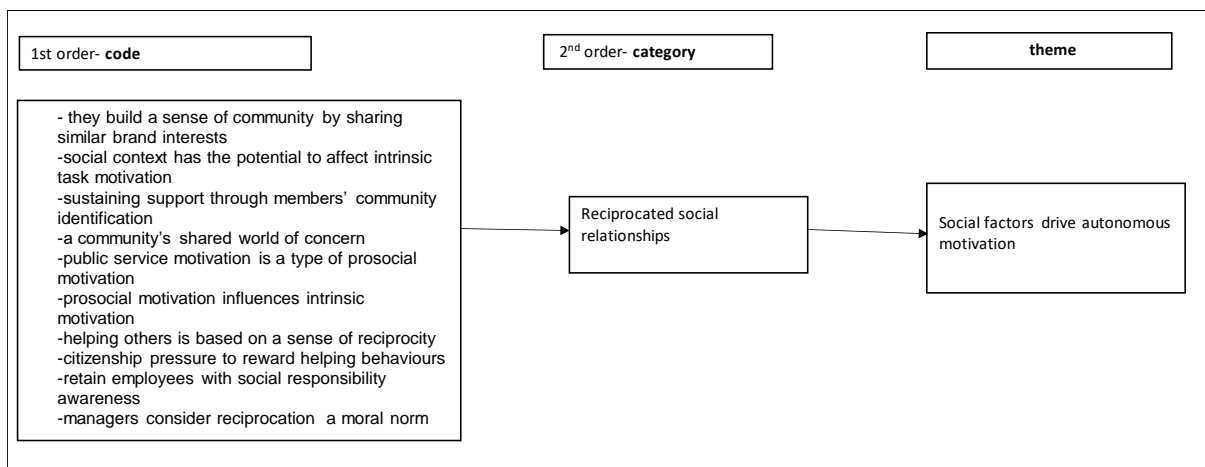


Figure 6: Mind map of Theme 4- Social factors that drive autonomous motivation

Businesses endeavour to foster mutual partnerships with the community by providing supportive assistance at the same time benefiting from available markets to sale products. This means that employees are expected to be enthusiastic about social initiatives in support of organisation's objectives. As shown in [Table 10](#), scholars that argued for the social relationship aspect are highlighted(Creed et al., 2022; Grant & Shandell, 2021; Lin et al., 2019; Malek et al., 2020).

Table 10: Frequency distribution of Theme 4- Social factors drive autonomous motivation

	Reciprocated Social Relationships Aspect- RCPSRAsp Gr=80; GS=27	Totals
(Creed et al., 2022)Gr=47	9	18
(Lin et al., 2019)Gr=17	7	14
(Grant & Shandell, 2021)Gr=23	6	12
(Malek et al., 2020)Gr=32	5	10
(Ripoll & Breaugh, 2019)Gr=24	4	8
(Baswani et al., 2021)Gr=19	4	8
(Shin & Perdue, 2022)Gr=18	4	8
(Jung et al., 2022)Gr=19	4	8
(Bastida et al., 2022)Gr=22	4	8
(Malik et al., 2019)Gr=52	3	6
Abbreviations		
Gr	Groundedness of codes (number of quotations coded by a code) or documents (quotations created in a document)	
GS	Number of documents in a document group or number of codes in a code group	

3.5.1 Reciprocated social relationships

Social relationships that involves mutual and symbiotic interaction with organisations have been classified as reciprocated social relationships in this study. As such, aspects that will be evaluated include community, prosocial acts and behaviour, helping, citizenship and social responsibility. In this way, the aim is to understand what drives employee autonomous motivation. The next paragraph interrogates the community aspect to answer the research question.

3.5.1.1 Community

Since employees belong to the community, they desire to identify with this community through behaviour that have prosocial identity(Chung et al., 2022). In this case, the authors allude, the employees aim to develop the community by engaging in the prosocial activities. It is important to note that, in these engagements employees search for meaning as they interact with communities for value addition(Creed et al., 2022). In some way, Baswani et al. (2021) alludes that employees have a sense of attachment to the community striving to provide value adding products or services. In this view, the authors claim, employees need recognition or reputation from the community. On the other hand, the need for community sharing drive employee autonomous motivation to creativity(Robson et al., 2019).

However, in their engagement with the community, employees desire to extend and safeguard a brand in the community. This drives autonomous motivation to brand consciousness and awareness effort (Shin & Perdue, 2022). As such, the employees require trust from the community as they engage in prosocial behaviour in anticipation of reciprocate support from the community(Bastida et al., 2022) . In return, the employees desire to work more collaboratively in community projects (Grant & Shandell, 2021). However, Chiu et al. (2022)

claims that a sense of support from top management for strategic community engagement drives employees autonomous motivation. This enable the employees to venture into community initiatives to gain recognition or status at work.

3.5.1.2 Prosocial acts and behaviour

Organisations show commitment to communities through prosocial activities and behaviour that supports these actions. It calls for creative leadership to appropriately design prosocial task to serve the communities(Malik et al., 2019) . In this case, social capital drive autonomous motivation to teamwork in the community engagement(Bastida et al., 2022). Since organisations aim for recognition and reputation from the community, shame aversion motivates employee adherence to social norms (Dhami et al., 2022). In this way, employees reflect behaviour that yields positive social results. Perhaps the employees anticipate social rewards through engaging in prosocial behaviour(Malek et al., 2020) . Therefore, social interactions and experiences drive autonomous motivation to prosocial behaviour that cater for the world of concern(Creed et al., 2022).

3.5.1.3 Helping

When employees engage in prosocial activities, they aim to help communities in sustaining livelihoods. Therefore, they help communities in alleviating social challenges driving autonomous motivation to prosocial behaviour(Lin et al., 2019). They are cognisant that communities provide the market for their products besides financial investment through share acquisition and ownership. However, the authors allude that helping depends on the situation i.e., if there is close relationship or it is a matter of urgency. Regardless, the need to help and transform lives in communities is driven by concern for the community(Good et al., 2022). When employees resort to helping communities, this boost positive affect(Lin et al., 2019) .

3.5.1.4 Citizenship and social responsibility

Since employees desire to help communities through social activities, they have a sense of responsibility to the community as part of good citizenship. It seems they are mindful of the importance of supporting government socio-economic efforts through community engagement. In this view, concern for the welfare of society drive autonomous motivation to prosocial activities(Ripoll & Breaugh, 2019). However, in some cases there is citizenship pressure coming from managers when employees are mandated to indulge in social activities (Lin et al., 2019). In this case, employees are controlled, and they lack autonomous motivation as they are compelled to act.

On the other hand, there is organisational citizenship that implies a desire to do good through appropriate behaviour(Grant & Shandell, 2021). In such situation, employees expect hedonic rewards for ‘brand conscious community engagement’(Shin & Perdue, 2022). Importantly, hedonic motivation and a sense of belonging drive autonomous motivation to affectively engage with the community(Chung et al., 2022).

In sum, citizenship implies that employees have responsibility to engage in activities that serve communities. They have awareness of social responsibility thus driving their autonomous motivation in prosocial task engagement (Zhao et al., 2022). This sense of prosocial responsibility creates social identity influencing motivation to engage in community activities(Shin & Perdue, 2022).

3.5.1.5 Reciprocity

A mechanism of reciprocity between the organisation and the community drive autonomous motivation to prosocial behaviour(Rodrigo et al., 2022). However, a sense of manager reciprocity drive employee autonomous motivation to exert effort in tasks in order to get recognition and praise from their managers(Chang et al., 2020).

3.6 Theme 5- Environmental factors drive autonomous motivation

Environment factors are mostly centred on sustainability and concern for the future through current efforts that makes blueprints for next generations. In this framing, businesses are embracing smart initiatives to achieve environmental goals. As shown in [Figure.7](#), sustainability is at the core of environmental factors. In this study, the researcher sought to understand how environmental factors influence employee autonomous motivation to performance.

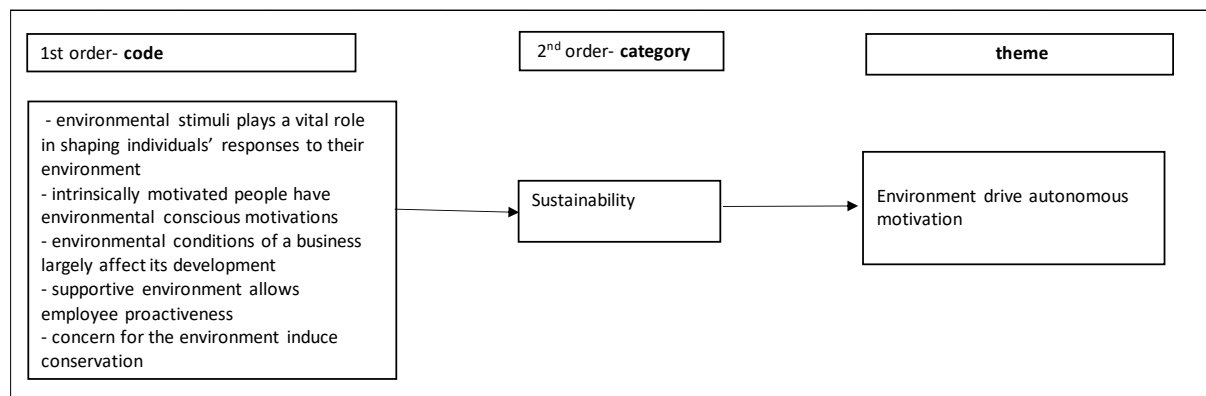


Figure 7: Mind map of Theme 5- Environment factors that drive autonomous motivation

Literature has revealed the scholars that advocated for environmental factors as depicted in [Table 11](#). In the next sections, the researcher will analyse the author's views with the aim to understand the influence of environmental factors on autonomous motivation.

Table 11: Frequency distribution for Theme 5- Environment factors drive autonomous motivation

	Environment- ENVT Gr=18; GS=4	Totals
(Ashkanani et al., 2022)Gr=13	3	3
(Bastida et al., 2022)Gr=22	1	1
(Chung et al., 2022)Gr=16	1	1
(Creed et al., 2022)Gr=47	1	1
(Good et al., 2018)Gr=22	3	3
(Jung et al., 2022)Gr=19	1	1
(Pfister & Lukka, 2019)Gr=25	1	1
(Wu & Parker, 2017)Gr=23	1	1
(Xu et al., 2022)Gr=6	2	2
(Zhao et al., 2022)Gr=23	2	2
Abbreviations		
Gr	Groundedness of codes (number of quotations coded by a code) or documents (quotations created in a document)	
GS	Number of documents in a document group or number of codes in a code group	

3.6.1 Sustainable environment

The concern for the environment is a prominent issue that organisations are taking seriously to combat degradation and depletion of humanity through climate change. In this endeavour, companies have adopted sustainable measures to curb the scourge. In this framing, employees have a critical role in complementing stipulated government environmental policies. Although there are rules to monitor the environmental conduct of companies and employees, stiff penalties and fines are imposed on offenders. However, environmental consciousness begins with the employee who is expected to be proactive in this regard. Therefore, it is befitting to understand how concern for the environment influence employee motivation.

Employees have a sense of duty to preserve the environment (Creed et al., 2022), therefore they apply effort in pro environment tasks. Good et al. (2018) confirms the employees have sustainability purpose as they strive to work smart through environmentally friendly initiatives. It is important to note that concern for the environment stems from personal interest apart from the coercive force from imposed environmental laws. Therefore, the employees ought to be interested in the drive and must have willingness to take part in the environmental ventures. As such, Xu et al. (2022) postulates that employees are enthusiastic and passionate to be involved in environmentally sustainable projects. In this way, employee's concern for the environment drive autonomous motivation to engage in environmental tasks.

On the other hand, the employees require a supportive workplace environment for effective performance (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Accordingly, Reizer et al. (2019) states that workplace environments influences employee performance. In this case, the environmental concerns must be incorporated into the organisational value proposition. They must be part of the organisational culture to enable all employees to comply uniformly. More importantly, Shin and Perdue (2022) proposed worksite environment that support physical and mental wellbeing. In fact, the environmental stimuli (Jung et al., 2022) drive autonomous motivation to performance as individuals are concerned about the sustainability of the environment.

Employees have sense of meaning and sustainability consciousness in task engagement (Ashkanani et al., 2022). According to Pfister and Lukka (2019), as employees aim to meet stretch targets, they consider the control environment. In this regard, Xu et al. (2022) confirms they have belief in conservation efforts to complement environmental consciousness. Therefore, the employees have sense of smart achievement influencing autonomous motivation to environmentally friendly actions (Zhao et al., 2022). As such, they are passionate to engage in sustainable environmentally friendly tasks (Chung et al., 2022).

Employees must behave in ways that develop the business by considering environmentally friendly initiatives for future generations (Bastida et al., 2022). In this view, they must aim for sustainable creativity (Wu & Parker, 2017) that positively impact the environment. In sum, employees have desire to preserve the environment thus driving their autonomous motivation to environmentally sustainable initiatives for the community.

3.7 Theme 6- Team work factors drive autonomous motivation

In most cases, employees have to work in teams to meet objectives of the business. As they work in teams, team leaders and members have to work collaboratively in harmony. However, understanding how teamwork drives employee autonomous motivation form part of this study. In this regard, team leader and team members (see [Figure. 8](#)) are considered essential to determine what drives their motivation to task engagement.

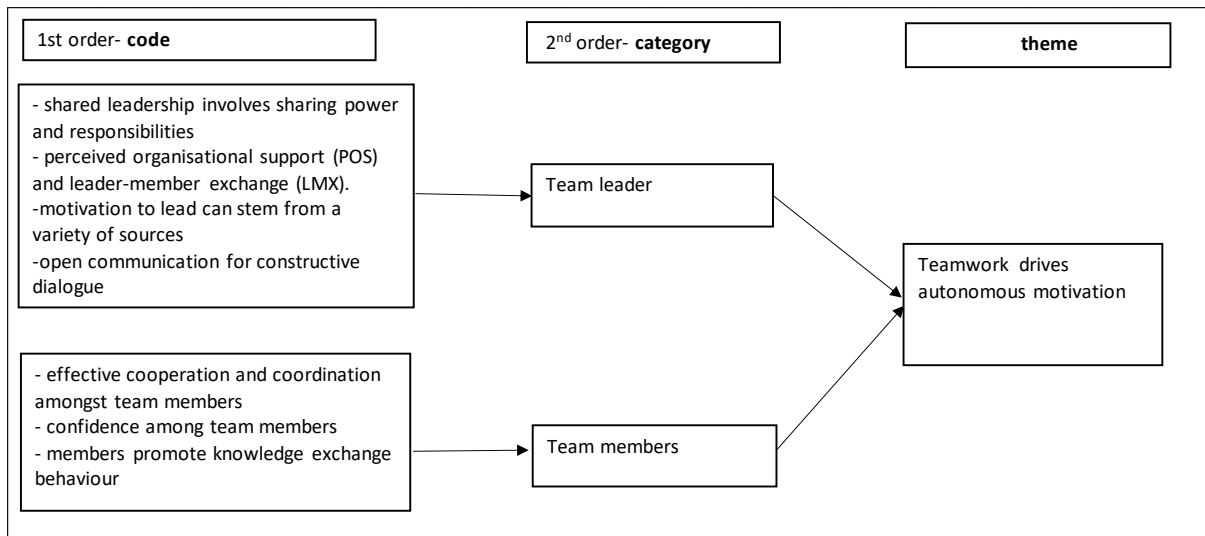


Figure 8: Mind map of Theme 6- Teamwork drives autonomous motivation

As shown in [Table 12](#), Chiu et al. (2022) is the main proponent of teamwork leader aspect whilst Jungert et al. (2018) argued for teamwork member aspect. However, in order to understand the current debate around the teamwork construct, the researcher will consider views from all the scholars captured in this table.

Table 12: Frequency distribution for Theme 6- Teamwork factors drive autonomous motivation

	Teamwork Leader Aspect- TWLDAsp Gr=29; GS=14	Teamwork Member Aspect- TWMBAsp Gr=26; GS=9	Totals
(Bastida et al., 2022)Gr=22	2	3	5
(Chang et al., 2020)Gr=32	3	1	4
(Chiu et al., 2022)Gr=23	11	2	13
(Cho & Jiang, 2022)Gr=19	1	0	1
(Chung et al., 2022)Gr=16	1	1	2
(Grant & Shandell, 2021)Gr=23	1	1	2
(Gu et al., 2020)Gr=25	2	1	3
(Jungert et al., 2018)Gr=22	2	4	6
(Malik et al., 2019)Gr=52	2	2	4
(Ripoll & Breaugh, 2019)Gr=24	0	2	2
(Roberts & Yoon, 2021)Gr=5	0	2	2
(Vecchione & Schwartz, 2022)G	2	0	2
Abbreviations			
Gr	Groundedness of codes (number of quotations coded by a code) or documents (quotations created in a document)		
GS	Number of documents in a document group or number of codes in a code group		

As such, in the next section the role of team leader is evaluated.

3.7.1 Team leader

Teamwork involves concerted effort from members but importantly, the team leader plays a critical role in guiding the team. Therefore, the team leader possesses power to effectively

communicate and influence team members through motivation and offering support. In the next paragraph, the importance of team leader power is assessed to ascertain influence on employee autonomous motivation.

3.7.1.1 Power

Team leaders possess expert power by virtue of their role and experience from practice and training during their tenure (Chiu et al., 2022). The same authors further claim that the team leaders have equity power gained from their interaction with other employees in the company. However, they also have prestige power which stems from personal desire to excel in tasks for recognition and reputation purposes. In this context, the expert power (Chiu et al., 2022) when perceived beneficial it drives employee's autonomous motivation to task engagement. In the same way, when the equity power is associated with a sense of respect and honour it stimulates employee autonomous motivation. Therefore, both team leaders and team members ought to have a sense of a sense of responsibility and readiness to account for performance.

3.7.1.2 Support

Although team leaders have power as alluded, the support they provide to team members is essential to performance and task engagements. As such, Gu et al. (2020) confirms that team leaders have organising skills that influences motivation in task engagement .It therefore means, the team leader has a critical position that influences employee motivation. This perhaps depends on the perception of the employee with regards to the team leader's support. When employees receive positive feedback and verbal reinforcements from team leaders, they are autonomously motivated. On the other hand, the team leaders must also have a desire to lead driving their autonomous motivation to monitor performance of subordinates(Grant & Shandell, 2021). However, both team leader and team member have autonomous motivation to performance when they get a sense of shared leadership (Gu et al., 2020).

3.7.1.3 Motivation

Although team leader support can be monetary rewards, non-monetary consideration may have far reaching influence on employees. In this case, team members are motivated by feedback and recognition from the team leader. In this way, the team members have a sense of respect and trust in their leader as they apply effort to tasks. As alluded by Bastida et al. (2022), the team members have interest in the task and become committed to task

performance. However, communication in teamwork is essential to bond the team in working in unison towards goals. In the next paragraph, the influence of communication is explained.

3.7.1.4 Communication

Teamwork effort depends on effective communication between the team leaders and team members. Although communication starts at individual level, at team level it is more important to blend members from diverse backgrounds. Therefore, the team leader must effectively communicate with the team members in task engagement. Perhaps this role depends on the leadership style adopted by the team leader. If for instance the team leader is perceived autocratic, this may stifle employee autonomy as they are more controlled. It means therefore under such circumstances; employees have little to no autonomous motivation. However, democratic team leaders provide liberty to employees, thus stimulate autonomous motivation. In this view, the team member's perception on team leader's openness to communication drives autonomous motivation to performance(Jungert et al., 2018). In sum, the team leader's personal skills and leadership style influences team members' autonomous motivation to behave in particular ways. Jungert et al. (2018) identified these personal skills to include communication and negotiation aspects.

3.7.2 Team members

On the other hand, team members have an important role in task execution through teams. In this outlook, consideration is made for member identity, collaboration and communication as important to drive autonomous motivation. In the next paragraph, member identification is explained further.

3.7.2.1 Member identification

When team members identify with the team, they become bonded as a family as they work together in unison. There is a sense of pride associated with the member's identification with the team. However, team members feel comfortable and enjoy working with teams that are successful in task engagement. It is therefore incumbent on team leaders to provide a conducive environment where the team thrives. They can do this by applying relevant skills to motivate the team members. In this way, the team leaders are able to gain loyalty and respect from team members. Importantly, Robson et al. (2019) argue that member identity reinforcement drives autonomous motivation to creativity. Therefore, team members require a sense of identity with the team to stimulate autonomous motivation to task performance(Chang et al., 2020).

3.7.2.2 Collaboration

Working in teams require team members to collaborate and work together towards meeting set objectives. The fact that team members have diverse background means there will be differences in ideology. However, it is the role of the team leader to unite the team and provide essential support as alluded. This depends on team member's interest and willingness to engage with other members. Therefore, assuming the team members are willing to work collaboratively, then team performance thrives. In other words, as claimed by Grant and Shandell (2021), a sense of collaboration drives employee autonomous motivation to performance. In this regard employees make collaborative efforts working in teams (Bastida et al., 2022; Chiu et al., 2022; Jungert et al., 2018). However, this collaboration must be supported by effective communication skills (Gu et al., 2020; Jungert et al., 2018). Of course, the employees require training for better engagement and performance. Therefore, training also influences team member's autonomous motivation to task performance(Bastida et al., 2022; Jungert et al., 2018; Zhao et al., 2022).

3.7.2.3 Communication

Teamwork must be anchored on communication among team members in the team with other teams and interested parties. In this view, both team members and the team leader must engage in effective communication to meet set goals. Communication starts at individual level before interacting with other persons. If team members have a personal desire to communicate with other members in creativity efforts, then they autonomous motivation to creativity(Malik et al., 2019).

Chapter 4- Discussion of literature review

An analysis of autonomous motivation literature in the previous chapter yielded six themes that could assist in understanding the phenomenon. However, based on the literature review in [Chapter 3](#), the researcher had to evaluate the themes to produce a revised conceptual map as depicted in [Figure 9](#). It is important to note that some of the themes were later classified as enablers that support intrapersonal drivers to autonomous motivation. This change was made cognisant of the fact that autonomous motivation is intrinsic or internalised by individuals, therefore some of the themes could not qualify this definition. In this study, the researcher adopted the definition of autonomous motivation to mean independent, internalised cognitive value attachment to goals and tasks deemed interesting and enjoyable for non-monetary intrinsic rewards. Based on this definition, social, task, teamwork and organisational themes were reclassified as enablers to intrapersonal drivers of autonomous motivation. These enablers are not drivers to autonomous motivation but rather aid the process thus they are essential to employee behaviour. As illustrated in [Figure 9](#), organisation factors directly influence intrapersonal drivers. However, they have same effect indirectly through task and teamwork factors. Interestingly, such organisation factors depend on social factors as shown in the diagram.

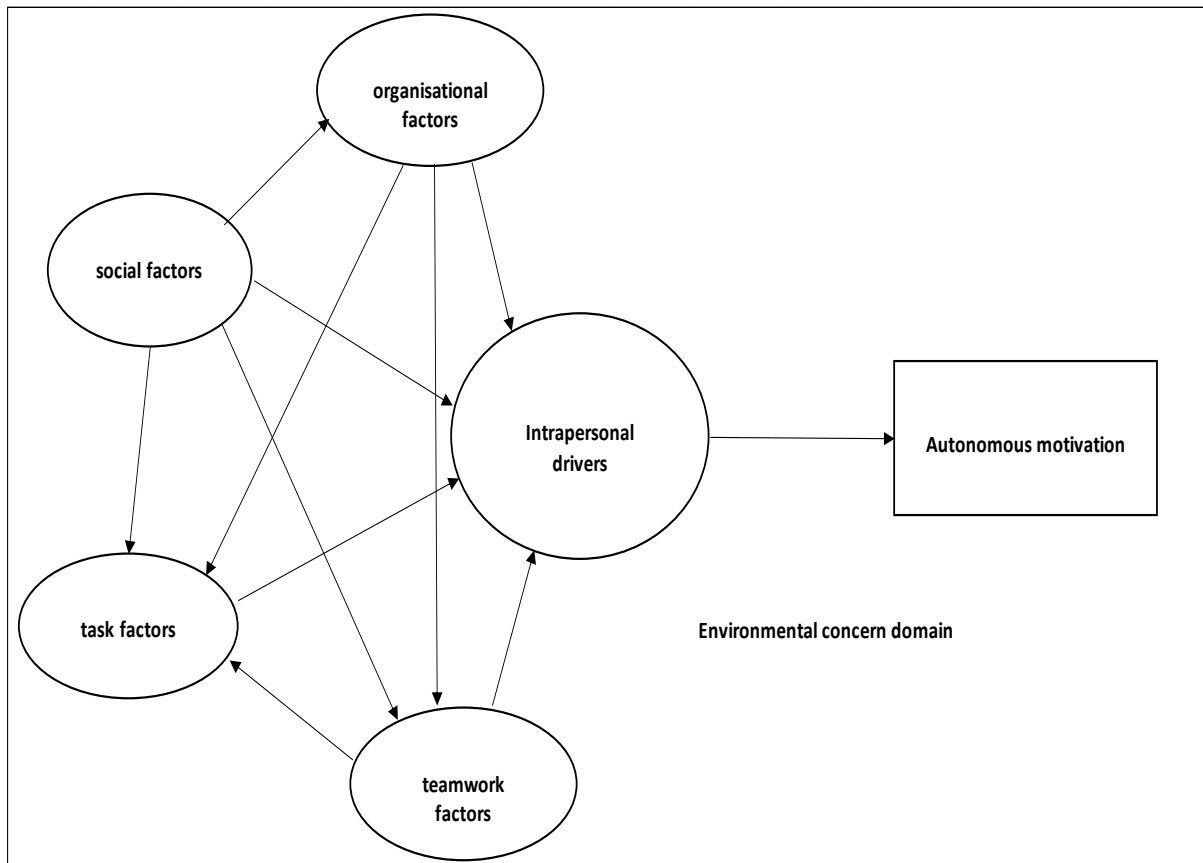


Figure 9: Revised conceptual map

Social factors directly stimulate intrapersonal drivers to autonomous motivation. Similar to organisation factors, the effect is indirect when task is involved. However, in contrast social factors indirectly influence intrapersonal drivers through teamwork. On the other hand, task factors that depend on the social and teamwork factors directly stimulate the intrapersonal drivers to autonomous motivation. Notably, teamwork factors directly stimulate intrapersonal drivers to autonomous motivation, though they have same effect indirectly through task factors. Lastly, the enablers must operate in an environmentally conducive domain to influence individual drivers to autonomous motivation.

Further to the discussion of literature, the sample of **55** journal articles (Hiebl, 2021) that were identified through the meticulous SLR method have been demystified to codes, categories and themes (Saldaña, 2014). As such, a systematic method with rigour entails adoption of thematic analysis method in this explorative research (Johnson et al., 2020). In this way, deep interrogation of the literature established six themes (Cassell & Bishop, 2019) that are possible drivers of autonomous motivation. These central themes are presented in [Fig. 3](#) - Intrapersonal drivers of autonomous motivation; [Fig. 4](#) - Task factors that drive autonomous motivation; [Fig. 5](#) - Organisational factors that drive autonomous motivation; [Fig. 6](#) - Social factors that drive autonomous motivation; [Fig. 7](#) - Environment factors that drive autonomous motivation and [Fig. 8](#) - Teamwork drives autonomous motivation.

Whilst the study aim to understand the autonomous motivation phenomenon, the research leaned on the shoulders of giants in the literature (Massaro et al., 2016). This provided information on what is known and what is not known about the construct. However, in a quest to provide answers to the identified gap of what is not known about this phenomenon, the study makes contribution to the body of knowledge (Corley & Gioia, 2011).

In this framing, this chapter will discuss each of the six aggregated themes. This will involve discussing first, the identified concept related to autonomous motivation (i.e., 1st order **code**). Second, the categories of these codes (i.e., 2nd order **category**). Lastly the aggregated dimension of the themes (i.e., **theme** that drive autonomous motivation). In the end, the research contribution, what worked well and the limitations of SLR in this study will be discussed.

4.1 Intrapersonal drivers of autonomous motivation

In the study intrapersonal factors were prominent in driving employee autonomous motivation to performance and creativity. Although self-determination theory (SDT) (Good et al.,

2022b) makes reference to cognitive aspects as a major psychological need in driving motivation, the study identified behaviour, self-actualisation and emotional aspects equally important. These categories are illustrated in [Fig. 3](#), highlighting their links leading to the formulation of the intrapersonal theme. However, based on the number of quotations recorded (groundedness of codes) in the analysis of the 55 sampled articles, self-actualisation had 84, emotional aspect- 68, behaviour aspects – 67 and cognitive aspects- 26. This suggests that self-actualisation aspect had a major contribution to intrapersonal factors that drive autonomous motivation. In the next paragraph, self-actualisation is scrutinised.

4.1.1 Self-actualisation - (SACNAsp)

As illustrated in [Fig. 3](#), self-actualisation is an intrapersonal factor that triggers employee autonomous motivation. Based on [Table 2](#), this category depicted as **(SACNAsp)** is the most popular driver of autonomous motivation in the intrapersonal theme. It has 84 quotations recorded from 28 articles that are part of the 55 sampled. However, three codes that were popular in this category are beliefs, morals and commitment were 4 articles in each case mentioned the aspect. As such, D7, D21 and D23 claimed that employees have beliefs that drive them to self-actualisation. In particular, D23 claimed: “ this creates a particularly motivating setting that strengthens capability beliefs and creativity for team members”. In this instance it means that employees have a belief that they are capable of executing a task, thus they are driven more by their conscience in their belief. However, this belief may also be based on the perception of the organisational processes as claimed by D21: “ need satisfaction may furthermore also stem from HR practices such as training and organisational factors (p6)”. Importantly, these beliefs may be institutionalised by the employees as D7 confirmed “ entered another domain of institutionalized beliefs and practices”. In this way, employees behave and act in a manner that is in line with their beliefs. Perhaps there is need to consider normative beliefs as argued by D37: “normative beliefs are beliefs about what others ought to do, in a manner that is consistent with some underlying social norm, rather than what others will actually do”.

However, based on the findings of the study, moral influences employee self-actualisation. In the study, it was observed that whilst D40 explained moral voice and moral integrity, D9 emphasised moral identity and D39 argued moral elevation. moral voice and moral elevation as important in triggering autonomous motivation. In explaining the moral voice D40 claimed: “socially responsible human resources management (SRHRM) may stimulate employee moral voice motivation through satisfying their basic psychological needs”. Importantly, D40 emphasised that moral integrity is essential to inculcate behaviour that drive employee

motivation: “When the individual and the organization have consistent moral values, the relevant ethical policies in the organization can effectively motivate employees to generate ethical behaviour motives”. On the other hand, D9 took the morals aspect further and claimed that: “moral identity motivates individuals to produce ‘right’ moral outcomes”. However, morals were viewed from a different angle by D9 who suggested work motivation through moral elevation: “leaders can influence their followers’ ethical behaviours through moral elevation”.

Commitment was also popular in defining self-actualisation as supported by D59, D9, D14, D25 and D41. Although employees have beliefs and morals that define their personality, commitment is a behaviour trait that is important in influencing autonomous motivation. It is a virtue that may influence employee behaviour at the workplace. As such, employees may commit to serve the public as stated by D9: “public service motivation (PSM) are characterized by a commitment to the public good that is based upon the ethic of serving others and society”. However, employees are expected to be committed to their organisation and holistically serve the interests of these organisations. Thus, D41 explained that: “organisational commitment (OC) refers to (a) persons affective reactions to characteristics of his employing organisation”.

In this view, D14 confirmed that : “commitment to the organization and to one's team, which is also related to autonomous motivation is positively related to knowledge sharing.” This commitment is a personal choice that employees make and sacrifice their personal interests in pursuance of the organisation’s interest. As such, D25 alluded that : “stronger organizational commitment suggests a genuine intent to stand with one’s employer in the face of crisis.” Perhaps, there must be an affective tone in employee’s mind in task engagements and in serving the interests of the organisation. In this view, D59 confirmed that : “the theoretical focus on affective commitment is also consistent with the SDT, which suggests that the satisfaction of employees’ basic psychological needs promotes autonomous regulation at work and thereby particularly fosters affective commitment.”

4.1.2 Emotional aspect - (EMOTAsp)

As highlighted in [Table 2](#), emotional aspect depicted as **(EMOTAsp)** category recorded 21 responses with 68 quotations. Although in this category there were six codes, the four that were outstanding are emotions – 9, affective-5, feelings- 3 and enjoyment- 3. However, enthusiasm and interest were trailing behind with 1 and 2 responses respectively. Emotions influences employees in the way they behave and act, therefore they form part of intrapersonal drivers to autonomous motivation. As such employees need emotional support from their leaders as claimed by D23: “when team members hold shared beliefs regarding their team’s capability to complete tasks, individual members tend to cooperate with each other, and

believe that they will receive emotional and material support from other members”. This shows that emotions are important to employees in their performance as D7 argued: “ the emotions in institutions perspective alerts us to neglected aspects of action by showing that while people do indeed navigate institutions through processes of thinking and understanding they also engage them emotionally”.

However, affective and feelings were also considered important in this emotional aspect category. In this framing, responses received were 5 for affective and 3 for feelings . As such, D42 alluded affect influences individual behaviour : “ consumer theory dictates that affect or emotions influence broad consumer behaviour processes”. However, it is positive affect that is important to the business as argued by D15: “we theorize that positive affect during a helping episode serves as a mechanism linking helping motivation to subsequent helping”. It seems D15 was cognisant of the fact that positive affective behaviour may lead to reciprocated actions. This is particularly important and applicable to employees and their managers, where a symbiotic relationship of mutual coexistence must be natured. This collegiality creates externalities that motivate employees to maintain good behaviour. In this case, once employees commit to their work and provide the best possible output, then they must receive recognition from their leaders. In this way, they are motivated to reinforce the good behaviour, benefiting both themselves and the employer.

Feelings influence personal behaviour as noticed by the responses gathered in this study. Employees must share positive feelings towards their organisation and especially in their task engagement. These feelings may vary depending on situations as claimed by D20: “ the shared feelings, what we call the affective contours of a structure of feeling, may materialise differently and to varying degrees depending on people’s circumstances”. Therefore, positive feelings are important to employee performance as argued by D15: “ when employees are feeling positive, they are more likely to be attentive to those in need.” However, feelings may depend on personal interests as suggested by D21: “individuals desire to behave in line with their own interests, to make their own choices, to express their feelings freely and to initiate their own actions.”. Thus, feelings are subjective as they depend on the individual as claimed by D16: “ Emotions include subjective feelings that are interpreted cognitively by individuals.”

Enjoyment is part of the intrapersonal factors that drive autonomous motivation. Similar to feelings, there were 3 responses that were recorded in this code. When employees engage in tasks, they are interested in gaining experience, proving their capability or even for the sake of enjoyment. Therefore, the desire to enjoy a task drive autonomous motivation. Of course, they need recognition for their effort and interest . In this view, when employees receive positive feedback, they are gratified for recognition of their performance. As such, they enjoy

doing either the same work or new work depending on the situation. However, there is a sense of inherent pleasure associated with hedonic tasks. This has been iterated by D3 when they argued: “ people’s positive tendency to accomplish challenges or tasks due to inherent pleasure or satisfaction which originates from enjoyment in helping and hedonic motivation.” Therefore, employees have a quest for enjoyment , infusing a desire to autonomous motivation. This has been claimed by D13: “drivers for engaging in brand activities pleasure (e.g., getting pleasure out of transmitting information).”

4.2 Task factors that drive autonomous motivation

There are seven categories that constitute the task driver to autonomous motivation as illustrated in [Fig. 4](#). However, the literature has revealed that task processing and task output were dominant drivers in this theme. As such the findings were that for task processing there were 25 responses and task output had 21 responses. Therefore, job aspects (8) and task orientation (5) are the main codes that explain the task processing. On the other hand, task output is explained by knowledge sharing (3), learning (2) and feedback (2). It is important to understand that the selection of task processing and task output is based on the number of quotations recorded under these categories. As shown in [Table 6](#), task output (**TSKOAsp**) had 65 quotations and task processing (**TSKPAsp**) 53 quotations.

The task drives employee autonomous motivation as revealed by the codes job aspect and task orientation. This is not a surprise since most of the engagements at work are in form of tasks and mostly involve teamwork. As such, employees desire to share knowledge through task engagements as echoed by D14 : “job autonomy has been related to intrinsic motivation to share knowledge.” In addition, D14 further confirmed that : “job autonomy has been shown to increase intrinsic motivation and is likely to facilitate the internalization of the value of sharing knowledge .” In the same way, D17 claimed that “ when jobs are structured in a way that encourages contact among team members, employees may identify with and take the perspective of others on the team.” This enables satisfaction of psychological needs as stated by D21: “ need satisfaction has been found to arise from high quality job design, including having many job resources”. Perhaps it influences the context as alluded by D31: “ contextual aspects of motivation can be altered by job design and managerial practices that make work more inherently enjoyable and satisfying”

However, employees perform a job in anticipation of recognition for their effort or for fun. This sentiment is shared by D25 who claimed: “ job-oriented employees may still find some work activities fun and thereby be intrinsically motivated to perform them”. Perhaps it depends on

the purpose of the job as D16 argued: “ when people understand the worth and purpose of their job and feel ownership and autonomy in carrying it out, they may perform better at work.” Regardless of the purpose, knowledge sharing in the job engagement is crucial at the workplace as D14 confirmed : “ (HR) practices, such as motivating work design, would influence knowledge- sharing motivation”.

On the other hand, task orientation draws the interest of the employee in engaging in task they consider interesting as D31 attested: “intrinsic motivation means that actions stem from the task itself being inherently interesting or satisfying”. In this case, as D2 confirmed: “Intrinsic motivation is driven by dispositional and task characteristics”. This allows the sharing of knowledge as suggested by D14: “ that knowledge-intensive work environments require more information exchange and should therefore create interdependence that encourages knowledge sharing”. In this way, employees are motivated by the task as D2 argued: “operationalizes intrinsic motivation as a task-specific, situational motivation representing a work situation, in which employees are motivated by their task at hand that urges them to indulge in creativity at work.”

As for task output, the codes that were popular in the study are feedback, learning and knowledge sharing. This suggests that autonomous motivation is influenced by the desire to learn, share knowledge and receiving feedback from the tasks. In this view, employees are interested in learning new tasks as D8 claimed: “engaging in learning and developing new ventures is another key element contributing to intrinsic motivation”. It appears there is a self-direction that leads to this desire to learn as D35 suggested : “ the goal of self-direction thought is to cultivate one's own ideas and abilities, a goal served through study and learning”. On this note, creativity in tasks is made possible through the desire to learn and share knowledge as D12 claimed: “basic motivations for undertaking creative endeavours: autonomy, learning and community sharing.”

It is important to note that employees share knowledge in tasks thus enabling the achievement of set objectives. In this framing, knowledge sharing influences the behaviour of employees as D14 alluded: “autonomy can influence either motivation to share knowledge or actual knowledge-sharing behaviours”. Perhaps this depends on attitude of the person as D3 suggested: “ knowledge contribution of online communities means people would form more positive attitudes towards involvement in the community”. However, employees ought to have self-determination in knowledge sharing as D14 argued: “different reasons to engage in an activity, such as knowledge sharing, that reflect the degree of self-determination in a person.”. It is important for employees to have passion in this knowledge sharing as D14 claimed: “high

frequency of knowledge sharing, as intrinsically motivated people would tend to spontaneously talk about their work passionately”.

4.3 Organisational factors that drive autonomous motivation

Autonomous motivation is driven by organisational factors that are classified as organisational policies, organisational processes and organisational workforce. As depicted in [Fig. 5](#) above, a pictorial presentation of the organisational factors is shown starting with the code, themes and aggregate dimension. However, based on the results of [Table 9](#), organisational policies (**ORGPLAsp**) had 17 responses and 34 quotations, thus deserves scrutiny in this regard.

4.3.1 Organisational policies - (ORGPLAsp)

The organisational policies that influences autonomous motivation were related to organisational structure, context and culture. In this view, employees require support from the organisation’s governing structure e.g., the board of directors. It is incumbent on the leadership of a company to provide a conducive operating environment suitable for business and employees to thrive. However, employees are expected to act in good faith cognisant of their fiduciary duty of trust bestowed on them by the board of directors. As D29 claimed: “CEOs must ensure that the board's fiduciary obligations are fulfilled”. In this organisational framework, employees are guided by various policies and procedures. In this way, managers are able to monitor performance in fulfilment of set objectives. It is important that employees are provided equal opportunities in order to motivate their behaviour as D33 suggested : “ worker cooperatives have reconciliation and equal opportunities, which might specifically drive some people to join and choose this specific business model”.

Organisational policies must be transparent and fair to motivate employees. In this regard, D39 claimed: “ worker cooperatives can favour the implementation of reconciliation policies such as flexible timework or parenthood leave that act as motivating factors. These policies relate to the principles of ‘Autonomy and Independence’”. Thus, the policies must shun discrimination as D33 argued: “worker cooperatives rely on principles averse to discrimination, which, in turn, allow participation under conditions of equality”. The policies must promote reconciliation and mutual relations with employees as D33 claimed: “worker cooperatives focused on the relevance of reconciliation policies, which can act as a motivating factor for women”. Importantly, the policies must promote equal opportunities to employee as D33 argued: “actions to promote genuine equality can be implemented more easily than elsewhere. As worker cooperatives pay special attention to collective needs and social problems, they

are especially sensitive to issues related to equality and the adoption of socially responsible behaviour .”

On the other hand, organisational contextual factors are important to drive autonomous motivation. These factors have effect on employee performance and creativity as D2 alluded: “several personal and contextual factors that have unique effects on different types of creativity”. Consequently, this will affect the goal formulation and implementation of creativity as D2 claimed: “analysis showed that learning goal orientation (LGO) and performance goal orientation (PGO) promoted the effects of intrinsic motivation. This pattern emphasizes the importance of the domain congruence of the motivational context and the individual disposition in generating synergistic interactions toward creativity”. In this case, the environment as a whole may have effect on employee behaviour as D8 posited: “individuals’ immediate environments as contextual factors also influence the satisfaction of their basic needs”. Perhaps there is need to consider the cognitive aspect in this regard as D10 argued: “ changes in perceived locus of causality and perceived competence as the two primary cognitive processes through which contextual factors can influence an individual’s intrinsic motivation.”. In this way, employees may embrace strategic change through support from leadership as D29 argued: “as firm conditions warrant strategic change, powerful CEOs will experience greater control and confidence about the context of strategic change.”

However, related to organisational context are social context by virtue of organisations operating as social domains constituted by a group of people with common objectives. In this framing, the workplace provides a platform where employees can have self-reflection as D16 claimed: “ SDT theory acknowledges that social contexts (e.g., the workplace) may facilitate or frustrate their striving toward self-determination”. Thus, the social context is important in driving autonomous motivation as D17 claimed : “the social context in which a task is performed has the potential to affect intrinsic task motivation (p.530).”. However, since employees operate in an open environment there is need to consider other factors important to stimulate their motivation. In this outlook, D33 suggested that: “the external factors conditioning the entrepreneurial activity with special attention to the socio-cultural factors”. On this note, there is need to consider the culture aspect as D2 argued: “ team cultures are more than the sum of their individual parts, and evidence suggests that it is possible to cultivate prosocial motivation in a team beyond assembling a group of prosocial individuals.”.

4.4 Social factors that drive autonomous motivation

Employees are engaged in a social relationship where they interact in knowledge sharing within the organisation and with external partners. As illustrated in [Fig.6](#), reciprocated social relationships drive autonomous motivation.

In [Table 10](#), there are 27 responses and 80 quotations recorded under reciprocated social relationships. This is clear evidence that the factor has an important influence on autonomous motivation.

Employees are motivated to help when they engage in social tasks. They are driven by the desire to serve communities through initiatives that alleviates livelihoods. In this way, they derive personal gratification from their good deeds as D15 suggested: “helping can boost helpers’ positive affect, which is well documented as the “doing good–feeling good” effect”. In this case, the employees desire to be identified with the community as D3 claimed: “study positions community identification as a key connection between individual motivation and social loafing in online travel communities.”. Besides identifying with the community, employees have interest in the tasks out of personal love as D10 suggested: “the love of community to be a salient motivator”. In other words, employees have hedonic motivation in their social engagements as D3 argued: “hedonic motivation further deepens members’ involvement and sense of belonging to the community”. In this framing, employees feel obligated to serve and make a difference to their communities as D31 stated: “ salespeople also want to make a difference and contribute to society through their work.....salespeople choose the profession because they want to help others and make a difference in the lives of customers.”. In sum, employees are concerned about the welfare of their communities as D9 alluded: “ their concern for the welfare of society, which requires that public servants focus on the results of their activities.”

However, in their helping efforts, employees have citizenship pressure to serve their communities. In this view, D15 claimed: “individuals’ perception of pressure from the workplace to perform stems from environmental forces, such as helping norms and role perception”. This will impact employee prosocial behaviour towards the organisation’s social initiatives as D40 argued: “autonomous motivation has a positive effect on employee prosocial motivation and organizational citizenship behaviour, and it also encourages the employee to participate in environmental protection.”. In this regard, employees can have social identity as D13 suggested “ community members build social identity or social capital by engaging in community activities.”. In sum, employees have autonomous motivation to assist their

communities through personal effort as D15 argued: “ helping is an interpersonal process in which individuals expend personal resources to maintain social relationships.”

In consideration of the prosocial activities that employees formulate in serving communities, they must have prosocial behaviour to support such initiatives. In this vein, D9 claimed: “public service motivation (PSM) is associated with pro-social behaviours outside the workplace”. The same sentiments were echoed when D22 suggested: “ In sales and service contexts, a prosocial motivation helps focus employee on-the-job cognitions, attitudes and behaviours around customer need satisfaction”. In sum, prosocial acts must be supported by prosocial behaviour when employees are serving communities. As discovered in the study, prosocial acts drive autonomous motivation at the workplace.

4.5 Environment factors that drive autonomous motivation

In [Fig.7](#), employees’ desire for sustainability drives autonomous motivation to environmental preservation. Although [Table 11](#) shows only 4 responses and 18 quotations recorded under environment theme, this does not imply that the theme is less important in driving autonomous motivation. Since, environmental sustainability is a phenomenon that companies are currently embracing, there still more research undertaken in this discipline. Perhaps, environment specific articles might have been excluded by confining the search to business related journals in line with adopted SLR method in this study. This means in future there is need to reach out to journals in databases that are specific to environmental science (i.e., social science in particular).

Environment factors drive autonomous motivation to environmentally friendly activities. Employees who are cognitively alert of the environment and concerned about future generations embark on conservation. In this way, they desire to make environmental blueprints for future generations, thus D22 argued: “intrinsically motivated people are more likely to act on their environmentally conscious motivations”. Therefore, the quest to conserve the environment drives autonomous motivation as D32 claimed: “the forces that induce conservation are concern for the environment”. In other words, employees require a supportive environment as D47 suggested: “having a supportive environment in which employees are encouraged to try alternative ways to do their work without worrying about potential obstacles is likely to facilitate proactivity.” . However, this environment has an effect on the business growth and development as D33 claimed: “the environmental conditions of a business largely affect its development”.

4.6 Teamwork drives autonomous motivation

As depicted in [Fig. 8](#), team leader in collaboration with team members drive autonomous motivation. In [Table 12](#), team leader aspects recorded 14 responses and 29 quotations proving they are prominent in this study. Therefore, team leader support and power were also identified as major contributors to team leadership in a quest to understand how they drive autonomous motivation. In this outlook, team leader support and power will be evaluated in the next paragraph.

Team leaders have power to influence autonomous motivation of subordinates. Their motivation to lead stems from this power as D39 claimed: “The motivation to lead can stem from power, achievement, and affiliation motives.” In this regard, they are expected to be fair and equitable to subordinates if they are to be effective as D29 suggested: “in the context of corporate divestiture, CEOs' equity power is likely to lessen employee resistance to organizational change as they have the motivation as well as the strategic means through their ownership position to affect firm changes”. The team leaders must use expert power to motivate employees as D29 suggested: “ such expert power will also allow them to gain support from internal and external stakeholders and facilitate collaboration across functional teams in achieving corporate change goals.”.

In addition, team leaders must control employee behaviour through structural power as D29 suggested: “structural power enables CEOs to influence decision making processes and have greater control of outcomes.”. Moreover, their prestige power represents their personal influence as D2 claimed: “CEOs' prestige power represents their external status and reputational capital and signals their personal influence and legitimacy.”. As such, the team leaders must share their power as they motivate subordinates as D23 claimed: “ Shared leadership involves sharing power and responsibilities with a view toward facilitating motivation and confidence among team members and for the team as a whole”. On the other hand, they are expected to effectively communicate with subordinates as D21 suggested: “ we also focused on improving communication and collaboration skills among employees to increase their ability to support each other's needs and, hence, their autonomous motivation.”

In sum, [Fig. 2](#) illustrates the six themes that drive autonomous motivation as intrapersonal, task, organisational, social, environmental and team. In this regard, the factors that drive autonomous motivation were coded and grouped into categories with identical codes. As a result, six themes were produced from combining similar categories. In this way, the research was able to identify the drivers of autonomous motivation.

4.7 The limitations of the proposed methodology

In this study, there are certain limitations that one needs to take note of. Although SLR reveals autonomous motivation themes in literature, it does not show if these themes improve employee performance (Dembek et al., 2020). Also, the fragmented nature of business field makes the study difficult in collating divergent views from scholars (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). Therefore, challenges are faced in locating and integrating information sources from many subfields thus making it difficult to synthesise the review results (Denyer et al., 2008). To add on, the screening process in the selection of articles is an expensive, labour-intensive task (Hiebl, 2021) that requires sufficient and appropriate resources e.g., access to electronic databases. In addition, the time restriction or limit of five years (**2017 to 2022**) since publication, implies excluding some important seminal valid articles relevant to the study (Henry & Foss, 2015).

Concentrating on the top-tier, rated journals restricts access to valuable information in other low-ranked journals (Henry & Foss, 2015). Therefore, based on the weaknesses alluded, SLR may not be the best strategy when dealing with a broad construct (e.g., autonomous motivation) that is multidisciplinary (Snyder, 2019a). Moreover, in the SLR protocol, some useful articles may be excluded solely due to oversight on the search term (Gupta et al., 2020a). Also, if SLR solely considers citation-based inclusion criteria, then useful low cited articles may be excluded from the study (Hiebl, 2021). Furthermore, concentrating on peer-reviewed published autonomous motivation articles may exclude grey literature (Hiebl, 2021) that may be important to this study (Adams et al., 2017). In the next section, the researcher reflects on the SLR experience.

4.8 Evaluation of what worked well (or not) and justification

In conclusion, although the identification and selection of autonomous motivation business related articles went well, there is need to keep on searching for more recent articles. In this way, the researcher will be able to get a fair reflection of autonomous motivation current status in the literature, thus answering the research question. The researcher still need to do more in clearly articulating the research themes as informed by new scholarly insights accessed. This can be done through a continuous reflection on recent literature in different databases. On this note, the researcher still need to engage more on SDT literature to deeply understand the autonomy aspect so as to strengthen the research. This will assist in making a relevant and valid theoretical contribution to this literature. Whilst the researcher might have exhausted

the database searches for now, there is still a need to vary the search terms to include related terms like 'job satisfaction.' In this case, the researcher will apply a Boolean search 'autonomous motivation or job satisfaction' to widen the search. This will impact the sample size which the researcher have to keep refining until saturation.

Chapter 5 - Formulation of research questions and conclusion

5.1 Future research areas

Since this study was conducted in a short period of 18 months, there is need for future studies to extend this period to get more insight into the literature. Perhaps, there is need for empirical studies (Good et al., 2018) in future to observe employee behaviour in real life. This is in line with recommendations made by Zhu et al. (2022) for future empirical studies on motivations of senior entrepreneurship. The scholars however suggested variation of national and cultural contexts. This notion is also supported by the fact that autonomous motivation is a psychological phenomenon, hence behaviour observation may provide ideal results. In addition, there is need to carry out a case study in a different context, for replication purposes. In this way, different context based results will be produced thus providing better understanding of the phenomenon. Also, accessing first-hand experience through semi-structured interviews with participants, will assist in better understanding of the construct. In addition, future studies may consider involving an independent opinion in assessment of the sample to minimise interviewer bias. Moreover, future research may focus on the psychology journals due to the cognitive nature of the phenomenon.

Based on the research findings, there is scarce information on how culture promote employee creativity (as alluded in **Chapter 1, Section 1.11**). Hence, future research should consider how culture influences employee creativity. This sentiment is shared by Zhu et al. (2022) who argued for future studies to explore the influence of cross-culture on senior entrepreneurs' motivation. On the other hand, the same authors advocated larger sample size, which is also an aspect recommended for future research in this study. Hence, a small sample of **55 articles** applied in this study may prove inadequate to provide sufficient results. Therefore, to improve research validity and reliability, a larger sample size is advisable. Perhaps there is need for future studies to consider a quantitative approach to gather a larger sample (Mason, 2010) of data appropriate for generalisation.

Since this study focused on drivers of autonomous motivation, future studies may rank these drivers in an effort to understand how they influence employee behaviour (as alluded in **Chapter 1, Section 1.11**). Whilst four enablers were identified in this study as autonomous motivation drivers, the study could not reveal the ranking in order of importance. It is important to know the ranking of the enablers to assist companies in developing strategies on motivating employees. Based on this notion, Good et al. (2018) recommended future studies to measure intrinsic motivation. On this note, the same authors recommended future research to employ

an experience sampling methodology. This will enable assessment of the motivation trend within salespeople.

Although the study identified the drivers to autonomous motivation, it faltered in explaining how organisations retain the motivated employees(as alluded in **Chapter 1, Section 1.11**). In this view, future research may investigate how much longer intrinsically motivated salespeople stay with their employer (Good et al., 2018:290). It will be interesting to know how much influence such employees have on productivity and creativity. Also, what is the effect of such motivated employees on customer relationship management. On the other hand, (as alluded in **Chapter 1, Section 1.11**)future studies may want to explore how a sense of purpose can impact recruiting efforts as well(Good et al., 2018:290).

Team leader role was identified as driver to autonomous motivation. However, the study could not explain how the leadership interact with autonomous motivation. In this view, as suggested by Good et al. (2018),future research could examine how leadership style interact with motivation(as alluded in **Chapter 1, Section 1.11**). This will probe leadership styles and behaviour thereby providing deeper understanding of the construct. On the other hand , although the study confirmed that teamwork drives autonomous motivation, there is lack of information on team composition and characteristics. These aspects are important to understanding the role of teams in employee autonomy. As such, Gu et al. (2020) recommended future research to investigate the team member composition and characteristics.

In the study, employees have desire for prosocial activities as they enjoy helping communities. However, the study could not distinguish employees who active and passive in community initiatives. It is important to note that, having prosocial interest in community engagements does not imply active participation. As such, there are some employees who are autonomously motivated but inactive in community engagements. Therefore, future research (as alluded in **Chapter 1, Section 1.11**) needs to explore differences between those who frequently and actively engage in community activities as compared to those who passively engage in community activities(Shin & Perdue, 2022:1101).

Although this study focuses on employees motivation for performance and creativity, future research may focus on managerial perspectives of creativity(as alluded in **Chapter 1, Section 1.11**). Perhaps future studies may include a multi-dimensional approach to understand perspectives of both the employee and the managers (Shin & Perdue, 2022:1101).However, a customer-centric perspective may also consider investigating customer satisfaction, customer experience, customer service usage and/or customer loyalty (Jung et al., 2022:332).

The study focused on the drivers of autonomous motivation for performance and creativity. However, this narrow the factors that impact performance and creativity. There could be other factors that are important in driving performance and creativity. Therefore, future research may investigate (as alluded in **Chapter 1, Section 1.11**) the factors that influence overall firm performance and creativity (Jung et al., 2022). On the other hand, the drivers that were identified in the study were not showing relationships. There are some interlinkages that are expected for these drivers. This hints on causality of the variables identified as drivers to autonomous motivation. Based on this reasoning, it is advisable to future research to consider quantitative methodology. In particular, structural equation modelling (SEM), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) are some quantitative multivariate methods that can be applied. This will allow more explanation on the relationship between the variables, perhaps this will establish causality. This notion is shared by Gu et al. (2020) who recommended longitudinal studies to establish the causality of these variables.

Attitude which is an intrapersonal character, may have influence on behaviour for performance and creativity. Although in this study attitude had less effect in driving autonomous motivation, perhaps future studies may consider how attitude influences employee performance and creativity. The same applies to personality traits that differ per individual. In addition, the influence of spiritual beliefs in teamwork requires further study since it received less attention in the current study. Future studies may also consider how citizenship influences organisational change and also the role of citizenship in social responsibility. This notion is based on the research findings where little information was received from citizenship aspect. Furthermore, future research may investigate (as alluded in **Chapter 1, Section 1.11**) the influence of team communication in autonomous motivation or how does goal orientation influence teamwork performance.

5.2 Conclusion

In this chapter, the discussion centred on future research implications of the four enablers (themes) that drive autonomous motivation as illustrated in **Fig. 9**. The sample of **55 articles** identified in **Chapter 2** was useful in the review of the business literature. As a result, the discussions in this chapter were focused on the information gathered from the sampled articles (Hiebl, 2021). However, SLR is an iterative and labour intensive process (Merli et al., 2018). This meant the researcher had to be keep monitoring the process to maintain quality. On the other hand, adhering to strict search terms and confinement to specific top rated business journals meant exclusion of useful low rated journals (Henry & Foss, 2015). Also, confinement to business journals meant exclusion of useful journals that might support the

study. This was evident in the environment theme where few articles specifically supported this theme. Perhaps access to environmental journals will provide more useful information. The same applies to emotional aspects identified in this study. Emotions are part of the psychology discipline, if researchers access articles from the psychology journal, more information will be gathered. Therefore, the multidisciplinary nature of autonomous motivation requires devising appropriate strategies to gather more information from different perspectives. In this way, a fair evaluation and reflection will be made.

On the other hand, the study makes useful contributions to the autonomous motivation literature. First, self-actualisation through beliefs, morals and commitment influence autonomous motivation of employees. Second, the task through task processing and task output enables autonomous motivation. In particular, task processing depends on job aspects and task orientation whilst task output depends on learning and feedback. Third, reciprocated social relationships enables autonomous motivation. Fourth, teamwork enable autonomous motivation of employees. This is depended on team leader support and team member collaborative efforts. Fifth, organisational factors enable autonomous motivation through policies, and processes that involve workforce. Lastly, autonomous motivation depends on conducive environmental factors e.g., the quest for sustainability in the business through environmental concern. In sum, in this study four themes (enablers) represents the drivers to autonomous motivation filling the research gap identified in the research (Malik et al., 2019).

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