Gordon Institute of Business Science
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Enablers and Inhibitors of High Performance of Semi-skilled Employees

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Abstract

It has been shown that high performance employees make a significant and positive contribution towards companies becoming high performance organisations as well as towards their future sustainability. However, while the literature shows that there is a plethora of factors perceived to drive employee performance, the studies reviewed offered very little clarity on the extent to which these enabling or inhibiting factors influence the performance of semi-skilled employees. The primary objective of this research study was to empirically determine the factors that semi-skilled employees, perceive to enable and inhibit their performance and secondly to compare these findings with the views held by the managers of these semi-skilled employees.

Data was collected from participants using the nominal group technique, from 6 focus group discussions, comprising of 38 semi-skilled employees and 16 managers of semi-skilled employees, in a single organisation but across two business units, which are situated in different geographies.

The primary results of the study identified the enablers of semi-skilled employee performance to be that of fair pay followed by recognition & appreciation, teamwork, training & development and good leadership. The inhibitors of semi-skilled employee performance were identified to be inequality & unfairness followed by working under pressure, low pay, poor leadership and lack of communication. There were some clear differences of opinion between the semi-skilled employees and their managers which have important ramifications. The study produces a force field model that managers can use as a guideline, towards improving semi-skilled employee performance.

This study offers clear insights into the factors impacting on semi-skilled employee performance, which are poorly represented in existing literature.

Keywords

Semi-skilled employees

Employee performance

Employee engagement

Motivation

Performance

Organisational competitiveness

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 Business Administration 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.

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1.1 Research problem

The 'Global Competitiveness Index report (GCI) 2017–2018' shows that South Africa, in terms of its GCI index, has dropped 14 places to 61st place, out of the 137 countries that were assessed as part of the study (Schwab, 2017). This drop in South Africa's overall GCI ranking is largely attributed to its virtually dormant economy, which saw an actual GDP growth rate of around 1% in 2017 and projections of approximately 1.2 percent going into 2018. In addition, the unemployment rate remains very high at 25% and together with an environment of political uncertainty, has lowered investor confidence in the country. This invariably creates an economy in which its participants must compete for all available resources and it therefore reasons why South Africa is ranked as the most competitive economy in Sub-Saharan Africa (Schwab, 2017).

Therefore, given this highly competitive economic landscape, it becomes imperative that companies operate both efficiently and effectively in order to remain sustainable in these highly competitive markets. To this end, it has been shown that high performance employees, amongst other organisational elements, make a significant and positive contribution to high levels of organisational energy, efficiency and effectiveness. This ultimately leads to the company itself becoming a high performance organisation, thus ensuring it's long term sustainably into the foreseeable future (Jha and Kumar, 2016; Warrick, 2014 and Louw, 2012).

However, in this context, the 'GCI 2017–2018 report' ranked South Africa as the worst country in the study, in terms of its labour market efficiency, coming in at 137th place, which clearly shows that there is a huge gap in co-operative relations between the organisations key stakeholders of employees and managers, thus resulting in hostile union strikes and labour unrest, as we currently experience or read of in the news (Schwab, 2017).

According to Stakeholder theory, the organisation should aim to mutually benefit all of its stakeholders. Now, given that employees and managers are key stakeholders of the organisation, synonymous with that of the organisations other stakeholders (i.e. shareholders, customers, suppliers, the community and the planet at large), it becomes important that the organisation invest effort in gaining insights into the expectations of these stakeholders, in order to better meet their needs. This approach creates mutual benefits for both entities and ultimately increases employee performance and organisational success (Assudani and Kloppenborg, 2010).

Therefore, it is saliently necessary to delve deeper into the study and understanding of the enabling and inhibiting factors which are perceived to influence employee performance between these business stakeholders, with the intention that alignment can be achieved between any differences that may exist. Figure 1 below identifies the business stakeholders as considered in the context of this research study.
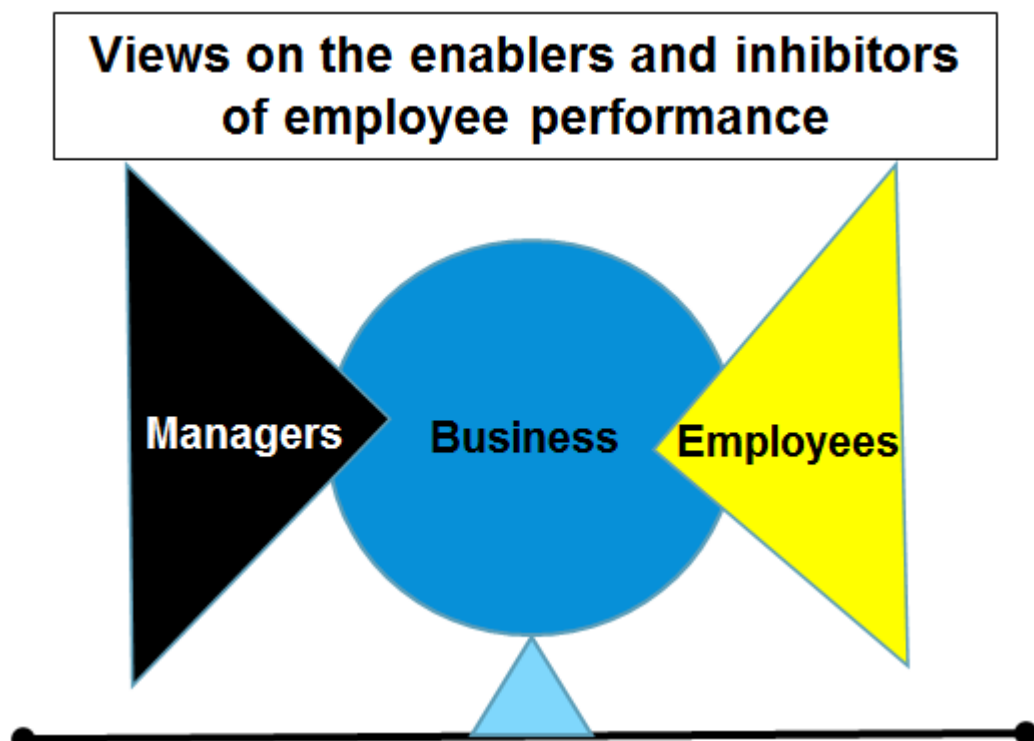
Figure 1: Stakeholder views on factors influencing employee performance

The literature study undertaken in the above regard, identified that there are several factors that predict employee performance, wherein the most important factors that emerged were that of employee motivation and employee engagement, as these factors were predominantly seen to have a strong significant relationship in predicting employee performance (Schaufeli, 2017; Cummings and Worley, 2015; Anitha, 2014; Louw, 2012; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner and Schaufeli, 2001; Sadri and Bowen, 2011; Danish, Khan, Shahid, Raza and Humayon, 2015; Guha, 2010; Harell and Daim, 2010; Bristow, Amyx, Castleberry and Cochran, 2011; Sharabi and Harpaz, 2010; Kaufman, 2009; and Schraeder and Jordan, 2011).

However, while the literature identified several factors that influenced employee performance, including that of employee motivation & employee engagement; and their antecedents, it is not clearly understood whether these factors, hold true for semi-skilled workers, as their views are poorly represented in the literature. This given that the existing literature did not make any distinction in terms of the applicability of the factors that drove employee performance, in terms of organisational levels, as defined by Drotters leadership pipeline (2010) or to that of the early definitions of the different types of manufacturing production workers, as defined by Kremer and Maskin (1996).

1.2 Research scope, aim and motivation

The scope of this research study is focussed at the semi-skilled organisational level because semi-skilled workers form the base of the employee pyramid and is generally reflective of where the bulk of the employees in most manufacturing organisations reside (Louw, 2012 and Drotter, 2010). Therefore, the reasoning for this approach is based on the view that an improvement in employee performance at this level within the organisation should have a significantly positive impact on the overall performance and efficiency of such organisations (Jha & Kumar, 2016 and Warrick, 2014). Similarly, the scope will also serve to encompass the managers of these semi-skilled workers into the study, so that a determination can be made from two perspectives, those of their managers as well as semi-skilled workers' opinions.

Stakeholder theory holds at its core, the fundamental principle which suggests that an organisation, firm or business exists for the mutual benefit of all its stakeholders (Assudani and Kloppenborg, 2010). In the context of this research study, the stakeholders that have been identified are limited to that of semi-skilled workers and their managers. As a result, it becomes worthwhile investigating the views held by these stakeholders, so that the organisation can better meet their expectations and needs.

The purpose of the study is therefore aimed at empirically determining the factors that enable semi-skilled employee performance and those factors that inhibit semi-skilled employee performance, from the perspective of the identified stakeholder groups i.e. Semi-skilled employees and their managers. This approach is employed with a view to fostering high performance employees that would be able to support the creation of high performance organisations that are sustainable into the foreseeable future, by highlighting and hopefully aligning any difference in perceptions in the factors that influence employee performance between the identified stakeholder groups (Schaufeli, 2017; Bakker and Demerouti, 2017; Anitha, 2014; Jha & Kumar, 2016; Warrick, 2014 and Demerouti et al, 2001).

According to Swanepoel (2016) semi-skilled workers are those employees that perform work at skill level two, which is related to tasks that require higher levels of literacy, interpersonal skills, communication and numeracy when compared to skill level one (un-skilled workers) where tasks are more manual, physically routine and seen to be fairly simple. In addition, according to (Louw, 2012 and Drotter, 2010) semi-skilled workers are regarded as managers of self, while Kremer and Maskin (1996), classified semi-skilled workers as manual employment. Kremer and Maskin went further to sub-classify manual employment that earned a minimum stipulated wage, in a range that was between that of unskilled and skilled employees.

The motivation of this study is therefore grounded in identifying the differences in perception, of the factors influencing employee performance (enablers and inhibitors), between semi-skilled employees and their managers in an effort towards improving employee performance and organisational success.

1.3 Research objectives

Given the literature study is indicative that high performance employees support the creation of high performance organisations it becomes prudent that business leaders are aware of, understand and are cognisant of the factors that enable and inhibit performance of semi-skilled employees. This bears significant importance when developing organisational strategies to improve organisational effectiveness and competitive advantage in the marketplace. This can be achieved by eliminating the inhibiting factors and intensifying the enabling factors that serve to improve employee performance (Schaufeli, 2017; Warrick, 2014; Carpenter and Charon, 2014) and by improving employee relations with management.

The literature study undertaken in the above regard, identified that there are several factors that predict employee performance, wherein the most important factors that emerged were that of employee motivation and employee engagement, as these factors were predominantly seen to have a strong significant relationship in predicting employee performance (Schaufeli, 2017; Cummings and Worley, 2015; Anitha, 2014; Louw, 2012; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner and Schaufeli, 2001; Sadri and Bowen, 2011; Danish, Khan, Shahid, Raza and Humayon, 2015; Guha, 2010; Harell and Daim, 2010; Bristow, Amyx, Castleberry and Cochran, 2011; Sharabi and Harpaz, 2010; Kaufman, 2009; and Schraeder and Jordan, 2011).

However, while the literature identified several factors that influenced employee performance, including that of employee motivation & employee engagement; and their antecedents, it is not clearly understood whether these factors, hold true for semi-skilled workers, as their views are poorly represented in the literature. This given that the existing literature did not make any distinction in

terms of the applicability of the factors that drove employee performance, in terms of organisational levels, as defined by Drotters leadership pipeline (2010) or to that of the early definitions of the different types of manufacturing production workers, as defined by Kremer and Maskin (1996).

Therefore, the primary aim of this study is directed towards determining the factors that enable and inhibit semi-skilled employee performance, while simultaneously aiming to identify on a secondary level, any differences that may exist between the perceptions of the factors influencing employee performance between the identified stakeholder groups (i.e. Semi-skilled employees and their managers). To this end the study aims to develop a practical framework for both business use and academic reflection, which is based on satisfying the following objectives:

a) The inhibiting factors that decrease employee performance, as viewed by semi-skilled employees

b) The enabling factors that increase employee performance, as viewed by semi-skilled employees

c) The inhibiting factors that decrease employee performance, as viewed by the managers of semi-skilled employees

d) The enabling factors that increase employee performance, as viewed by the managers of semi-skilled employees

e) An analysis of the enabling and inhibiting factors of semi-skilled employee performance, as seen from the perspective of semi-skilled employees and their managers

f) Based on the outcomes of the research, highlight any difference in perceptions that may exist in terms of the factors seen to influence employee performance, between the identified stakeholders groups

2. Chapter two: Literature review

2.1 Introduction

The literature review that follows discusses the following key topics which includes that of semi-skilled employees, stakeholder theory and its implication for business and then an in-depth review of employee performance; which is expanded to explore the theories driving employee performance, in addition to discussing the factors which enable and inhibit employee performance, in line with the primary aim of this research study.

The literature review is then concluded with a tabulated summary of the key theories and concepts studied and in so doing; attempts to show the gap in the literature and the justification underpinning the research problem and need.

2.2 Semi-skilled employees

Kremer and Maskin (1996), stipulated that manufacturing production workers could be classified as either manual or non-manual employment. Kremer and Maskin went further to sub-classify manual employment as either being,

- Unskilled,
- Semi-skilled and
- Skilled,

while similarly sub-classifying non-manual employment into that of,

- Clerical, secretarial & administrative staff
- Supervisors & Foremen,
- Junior technical/Professional,
- Senior technical/Professional and
- Middle/senior management

Swanepoel (2016) then expanded the definition of semi-skilled workers, to be those employees that earned a minimum stipulated wage, in a range that was between that of unskilled and skilled employees.

According to Swanepoel (2016) there are four levels of employee skills, where skill level one was related to tasks that were manual, physically routine and seen to be fairly simple - This level of employees are referred to as unskilled workers. Skill level two, related to tasks that required higher levels of literacy, interpersonal skills, communication and numeracy when compared to level one - This level of employees are referred to as semi-skilled workers. Skill level three, related to tasks that required explicit technical expertise, were technically complex and required a certain level of higher education, practical training and work experience - This level of employees are normally referred to as skilled workers (i.e. technical specialists and first level managers). Skill level four, related to tasks that required involved decision making, extensive field knowledge in a specific field, exceptionally high levels of literacy and numeracy and the ability to solve complex problems - This level of employees are referred to as skilled workers (i.e. heads of departments, senior managers and executive management).

In addition, Louw (2012) and Drotter (2010) identified that there were different levels of leadership within an organisation which included at the lowest level, managers of self and then moving progressively higher in the organisation were the levels of managing others, managing managers, and ultimately enterprise managers. According to (Louw, 2012 and Drotter, 2010) the group of employees regarded as managers of self, are referred to as semi-skilled workers which formed the base of the organisations employees. Therefore, according to the definitions of Kremer and Maskin (1996), Drotter (2010) and Swanepoel (2016), semi-skilled workers in the context of this research study would be defined as those employees that earn a minimum wage, with skill level two and are classified as managers of self.

2.3 Stakeholder theory and its implication for business

Stakeholder theory holds at its core, the fundamental principle which suggests that an organisation, firm or business exists for the mutual benefit of all its stakeholders (Assudani and Kloppenborg, 2010 and Garvare and Johansson, 2010). According to Assudani and Kloppenborg (2010) stakeholders represent

any group or individual that is impacted by or affects/impacts the organisation. In order for a business to be successful, it must ensure effective stakeholder management through the following: (Assudani and Kloppenborg, 2010)

1) Identify all its stakeholders and determine the importance and degree to which a stakeholder can potentially impact the business.
2) Manage expectations through relationship building with the most important stakeholders
3) Ensure that all stakeholders are effectively communicated with on a regular basis

It is important to keep in mind that the expectations between the different stakeholders vary and it therefore becomes the responsibility of the business to understand such differences so that it can unite and satisfy these expectations effectively, specifically of those stakeholders classified as 'important'. It therefore follows that stakeholder analysis is an integral component within the framework of stakeholder management, which is applied in order to determine the different stakeholder classifications (Assudani and Kloppenborg, 2010).

Through the process of stakeholder analysis, three attributes are assessed in determining the strength and importance of each stakeholder. These attributes in include that of 'Legitimacy, Urgency and Power' – Stakeholders that possess only one of these attributes are classified as 'Latent stakeholders', that could be either 'Discretionary, Demanding and Dormant Stakeholders' depending on the specific attribute possessed. Stakeholders that have overlaps by virtue of possessing two attributes, are classified as being 'Expectant stakeholders' that could be either 'Dependent, Dangerous or Dominant stakeholders' depending on the combination of attributes possessed, while stakeholders that possessed all three attributes are classified as being 'Definitive stakeholders'. This classification of stakeholders is reflected in Figure 2 below (Assudani and Kloppenborg (2010).
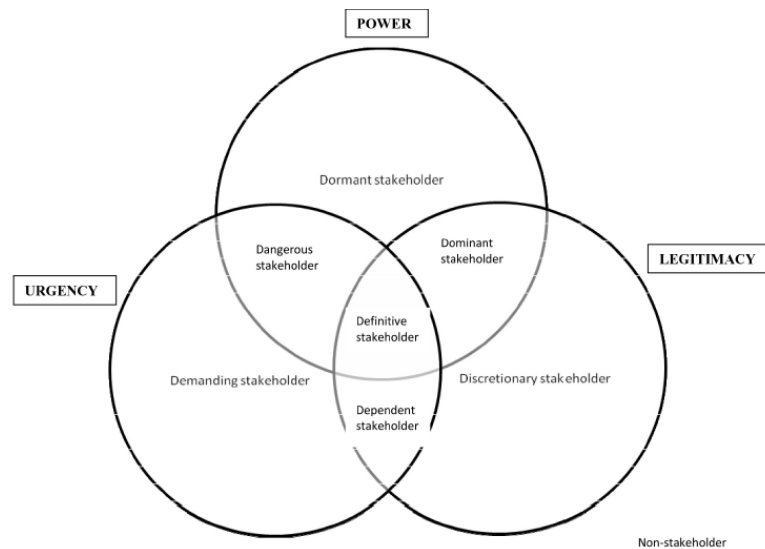
Figure 2: Classification of stakeholders
(Assudani and Kloppenborg, 2010)

In the context of this research study, the stakeholders that have been identified are limited to that of employees (i.e. semi-skilled workers) and managers (managers of semi-skilled workers). Applying of stakeholder analysis (attributes of 'Legitimacy, Urgency and Power) to these identified stakeholders, classifies both semi-skilled employees and their managers as being Definitive stakeholders, thus making the impact of these stakeholders significant and saliently important to the success of the business. .As a result, it becomes worthwhile investigating the views held by these stakeholders, so that the organisation can foster and maintain stronger working relationships between and with them to better meet their expectations and needs.

2.4 Employee performance

Anitha (2014, p. 313) defined employee performance as "… the financial or non-financial outcome of the employee, that has a direct link with the performance of the organisation and its success". According to Anitha (2014), a key manner in which to increase employee performance, was through enhancing employee engagement and as such employee engagement is identified to be a key antecedent of employee performance.

Further, according to Cummings and Worley (2015), factors related to improvement in motivation, capabilities and communication & co-ordination, served as being key factors that collectively increased employee performance. Cummings and Worley (2015) indicate in addition that improved employee performance has secondary benefits of improving employee well-being which supported employee satisfaction and retention, which then drove employee productivity even further. In addition, high performance employees have the impact of creating high levels of productivity which has the propensity to attract and retain talented employees within the organisation.

Furthermore, in a study conducted by Nyberg, Pieper and Trevor (2016), where four contextual factors i.e. "employee characteristics, job characteristics, pay system characteristics, and pay system", it was found that "bonus pay" and "merit pay" were positively associated with the future performance of employees. Furthermore, it was found that "bonus pay" had a stronger effect on future employee performance, as opposed to "merit pay", which goes against the presently held traditional economic perspective of merit pay being the stronger driver of future employee performance.

According to Jha and Kumar (2016) and Warrick (2016), high performance employees are those that are emotionally committed to their organisations and are vested in learning and achieving success, as both individuals and in teams. Similarly, high performance individuals are focussed on achieving organisational goals and in so doing create high performance organisations.

Therefore, high performance employees are considered to be the most valued and strategic assets of an organisations, because people that are properly engaged are difficult to imitate by other organisations and as such, organisations that have high performance employees are able to gain increased levels of competitive advantage and organisational effectiveness (Jha and Kumar, 2016; Warrick, 2016 and Anitha, 2014).

2.5 Motivation - Performance theories

Motivation is described to be a psychological term that speaks to the processes of how people stay guided in pursuit of obtaining defined goals. Therefore Sadri and Bowen (2011) extend the concept of motivation to encapsulate three elements, i.e. direction, intensity and persistence. Danish, Khan, Shahid, Raza and Humayon (2015) then added to this concept of motivation, by proposing that motivation could be further segregated in to that of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation where, according to Danish et al. (2015, p. 36), "Intrinsic motivation refers to tendency of human beings to learn while extrinsic motivation reflects true self-regulation." Employees that are highly motivated are less likely to leave their organisations, displayed organisational loyalty and produced higher volumes of work at improved quality levels, thus resulting in increased employee performance and organisational success (Sadri and Bowen, 2011). The discussions to follow, speaks to the various motivation theories and its implication for employee performance.

2.5.1 Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Maslow's hierarchy is comprised of 5 levels, where at the base of the pyramid is the basic building block referred to as 'physiological needs', which is largely satisfied through the perception of being paid a fair wage/salary. Once this level is reasonably satisfied, employees move to the second level of 'safety' which is generally met by a sense of job security and by receiving health & retirement benefits. Thereafter, the employee progresses to the third level of 'belonging and connection', by becoming socially acquainted with company resources and protocols. The next level that follows is that of 'feeling valued' by the company, by being given expected recognition and the final level is that of self-actualisation, where organisational incentives should be used to create employee satisfaction. Therefore, in a corporate context, business leaders can utilise Maslow's framework to determine at which level in the pyramid each employee resides, in order to develop company benefits that will satisfy the needs of the employee at that specific level, thereby increasing their motivation and performance (Sadri and Bowen, 2011).

2.5.2 Hertzberg's two-factor theory

Fredrick Hertzberg's 1957 'Motivation - Hygiene model', otherwise known as Hertzberg's 'Two-Factor theory' is a well-known and generally accepted theory within the management fraternity at large. This theory identifies two key themes namely, job satisfaction (i.e. 'Motivator factors') and job dissatisfaction (i.e. 'Hygiene factors'), which stipulated that motivator factors which created job satisfaction did not create job dissatisfaction when they were not present. Therefore Hertzberg concluded that the opposite of job satisfaction was not job dissatisfaction. In addition, the theory indicates that 'motivator factors' were additive but 'hygiene factors' were not (Guha, 2010 and Harell and Daim, 2010).

According to Guha (2010) the conventional 'work place' in modern days has transitioned to become a 'work space', which has inadvertently brought with it a change in employee characteristics. Similarly, new management styles and motivation theories have emerged as well, which has created improved opportunities to enhance employee performance, even further. In addition, Guha (2010) argued that Hertzberg's 'two-factor theory' is far too simplified to be applied to the understanding of complex human behaviour and further that since Hertzberg's initial study, all studies done to verify his work has not been successfully replicated. Therefore, given this context and the findings of the study by Guha (2010), the original factors as identified by earlier studies of Hertzberg's two-factor theory are not applicable to modern day employees and therefore, the author issues caution to present day management on the use of the 'Motivation - Hygiene model'(Guha, 2010).

2.5.3 Vrooms expectancy theory

"Vrooms expectancy theory of motivation" emerged in the 1960's - this theory advocates that an employee will receive a reward if he/she completes a task well. This relationship between task and reward influences the employee's level of performance, which is determined by their perception of the value of the reward associated with the completing the task at hand. Therefore, according to the theory of expectancy, the output of increased performance is as a result of

an expected outcome that serves to increase the employee's motivation and productivity. In addition, the fundamental ideas also introduced by the theory include that of 'instrumentality', 'valence' and 'expectancy' (Danish et al., 2015; Harell and Daim, 2010).

2.5.4 Equity theory (Also known as Adams theory of inequity)

In 1963, John Stacy Adams introduced Equity theory, which suggests that employees are motivated when they perceive the organisations practices as being impartial, when it comes to rewarding employees for their efforts in performing their jobs - This simplistically means, rewarding all employees the same for equal effort invested in executing tasks. This increased level of employee motivation has positive impact on job satisfaction, organisational commitment, employee turnover and employee task performance (Danish et al., 2015; Harell and Daim, 2010).

2.5.5 McGregor's X-Y theory

In the context of McGregor's X-Y theory, Theory X suggests that people are lazy and don't want to work and must therefore be forced and directed by management into working, hence Theory X will not motivate employees. On the other hand, Theory Y suggests that employees have the inherent capacity to perform work responsibly but it is management's responsibility to provide guidance and motivation to ensure employees perform effectively. Therefore management assumes the onus and responsibility to identify the appropriate set of motivators to assist employees in overcoming any difficulties they may encounter. As such Theory X is synonymous with micro-management practices while Theory Y is more objectives based, allowing for employees to take on a self-managed approach towards completing tasks. That said management must identify the type of employees within their organisation and select the appropriate management practice between theories X and Y or a mixture thereof in order to ensure optimal employee motivation and performance (Harell and Daim, 2010).

2.5.6 McClelland's acquired needs theory (Learned needs theory)

The Acquired – Needs theory makes the statement that an individual's life experiences informs their needs over time, where the bulk of people needs could be classified into three categories i.e. "affiliation, power, or achievement" that effectively serve to drive an employee's motivation (Harell and Daim, 2010, p. 25). Individuals that are driven by affiliation desire positive and personal relationships, while power driven individuals seek institutional or personal power and lastly individuals driven by achievement are those that generally work by themselves and value achieving personal and/or organisational goals (Harell and Daim, 2010).

2.6 Employee engagement

Employee engagement is viewed as one of the best predictors of employee performance (Jha and Kumar, 2016; Warrick, 2016; Cummings and Worley, 2015; Anitha, 2014 and Louw, 2012). Cummings and Worley (2015, p. 122) defined employee engagement as "… diverse approaches to gain greater participation in relevant workplace decisions", where 'diverse approaches' is the extent to which skills, information, knowledge, rewards and power are shared with employees and 'workplace decisions', are those outcomes that affected organisational performance and employee well-being.

Similarly, Anitha (2014, p. 308) defined employee engagement as "…level of commitment and involvement an employee has towards their organisation and its values. When an employee is engaged, he is aware of his responsibility in the business goals and motivates his colleagues alongside, for the success of the organisational goals."

Further, Jha and Kumar (2016) described employee engagement as an organisational strategy that could be used to improve employee-employer interactions and in so doing could enhance employee performance, contribution and commitment towards the achievement of organisational values, goals and improvement in their own wellbeing. This definition by Jha and Kumar (2016) is

similarly aligned with the definition of employee engagement and the associated benefits thereof, as described by Anitha (2014).

In addition to enhancing employee performance, research suggests that employee engagement also has positive effects on driving organisational citizenship, discretionary effort, task commitment, improved psychological environment, affective commitment and customer service (Anitha, 2014).

Management also plays a role in motivating employees towards becoming fully engaged and committed to their work, through providing them with training to improve their skills, allowing for honest and open communication and by including their feedback input into the process of organisational decision making. Management should also reward and recognise the efforts of those employees that are directed towards achieving the organisations goals and they should respect and value those talented employees that are brand ambassadors of the organisation. These efforts serve to retain employees and motivate them in creating value for the business (Jha and Kumar, 2016).

On the hand, Bakker and Demerouti (2017) described employee engagement as a state of mind that caused employees to become infused with vigor and physical energy in such a way, that it influenced their enthusiasm and dedication towards their work content and the manner in which they executed their jobs, so much so that they became fully immersed in their work with very little concern about time spent doing the work.

Further definitions of employee engagement cited by Anita (2014, p. 309), include that of the "the right people in the right roles with the right managers drive employee engagement". In addition, other important definitions include that of "the state in which individuals are emotionally and intellectually committed to the organisation or group, as measured by three primary behaviours: "Say, stay, strive" and lastly as "the psychological state that accompanies the behavioural investment of personal energy". These definitions are a depiction that engaged employees have an emotional attachment to the

organisation and are driven by passion to achieve organisational goals and to live by the values of their organisational cultures.

2.6.1 Engagement - Performance theories

The 'Employee Engagement – Performance' model by Anita (2014) identified the determinants of employee engagement and its predictability thereof, together with a determination of the impact of employee engagement on the performance of employees (Anitha, 2014). The factors identified by the study were all found to be predictors of employee engagement and included that of "work environment, workplace well-being, compensation, company policies, training & career development, team & co-worker interactions and leadership", but work environment and team & co-worker interactions, were found to have major impact on employee engagement. It was also found that employee engagement had major impact on employee performance. This model of employee engagement and performance is shown in Figure 3 below.
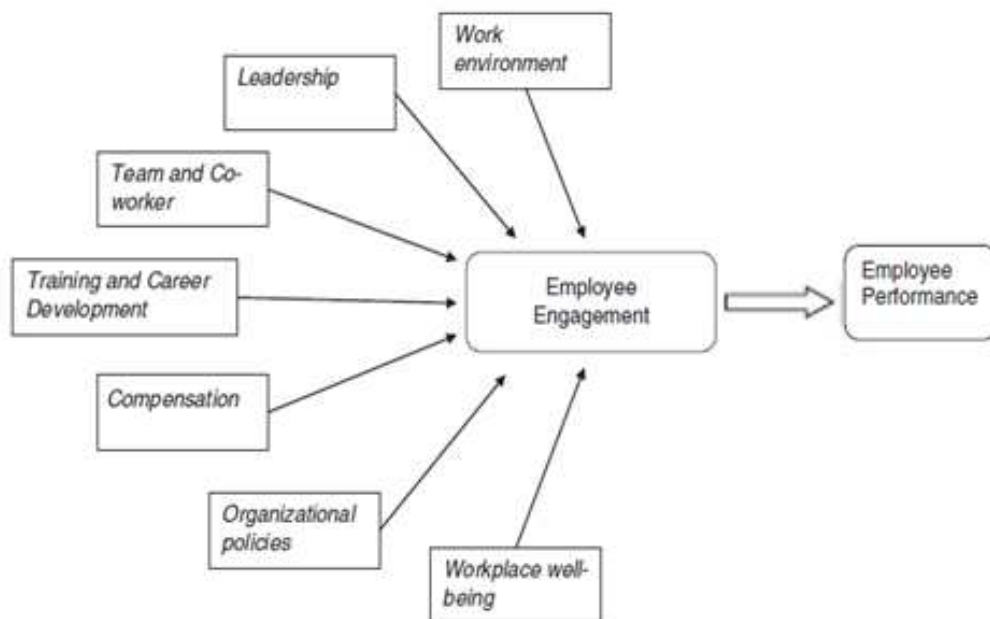
Figure 3: Engagement-Performance model (Anitha, 2014)

Therefore, according to Anitha (2014), directed effort should be focussed on the predictive elements of work environment and team & co-worker interactions, in order to foster increased levels of employee engagement and hence employee performance.

Anitha (2014, p. 309) credits Kahn (2014) as the person that introduced the concept of employee engagement, where he described employee engagement as "the harnessing of organisation members' selves, to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances". According to Anitha (2014) there are three conditions that must be satisfied in order for employees to be properly engaged, which included meaningful elements of work, social safety in terms of management practices & norms of the organisation and thirdly, availability to prevent distractions.

Further, Anitha (2014, p. 310) indicated that "there are three levels of employee engagement, namely, "engaged employees, not engaged employees, and actively disengaged employees". 'Engaged' employees are described as those employees that are driven to achieve excellence in their roles and consistently strive to achieve this level of performance. On the other hand are the 'not engaged' employees that need to be told what to do and be given spelled out tasks as they lack the focus to autonomously achieve organisational goals. Then there are the 'actively disengaged' group of employees, who are seen to be dangerous individuals as they not only perform poorly but also actively set out to demotivate and disengage those employees that are performing well in the organisation (Anitha, 2014).

The results of the study by Anitha (2014) found that work environment and team & co-worker interactions, were the factors that had the highest significant impact on employee engagement; where work environment is a reference to a work space that is both emotionally and physically safe and represented an environment that allowed for employees to feel perceptively engaged with, so much so that it motivated them in such a way that it enhanced their performance.

It therefore becomes important that work environments become improved in such ways that promote a healthy balanced life for employees between their personal and professional responsibilities, that gives employees feedback and

recognition of their efforts and the tools and resources that enable them to do their jobs effectively.

Similarly, the predictor of team & co-worker interaction was found to be significantly impactful in terms influencing employee engagement. In order to foster high performance teams it becomes important to promote aspects of talent management, leadership & commitment, team ethics & pride, together with clear communication and purpose. Therefore organisations that can sustain energy and focus towards enhanced employee engagement will create work environments that promote high performance employees that improve their own quality of work and in so doing would improve organisational performance (Anitha, 2014).

According to Jha and Kumar (2016) a workforce that is fully engaged has the capability of improving its productivity by 78% and profitability by more than 40%. Therefore, employee engagement in recent times has become viewed as a strategic factor in terms of driving employee performance in order to gain sustainable competitive advantage. However, the study by Jha and Kumar (2016) found that four out of ten employees remain disengaged from their jobs due to a worldwide increase in personal and work life imbalances, competitive rivalry and mounting work pressure.

Similarly, the study by Makikangas et al. (2016) found through multi-level analysis, that the perception of team performance was associated with both individual and teamwork engagement. In addition, the study found that in teams where shared job crafting was high, that the levels of individual work engagement on perceived team performance was equally high. This finding supported the JD-R work engagement theory (Demerouti et al., 2001 and Bakker & Demerouti, 2017) which promulgated that high levels of employee engagement translated itself into high levels of employee job performance.

The study by Louw (2012) identified the enablers and inhibitors of organisational energy, where organisational energy was described as being a 'renewable energy source' that differentiated mediocre from high performance

organisations. The outcome of the study found that support by management; job security and recognition were the key enablers of productive organisational energy, while the lack of discipline, shortage of resources and corporate bureaucracy, were identified to be the key inhibitors of productive organisational energy.

According to Louw (2012), organisational energy was integrally related to employee engagement, where it was argued that employees who were highly engaged exhibited high levels of energy and as such were more productive by completing tasks more enthusiastically, effectively and efficiently, as opposed to those employees with low levels of engagement and energy. Therefore, it was positioned that an employee's well-being and level of engagement was key to creating productive organisational energy (i.e. the collective energy of high performance individuals) and as such organisational energy was identified to be a dependent variable, instead of an independent variable, in the determination of organisational performance and competiveness.

In addition, Louw (2012) described productive organisation energy as having the capability to positively influence the perception of employees in such a way that it influenced their ability to deal with organisational challenges. Further, organisational energy was described as being oscillatory between low and high levels of energy, which impacted on the performance of employees and invariably on the performance of the organisation as a result thereof.

2.6.2 Job Demands - Resources theory (JD-R theory)

The "Job Demands – Resources" Model (i.e. JD-R model) is a fairly new conceptual framework that was developed for the workplace going back about 15 years ago, that might explain the drivers and inhibitors of employee performance (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner and Schaufeli, 2001). The JD-R model can be used to understand the psychological factors that cause stress (i.e. Job demands - leading to burnout and reduced employee performance) and employee engagement (i.e. Job resources - leading to employee well-being and increased employee performance) so that employers can understand and

subsequently take timely and appropriate measures to reduce burnout and increase performance, because it has been shown that high performance employees contribute to high performance organisations (Schaufeli, 2017; Bakker and Demerouti, 2017; Makikangas, Aunola, Seppala, and Hakanen, 2016).

The first edition of the "J-DR model" was published in 2001 by Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner and Schaufeli (2001) in the Journal of Applied Psychology. In the next 10 years that ensued (2001-2010) the JD-R model matured into JD-R theory and then subsequently the theory was further expanded from just explaining employee burnout in the years thereafter (2011–2016), to include employee wellbeing into the JD-R model as well (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). Thus, the JD-R model speaks to two categories of working conditions which are identified to be that of job demands and job resources respectively.

According to Demerouti et al. (2001, p. 501), Job demands are defined as "those physical, psychological, social, or organisational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and/or psychological effort and are therefore associated with certain physiological and/or psychological costs" while Job resources refer to "those physical, psychological, social, or organisational aspects of the job that are functional in achieving work goals, reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs, or stimulate personal growth, learning, and development" (Schaufeli, 2017; Bakker and Demerouti, 2017 and Demerouti et al., 2001).

According to JD-R theory, when job demands are high employees experience exhaustion (not disengagement) and when job resources are high, they have the effect of counteracting the impacts of job demands and as such employees experience high levels of engagement. Similarly if job resources are low then employees experience disengagement from their work (with no direct effect on exhaustion). This basically indicates that exhaustion and disengagement are correlated but not causally related, meaning that disengagement is not an outcome of exhaustion but rather a result of a reduction in job resources.

Therefore JD-R model is referred to as a 'parsimonious model' that is comprised of 4 components, namely job resources, job demands, exhaustion and disengagement as shown in Figure 4 below (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker and Demerouti, 2017).
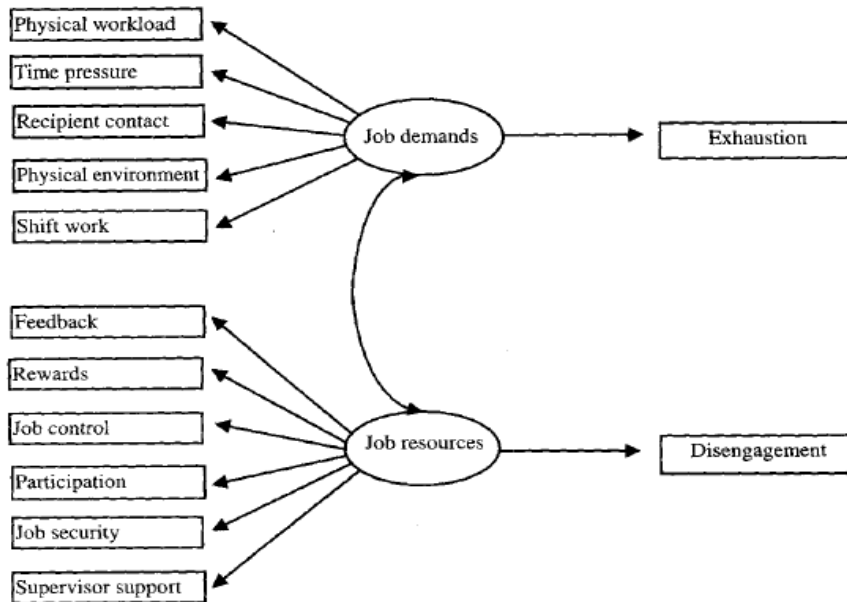
Figure 4: The Job - Demands Resources model of burnout (Demerouti et al., 2001)

Antecedents of job demands were identified to be that of "physical workload, time pressures, recipient contact, physical environment and shift work" and if these factors were high, then employees were at high risk of getting exhausted and burnt-out. On the other hand antecedents of job resources were identified to be "performance feedback, rewards, job control, participation, job security and supervisor support", which effectively served to alleviate the impact of job demands on burnout and contributed to employee (dis)engagement. Therefore JD-R theory promulgates two different processes which include that of a motivational process (i.e. engagement / disengagement) and an employee well-being process (i.e. exhaustion/burnout) (Demerouti et al., 2001 and Van Woerkom, Bakker and Nishii, 2016).

Bakker & Demerouti (2017), propose that job resources have a pronounced influence, particularly when job demands are high. Therefore by crafting "active jobs" which combined "high demands with high job resources", it is possible for

employees to become positively challenged and this allowed for them to learn new skills within their job, to become motivated and subsequently high performance employees that added competitive advantage to their organisations.

Similarly, Bakker & Demerouti (2017), equated job resources to be similar to that of personal resources, where personal resources included that of high levels of self-efficacy and optimism, because personal resources enable employees to take more control over their work environment and were better equipped to deal with unforeseen circumstances and therefore contributed to higher levels of employee engagement.

The motivation process of JD-R theory has a positive impact on job performance as employees who are engaged become enthusiastic and infused with high levels of energy towards achieving organisational goals, as opposed to employees who are exhausted and lack the energy to perform optimally under similar circumstances. (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017; Schaufeli, 2017; Maxl, 2013; Louw, 2012 and Lamberti, 2011).

Therefore JD-R theory provides a useful framework that can be used to monitor work place environments with a view to increasing employee performance. Employees that are engaged are driven to become high performance employees, which ultimately translates into financial success for their organisations, while employees that are disengaged and exhausted are generally the cause of workplace injuries, reduced performance, absenteeism and reduced performance. As such, it follows that business leaders should regularly examine their organisations against levels of employee well-being (i.e. engagement and disengagement) in order to take measures timeously, so as to prevent the ill effects associated with reduced employee performance (Schaufeli, 2017).

2.7 Enablers and inhibitors of employee performance

2.7.1 Compensation – Pay/salary/wage

Compensation and compensation satisfaction are seen to be key elements that influence strategy execution, organisational structure and employee behaviour which includes that of employee turnover, motivation, commitment and performance (Danish et al, 2015). Compensation structures are classified as either being compressed or hierarchical, where pay dispersion (hierarchical) is affected by factors like education levels, experience, positional seniority etc. (Bhanu, 2011).

According to Bhanu (2011) it is important that pay dispersion exists, as it serves to be a mechanism that rewards good performers and gives poor performers a reason to improve. On the other hand the argument for compressed pay which is linked to equity theory, aims to reduce cognitive inconsistency by damping internal competition amongst employees that work closely together and in so doing increases performance, thus this approach to compensation tries to break this link between pay and performance and reduce the unintended and adverse outcomes of incentives (Bhanu, 2011). However, in the study conducted by Bhanu (2011) it was found that pay dispersion actually resulted in employee dissatisfaction and negatively impacted pay satisfaction, which could either result in employees being motivated to perform better to gain the rewards, or alternatively they could leave the organisation from dissatisfaction.

Therefore, pay dispersion is effective in driving individual performance but where organisations require team members to work closely and collaboratively, and then pay differentials have negative effect on employee satisfaction and performance and therefore organisations in this situation, institute group type incentives as opposed to individual rewards (Bhanu, 2011). In a study by Burgess, Propper, Ratto, Kessler Scholder, and Tominey (2010), they found that team incentives did play a role in improving individual performance but also found that re-allocation of employees within the team, towards incentivised tasks, had a more significant effect on team performance than incentives alone.

Further, according to Bhanu (2011) overall employee job satisfaction is underpinned by pay satisfaction, which is the most important outcome of working. In addition, work attendance, intention to leave and employee performance are critically impacted by pay satisfaction. On the other hand, Sadri and Bowen (2011), argue that while employees tend to list pay and pay satisfaction as critically important aspects of a job, it was found in a study that only 20 percent of an employee's job satisfaction was attributed to pay satisfaction, which is an indicator that employees need several other needs to be satisfied in order to remain motivated in their jobs. This view by Sadri and Bowen (2011) is also shared by Bristow, Amyx, Castleberry and Cochran (2011) who agrees that salary impacts motivation and job satisfaction levels, but is not necessarily the primary element driving these outcomes.

2.7.2   Positive organisational behaviour

According to Schraeder and Jordan (2011, p.7) "Positive Organisational Behaviour (POB)' can be defines as the study and application of positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace".   This effectively means that, when the organisation responds positively to employees, then their levels of moral, motivation and associated performance all increase. This position is further supported by 10 years of research on the topic and can be used in conjunction or as part of processes like mentoring and coaching, organisational goal setting, performance assessments and the like (Schraeder and Jordan, 2011).

2.7.3   Job characteristics/attributes

In a study by Bristow et al. (2011), it was identified that certain characteristics within the job itself, played an important role in driving employee motivation and performance. These characteristics included that of autonomous decision making, appropriate levels of challenge, task variety and associated interest that the job presented.

Bristow et al. (2011) therefore suggest that managers go beyond just communicating attributes of a particular job but actively seek to make changes to the job itself, along the lines of these attributes, because such adjustments will serve to reduce employee turnover, thus reducing the exceptionally high costs of recruitment and orientation, improve employee motivation and increase employee performance.

2.7.4 Proactivity

In recent years the topic of employee proactivity has gained widespread interest amongst researchers and business stakeholders the same. Proactivity is defined as "…an active facilitation of meaningful personal and/or environmental change" (Thomas, Whitman and Viswesvaran, 2010, p. 276). Given the current constraints and limited resources that business leaders face while still being expected to perform effectively, it becomes necessary that modern day problems are dealt with proactively in finding solutions to such issues. As such, the success of proactive employees, in such dynamically complex environments, is attributed to their persistence in creating a set of circumstances that helps them to achieve their goals and in so doing are able to obtain both organisational and personal success.

Thomas et al., (2010) identified that there is a significantly strong relationship between proactivity and employee performance. Further, Thomas et al., (2010) expanded on employee proactivity as being comprised of four emergent constructs, namely 'proactive personality', 'taking charge', 'voice' and 'personal initiative'. These constructs of proactivity, were also found to drive work attitudes, where employee satisfaction was strongly correlated with 'proactive personality' and 'voice', while organisational commitment had a strong relationship with both 'personal initiative' and 'proactive personality'. Therefore, the findings of Thomas et al. (2010) can be summarised as proactivity being a significant driver of an employee's performance, satisfaction and organisational commitment.

2.7.5 Human Resource Management (HRM) practices

Farndale, Hope-Hailey and Kelliher (2011) argue that models of HRM (Human Resource Management) and firm performance are weak in that they fail to consider the perspective of the employee. Farndale et al. (2011) found that on the contrary, human resource management practices (HRMP) had a significant impact on employee behaviour and attitude, which influenced their perceptions and associated performance, which then had resultant impact on the overall performance of the organisation.

As such, the notion of 'High commitment performance management (HCPM)' is introduced as being an HRM practice that could foster employee organisational commitment and improved performance, where HCPM includes "…performance management practices which are designed to engender commitment from employees through involvement and personal development, such as regular appraisal feedback, input into the process of target setting, choosing pay and benefit options, and appraisals leading to development opportunities and new targets." (Farndale et al., 2011, p. 6) and in this context, performance management is defined as "an integrated process in which managers work with their employees to set expectations, measure and review results, and reward performance, in order to improve employee performance, with the ultimate aim of positively affecting organisational success" (Farndale et al., 2011, p. 7).

Farndale et al. (2011), further position 'high commitment' work practices as being linked to tangible outcomes (i.e. commitment) when compared to the more generic type of performance literature. The justification underpinning this position is motivated on the idea that employee attitudes and behaviour is shaped by 'high commitment' HRM practices (as described previously) through linking employee and organisational goals, thereby increasing employee commitment and performance, which has mutual benefits to the organisation as described by 'social exchange' theory. In addition, Farndale et al. (2011), found a strong positive relationship between HCPM practices on employee perception of organisational justice, a relationship that was further moderated by the employees' level of trust in their employer.

2.7.6 Incentives, rewards and recognition

An organisations workforce is deemed to be the most important factor that an organisation can use in becoming more competitive in highly dynamic markets. This can be achieved through appreciation systems that build employee motivation and performance. A reward management system is a practical approach that has been found to be an effective appreciation system, which can be used to retain talented employees while at the same improving their motivation and performance levels, which contributes to the organisations overall success (Danish et al., 2015).

It is also important to note that rewards are not only expressed in monetary terms but may also be of the non-monetary type, which includes examples of employee participation in the organisational decision making process, a work environment that offers employees flexibility, access to growth and promotion opportunities, training and development and the like (Danish et al., 2015 and Schraeder and Jordan, 2011). Danish et al. (2015) also found that employee task performance was positively correlated with intrinsic rewards and that 'intrinsic motivation', 'job satisfaction' and 'extrinsic motivation' all served as mediators to this relationship, meaning that employees that received intrinsic rewards showed increased performance while they simultaneously showed increased levels of motivation (intrinsic & extrinsic) towards their organisations and themselves. On the other hand job satisfaction played less of a moderating role in terms of the intrinsic reward – performance relationship.

On the other hand, the view presented by Kaufman (2009), in the context of rewards, is that if the reward system and its measurement indices are not aligned towards creating discretionary effort from employees, then the process runs the risk of creating the unintended result of de-motivation. This is expanded on in terms of being applicable to both 'milestone rewards', which pays rewards when a set target is achieved or in the context of 'contest rewards' in which the process creates more losers than it does winners and it therefore runs the risk of reducing employee morale, engagement and associated performance.

However, Kaufman (2009) argues that incentives and rewards can be effective in delivering organisation value but it must be aligned and applied correctly. Such benefits can be harnessed when incentives and rewards are used to create an organisational culture that is flexible to change, through initiatives that connect the business more closely. This can be achieved only if leaders use the process in such a way that it encourages employees to work collaboratively to successfully achieve process, task and project objectives. Through this process, employee engagement is enhanced, which then has a positive effect in driving discretionary effort and employee performance. Kaufmann (2009) further indicates that studies have shown that engaged employees, through improved performance can lead to higher profit organisations.

2.7.7 Security of employment

Employees are motivated to perform when they have a sense of job security or are not threaten by imminent loss of employment in the foreseeable future (Bristow et al., 2011). The study conducted by Bristow et al. (2011) showed that the current generation of employees expressed specific concerns around being able to keep long term jobs. Such beliefs and fears are attributed to the globally widespread phenomenon of organisational 'down-sizing', which has seen businesses retrench huge numbers of employees in a bid to reduce costs in order to remain sustainable in extremely competitive markets. Therefore, employees that are made aware upfront of expected job tenures, stability of the business and industry will have their job security fears allayed and will be focus on being more productive, given that they can plan their future more predictively (Bristow et al., 2011).

2.7.8 Opportunity for promotion/career growth

Danish et al. (2015) and Guha (2010) classified opportunities for promotion and career growth as extrinsic rewards which served to increase an employee's motivation. With an increased level of motivation it was found that an employee's performance also increased. Danish et al. (2015) also go further to indicate that an increase in employee performance is then positively correlated

with an increase in organisational performance.

2.7.9 Empowerment

Organisations that exhibit high levels trust are transparent in providing employees with information that is honest and true create an environment for employee empowerment. This together with an endearing effort to explain the reasoning behind management decisions taken has been shown to empower employees with information and creates a level of self-control within them. As humans we have an innate need to be in control because control is a practice that provides a sense of security. In instances where there is a lack of control, it will result in higher levels of stress, subsequent work disconnection and reduced levels of employee performance (Denton, 2010).

Therefore in order for leaders to promote employee empowerment, they should create an environment that acts as a place of safety where employees feel comfortable to take charge and express their ideas without the fear of being victimised or ridiculed. This method of collaboratively setting goals and solving workplace problems was found to be and effective means to improve employee self-control and performance. It was also found that employees with higher levels of self-control also exhibited higher levels or organisation trust and morale. Recognition and acknowledgment of employee contributions also goes a long way towards reducing labour turnover and improving employee performance. Therefore a self-confident work force empowered with the right tools and mindset will yield rapid improvements in employee and organisational performance (Denton, 2010).

2.7.10 Performance appraisals

Schraeder and Jordan (2011) indicate that performance appraisals have instrumental impact on driving employee performance. Performance appraisals are particularly effective in improving employee performance when the process itself employs methodologies which are aligned with the organisations goals, cultural practices and ultimately its strategic vision.

2.7.11 Coaching and mentoring

Coaching is deemed to be a popular approach towards increasing employee performance which presents a platform through which effective feedback can be communicated to the employee. The act of coaching also serves to create a positive relationship between the employee and coach and it's therefore important that organisations invest in developing managers into coaches satisfy this outcome adequately. However, on the other hand, if feedback is not given appropriately it can have the adverse effect of actually reducing employee performance (Schraeder and Jordan, 2011).

Similar to coaching, is the practice of mentoring which differs from coaching in that it does not aim to strengthen a particular skill/competency but rather aims to improve and potentially accelerate the growth prospects an employee in the organisation by the employee building a relationship with a more experienced senior employee within the organisation. The mentor helps to build the employees rapport and entrenches the organisations culture, characteristics and practices into the teachings imparted to the mentor - this relationship is supported by literature as having a positive effect on employee performance (Schraeder and Jordan, 2011).

2.7.12 Employee training and development

An individual's ability to do particular job has a significant impact on the individual's performance levels in executing his/her job. Therefore, training and development initiatives in support of employee skills development are viewed positively towards improving employee performance. In addition, employee performance is also indirectly improved because employees view the organisations investment in training them, as a token of appreciating their contributions made to the growth of the organisation (Schraeder and Jordan, 2011; Flowers et al., 2010 and Guha, 2010).

2.7.13 Communication and feedback

Effective leadership communication/feedback serves to be a significant factor in driving employee loyalty, commitment and organisational performance (Mayfield and Mayfield, 2002). According to Mayfield and Mayfield (2002) high levels of communication produces employee commitment which could increase employee productivity by 11%. In addition, increased levels of communication resulted in increased levels of mutual trust between employees and leadership, where trust is defined as a "relationship of mutual confidence in contractual performance, honest communication, expected competence, and a capacity for unguarded interaction" (Mayfield and Mayfield, 2002, p. 90) thus resulting in a further increase in employee productivity.

Mayfield and Mayfield (2002) identify 5 key communication strategies/practices that are effective in increasing employee trust and commitment as:

- Explain the reasoning behind management decisions
- Ensure regular communication practices
- Facilitate the continuous flow of important information
- Provide direction to other leaders and contextualise the impact of changes/decisions on employees and their environments
- Receive emotions 'as-is', as opposed to seeking 'should-be' emotions

It is also important to note that effective leadership communication requires a high level of listening; therefore it becomes necessary that the leaders be aware of their own style of communication and to make active efforts towards receiving criticism that is productive " (Mayfield and Mayfield, 2002, p. 90).

2.7.14 Fun in the workplace

Lamm and Meeks (2009) indicate that fun in the workplace has the ability to positively impact both employees and companies, where studies undertaken have shown positive links between fun in the workplace, to that of employee satisfaction, reduced levels of absenteeism, increased levels of innovation and positive organisational behaviour.

Having fun in the workplace, is the outcome of striking a successful balance between work and play to create a healthy and stimulating work environment. According to Lamm and Meeks (2009, p.614), "a fun work environment is one that intentionally encourages, initiates, and supports a variety of enjoyable and pleasurable activities that positively impact the attitude and productivity of individuals and groups", where it is further argued that 'fun' permeates and extends well beyond the concept of employee satisfaction. Interesting to note was the identification of generational differences as being a mediator on the relationship between workplace fun and individual performance, as found in the study conducted by Lamm and Meeks, (2009).

2.7.15 Work centrality (Expressive work events)

According to Sharabi and Harpaz (2010, p.379) "the concept of 'work centrality' refers to the degree of general importance that work has in an individual's life at any given time". Over a 12 year longitudinal study by Sharabi and Harpaz (2010, p. 389) it was found that "expressive work events (autonomy, interest, variety, and responsibility)" caused an increase in 'work centrality' in those employees that experienced them, while those employees who did not experience 'expressive work events' showed decreased levels of 'work centrality'. In addition work events that included 'promotion, advancement to managerial positions and qualifications was also found to positively influence 'work centrality'. Further, according to Sharabi and Harpaz (2010) an increase in 'work centrality' then resulted in an increase in job performance and associated organisational performance.

2.7.16 Satisfying employee needs

The framework presented through Maslow's hierarchy of needs, indicates that there are five levels of needs that all human beings possess, which ultimately influenced the way they are motivated to behave and act. Motivation is a psychological term that speaks to the processes of how people stay guided in pursuit of obtaining defined goals. The concept of motivation encapsulates three elements, i.e. direction, intensity and persistence. Employees that are highly

motivated are less likely to leave their organisations, displayed organisational loyalty and produced higher volumes of work at improved quality levels, thus resulting in increased employee performance and organisational success (Sadri and Bowen, 2011).

This notion of satisfying employee needs, to improve employee performance is also supported by the work of Schraeder and Jordan (2011), who indicate that management practices that are aligned towards fulfilling employee needs display a very strong tendency of becoming successful organisations through the efforts of motivated employees. Such management practices take the form of "idiosyncratic deals" that grants the employee a unique set of working conditions/expectations given the special circumstances that an employee may be faced with at any particular time thus satisfying the employee's needs, with the added benefit of employee loyalty and commitment to the company (Schraeder and Jordan, 2011).

2.7.17 Organisational culture

The culture of an organisation determines the character and personality of an organisation and inadvertently sets the rules of what constitutes acceptable employee behaviour. As such, cultural preferences and practices have implications for communication and employee management, which has a direct bearing on employee performance. Therefore it becomes important that cultural differences be taken into consideration when developing performance management programmes (Schraeder and Jordan, 2011).

In addition, it was found in a study by Kernan, Watson, Chen, and Kim (2011) that that some cultural values served to be a moderator on employee work attitudes (i.e. job satisfaction) for those employees exposed to abusive manager practices (i.e. use of abusive language, threatening & aggressive behaviour, intimidation, intentional exclusion and the like). Kernan et al (2011) found that employees that were impacted the most by abusive management practices were those employees who possessed cultural values of equity and fairness.

Therefore, given that globalisation has resulted in culturally diverse workforces, it is valuable to understand how cultural values mediate the relationship between management practices and employee attitudes, which if left unmonitored could result in employee dissatisfaction and negative implications for organisational growth and success (Kernan et al., 2011).

2.7.18 Working environment

Keeping staff motivated is one of the most important managerial responsibilities in order to create a productive work environment, yet at the same time this responsibility proves to be an exceptionally difficult task for management. However, the consequences of failing to positively motivate employees could result in an unhappy and unproductive workforce, that are likely to leave the organisation over time (Staren, 2009).

Healthy, motivational and productive work environments are characterised by the following attributes and practices:

- Ensure that talent, experienced, qualified and productive employees are adequately compensated
- Company policies and procedures must be such that they enforce workplace fairness and allows for employee participation in setting of organisational goals and objectives
- Communication must be open, honest and regular
- Managers should demonstrate positive interpersonal behaviour that expresses employee respect, empowerment & trust and leads through management practices that are transparent & integrity based
- Enable employees to do their jobs by providing them with the tools and resources required to perform tasks effectively

2.7.19 Trust and respect

Sadri and Bowen (2011) indicate trust is critical in retaining talented employees. Employees that do not trust the organisations leadership eventually becomes disengaged and their performance decreases, which then leads to employees

leaving their organisations in search of other opportunities. According to Sadri and Bowen (2011, p. 46), it "can cost organisations from 30 percent to 400 percent of that worker's annual salary" in replacing a talented employee that has left the organisation.

Similarly, Sharkie (2009) indicates that trust encourages employee performance in the relationship that employees share with their leader. Through trust in leadership, employees develop organisational co-operation which serves to enhance their organisational commitment and discretionary effort towards ensuring the success of their organisation. Therefore, leadership trustworthiness is a strong determinant which affects employee performance above expectations for organisational growth and success (Sharkie, 2009).

Further, according to Sharkie (2009) employee skills and knowledge best contribute to organisational success, when there is effective communication, as communication serves to be an indicator of reciprocal trust. Sharkie (2009) identifies that openness in communication is supported by trust and mutual respect between employees and managers the same. Organisations that encourage and cultivate high levels of trust provide an environment for the growth of 'cross network interactions' which significantly contributes to organisational performance, through increased employee's discretionary effort.

However, due to organisational work pressures, management tend to adopt company practices that inhibit employee interaction and thus supress cross employee communication and growth in trust and lose the opportunity to improve employee and organisational performance (Sharkie, 2009).

Therefore, it becomes necessary for management to move away from dictatorial practices to an environment that encourages collation and participation of employees in company decision making (Sharkie, 2009).

This process instils trust and respect in employees for their leaders and their discretionary effort and performance increases towards improving the organisations well-being and growth. Discretionary effort drives employees to

performance well above and outside their normal job description and contractual obligations, which is what management requires in order for employees to readily accept changes in their job requirements in order for the organisation to remain competitive (Sharkie, 2009).

Lastly, according to (van Quaquebeke, Zenker and Eckloff, 2008, p. 423), interpersonal respect be it "…. between leaders and their subordinates or among colleagues, affects outcome variables which are generally regarded as beneficial for an organization and its performance." because interpersonal respect sits deeply within an employee's value ranking system and therefore high levels of interpersonal respect impacts employee behaviour towards improvement in employee effort.

2.7.20 Bureaucratic control systems

The general approach taken by both private and more specifically government organisations, in an effort to improve employee performance, has been to increase bureaucratic controls and financial benefits/rewards. This approach is typical of 'self-interest' human resource practices, which goes against a growing base of literature that indicates people, have a natural affinity towards helping others to grow and a desire to make a positive difference in the lives of others. Therefore, such bureaucracy rather has the unintended outcome of limiting and reducing employee performance (Paarlberg and Lavigna, 2010).

2.7.21 The impact of leadership

The traditional form of Human Resource practices is founded in encouraging transactional processes that advocate the exchange of rewards by managers for enhanced employee performance and thereby aligning the self-interest of both parties. However, according to Paarlberg and Lavigna (2010), such practices are not suitable in creating a diversified workforce, which is required to build a creative, cohesive and integrated organisation.

Instead of such 'self-interested' HR practices, the authors Paarlberg and Lavigna (2010) advocate that transformational leadership has the capability of creating "values- based" management practices, which strives to create mutual benefit for and between employees, and the organisation at large. While 'self-interested' HR practices promote material gains, the practice of "values-based management' promotes concepts such as "altruism, affective organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, and prosocial motivations" that leads to enhanced employee task performance and organisational performance (Paarlberg & Lavigna, 2010, p. 710).

Further, according to Paarlberg and Lavigna (2010), transformation leadership is a key driver of employee satisfaction, which seeks to motivate employees through appealing to their values of morality, which goes well beyond the ideology of self-interest and individualistic gains, which is underpinned by goal setting theory and self-determination theory.

On the other hand, while Inceoglu, Thomas, Chu, Plans, and Gerbasi, (2017) agree that leadership behaviour has a direct correlation and impact on employee performance, they argue that research has neglected the study of leadership behaviour and its impact on 'employee health and well-being' (manifested as job satisfaction), which is often seen as a secondary outcome in studying the relationship between leadership and performance. The authors therefore position that more research must be done to understand the trade-offs in employee well-being, as an independent factor in the framework of assessing the impact of leadership behaviour, as opposed to just framing it as a driver of employee performance (Inceoglu et al., 2017).

Further, Higgs (2009) states that 'bad' leadership has the ability to create 'dysfunctional performance' and an unproductive organisational environment. Such 'bad' leadership attributes generally manifest themselves through the abuse of positional power for personal gain, abusive treatment that damages employee well-being & self-efficacy, obsession with perfectionism limiting employee initiatives and practicing unethical, illegal &corrupt behaviours.

These bad leadership attributes then have adverse effects on employee well-being, job satisfaction, motivation and affective commitment, which then have

adverse effects on employee and organisational performance in the long term (Higgs, 2009).

In closing, Flowers, Jones and Hogan (2010) position that strategic leadership has a pronounced impact on the effectiveness of the organisation. Flowers et al. (2010) further suggests that strategic leadership overarches the entire organisational strategy and through shared values can create a clear vision and direction for the organisation and its employees.

2.7.22 Goal setting and participation

The act of defining and setting organisational goals together with employees is seen to be positively correlated with employee performance. Goals provide guidance in achieving task objectives and inculcate employee motivation towards achieving such objectives. However, in setting these goals consideration must be given towards the goals being specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-based (Schraeder and Jordan, 2011).

Similarly, given that many employees consider their jobs to be a major portion of their lives they have an expectation to have a voice or say in the decision making of the organisation. When employees are involved in such organisational processes they believe that their views, ideas and feelings are valuable to the organisation, which further motivates them and increases their productivity (Schraeder and Jordan, 2011).

2.7.23 Job resources

In order for employees to do perform their tasks efficiently and effectively they have an expectation that they will be provided with the required resources to do so. When employees believe otherwise, their levels of motivation decrease which negatively affects their productivity (Schraeder and Jordan, 2011).

Bakker & Demerouti (2017), propose that job resources have a pronounced influence, particularly when job demands are high. Therefore by crafting "active

jobs" which combined "high demands with high job resources", it is possible for employees to become positively challenged and this allowed for them to learn new skills within their job, to become motivated and subsequently high performance employees that added competitive advantage to their organisations (Schraeder and Jordan, 2011).

Similarly, Bakker & Demerouti (2017), equated job resources to be similar to that of personal resources, where personal resources included that of high levels of self-efficacy and optimism, because personal resources enable employees to take more control over their work environment and were better equipped to deal with unforeseen circumstances and therefore contributed to higher levels of employee engagement.

2.7.24 Quality of Work Life (QWL)

The year 1972 saw the formation of the first council for the 'Quality of Working Life', which aimed to understand and represent the democratised rights and interests of employees. What followed from there was a high priority focus in instituting organisational redesign in order to obtain work place democracy to enhance the 'Quality of Work life' (QWL) (Saklani, 2010).

QWL holds central to its purpose that employees are the most important asset of any organisation and must therefore be developed and realised for the value that employees bring to the corporate life of an organisation. QWL programs can be used improve employee-organisation relations and can be used effectively in dealing with problems related to employee churn, work attendance, alcoholism and poor performance, through improved self-esteem, job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Therefore a high level QWL has the potential to improve employee performance and organisational effectiveness (Saklani, 2010).

In the study by Saklani (2010) it was found that economic well-being, in line with Maslow's' first level of physiological needs, surfaced as the key driver of QWL and associated motivation & performance, for non-management type

employees. This finding correlates well with the work conducted Sadri and Bowen (2011) who indicated that salary and wages are fundamental towards meeting employee needs, before they progress to higher order needs needing to be satisfied.

2.8 Conclusion

Given that high performance employees support the creation of high performance organisations it becomes prudent that business leaders are aware of, understand and are cognisant of the factors that enable and inhibit performance of semi-skilled employees. This bears significant importance when developing organisational strategies to improve organisational effectiveness and competitive advantage in the marketplace. This can be achieved by eliminating the inhibiting factors and intensifying the enabling factors that serve to improve employee performance (Schaufeli, 2017; Warrick, 2014; Carpenter and Charon, 2014).

The literature study undertaken in this regard, identified that there are several factors that predict employee performance, wherein the most important factors that emerged were that of employee motivation and employee engagement, as these factors were predominantly seen to have a strong significant relationship in predicting employee performance (Schaufeli, 2017; Cummings and Worley, 2015; Anitha, 2014; Louw, 2012; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner and Schaufeli, 2001; Sadri and Bowen, 2011; Danish, Khan, Shahid, Raza and Humayon, 2015; Guha, 2010; Harell and Daim, 2010; Bristow, Amyx, Castleberry and Cochran, 2011; Sharabi and Harpaz, 2010; Kaufman, 2009; and Schraeder and Jordan, 2011).

However, while the literature identified several factors that influenced employee performance, including that of employee motivation & employee engagement; and their antecedents, it is not clearly understood whether these factors, hold true for semi-skilled workers, as their views are poorly represented in the literature. This given that the existing literature did not make any distinction in terms of the applicability of the factors that drove employee performance, in

terms of organisational levels, as defined by Drotters leadership pipeline (2010) or to that of the early definitions of the different types of manufacturing production workers, as defined by Kremer and Maskin (1996).

Therefore, the primary aim of this study is directed towards determining the factors that enable and inhibit semi-skilled employee performance, while simultaneously aiming to identify on a secondary level, any differences that may exist between the perceptions of the factors influencing employee performance between the identified stakeholder groups (i.e. Semi-skilled employees and their managers). To this end the study aims to develop a practical framework for both business use and academic reflection, which is based on determining the following objectives:

a) The inhibiting factors that decrease employee performance, as viewed by semi-skilled employees

b) The enabling factors that increase employee performance, as viewed by semi-skilled employees

c) The inhibiting factors that decrease employee performance, as viewed by the managers of semi-skilled employees

d) The enabling factors that increase employee performance, as viewed by the managers of semi-skilled employees

e) An analysis of the enabling and inhibiting factors of semi-skilled employee performance, as seen from the perspective of semi-skilled employees and their managers

f) Based on the outcomes of the research, highlight any difference in perceptions that may exist in terms of the factors seen to influence employee performance, between the identified stakeholders groups

In concluding, Table 1 below has been developed as a means of summarising the key concepts of the literature study undertaken and is a depiction of the linkages that exist between the key concepts of the various pieces of academic literature.

Table 1: Summary of literature review (Key constructs)

Factors/Concept	Author/s	Key Findings
Employee engagement	Anitha (2014) Jha and Kumar (2016); Warrick (2016); Cummings and Worley (2015); Bakker and Demerouti (2017) and Louw (2012)	An increase employee engagement results in enhanced employee performance, contribution and commitment towards the achievement of organisational values, goals and improvement in their own wellbeing. Increased employee performance increases organisational citizenship, discretionary effort, task commitment, improved psychological environment, affective commitment and customer service. "When an employee is engaged, he is aware of his responsibility in the business goals and motivates his colleagues alongside, for the success of the organisational goals. Employee engagement is a state of mind that caused employees to become infused with vigor and physical energy which leads to emotional attachment to achieving organisational goals"
Improvement in motivation, capabilities and communication & co-ordination	Cummings and Worley (2015)	Key factors that collectively increased employee performance.
Bonus pay and merit pay	Nyberg, Pieper and Trevor (2016)	Positively associated with the future performance
High performance employees	Jha and Kumar (2016) and Warrick (2016)	Support increased levels of competitive advantage and organisational effectiveness
Direction, intensity and persistence	Sadri and Bowen (2011)	Increase employee performance
Intrinsic and Extrinsic motivation	Danish, Khan, Shahid, Raza and Humayon (2015); Jha and Kumar (2016)	Employees that are highly motivated are less likely to leave their organisations, increases employee performance and organisational success. Management also plays a role in motivating employees towards becoming fully engaged and committed to their work, through providing them with training to improve their skills, allowing for honest and open communication and by including their feedback input into the process of organisational decision making.
Maslow's hierarchy of needs L1 –'physiological needs'– Pay L2 - 'safety'- Job security+H&S L3 -'belonging and connection' L4 –'feeling valued' L5 –'self-actualisation'	Sadri and Bowen (2011)	Identify an employee's level of needs, then develop company benefits that will satisfy the needs of the employee at that specific level, thereby increasing their motivation and performance
Hertzberg's two-factor theory - Job satisfaction (i.e. 'Motivator factors') - Job dissatisfaction (i.e. 'Hygiene factors') i.e. Pay	Guha (2010) and Harell and Daim (2010).	Motivator factors which created job satisfaction did not create job dissatisfaction when they were not present. 'Motivator factors' were additive but 'hygiene factors' were not.
Vrooms expectancy theory	Danish et al. (2015); Harell and Daim (2010)	Expectation that employees will receive a reward if he/she completes a task well. This relationship between task and reward influences the employee's motivation and level of performance, as determined by their perception of the value of the reward associated with completing the task
Equity theory	Danish et al. (2015); Harell and Daim (2010)	Employees are motivated when they perceive the organisations practices as being impartial, when it comes to rewarding/treating employees for their efforts in performing their jobs. Increases employee motivation and performance
McGregor's X-Y theory	Harell and Daim (2010)	Theory X suggests that people are lazy and don't want to work and must therefore be forced and directed by management into working. Theory Y suggests that employees are motivated and have the inherent capacity to perform work responsibly but it is management's responsibility to provide guidance and motivation to ensure employees perform effectively. Theory X is synonymous with micro-management practices while Theory Y is more objectives based, allowing for employees to take on a self-managed approach towards completing tasks
McClelland's acquired needs theory - Affiliation, - Power - Achievement	Harell and Daim (2010)	Motivated individuals that are driven by affiliation, desire positive and personal relationships, while power driven individuals seek institutional or personal power and lastly individuals driven by achievement are those that generally work by themselves, which then drives employee performance

Work environment, workplace well-being, compensation, company policies, training & career development, team & co-worker interactions and leadership were found to be predictors of employee **engagement**. Work environment and team & co-worker interactions, were the factors that had the highest significant impact on employee engagement	Anitha (2014); Jha and Kumar (2016)	Employee engagement had major positive impact on employee performance. Work environments should become improved in such ways that promote a healthy balanced life for employees between their personal and professional responsibilities, that gives employees feedback and recognition of their efforts and the tools and resources that enable them to do their jobs effectively. A workforce that is fully engaged has the capability of improving its productivity by 78% and profitability by more than 40%. It also becomes important to promote aspects of talent management, leadership & commitment, team ethics & pride, together with clear communication and purpose to enable high engagement
Team performance	Makikangas et al. (2016)	The perception of team performance was associated with both individual and teamwork engagement. In addition, the study found that in teams where shared job crafting was high, that the levels of individual work engagement on perceived team performance was equally high.
Support by management; job security and recognition were the key enablers of productive organisational energy, while the lack of discipline, shortage of resources and corporate bureaucracy, were identified to be the key inhibitors of productive organisational energy	Louw (2012)	Organisational energy was integrally related to employee engagement, where it was argued that employees who were highly engaged exhibited high levels of energy and as such were more productive by completing tasks more enthusiastically, effectively and efficiently, as opposed to those employees with low levels of engagement and energy - organisational energy was identified to be a dependent variable.
Job Demands - Resources theory (JD-R theory) - promulgates two different processes which include that of a motivational process (i.e. engagement / disengagement) and an employee well-being process (i.e. exhaustion/burnout)	Schaufeli, (2017); Bakker and Demerouti (2017); Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner and Schaufeli (2001) and Van Woerkom, Bakker and Nishii (2016)	Antecedents of job demands were identified to be that of "physical workload, time pressures, recipient contact, physical environment and shift work" and if these factors were high, then employees were at high risk of getting exhausted and burnt-out. On the other hand antecedents of job resources were identified to be "performance feedback, rewards, job control, participation, job security and supervisor support", which effectively served to alleviate the impact of job demands on burnout and contributed to employee (dis)engagement. The motivation process of JD-R theory has a positive impact on job performance as employees who are engaged become enthusiastic and infused with high levels of energy
Compensation – Pay/salary/wage	Danish et al. (2015); Bhanu (2011); Sadri and Bowen (2011); Burgess, Propper, Ratto, Kessler Scholder, and Tominey (2010) and Bristow, Amyx, Castleberry and Cochran (2011)	Compensation and compensation satisfaction are seen to be key elements that influence motivation, commitment and performance. In the study conducted by Bhanu (2011) it was found that pay dispersion actually resulted in employee dissatisfaction and negatively impacted pay satisfaction, which could either result in employees being motivated to perform better to gain the rewards, or alternatively they could leave the organisation altogether given their dissatisfaction. According to Bhanu (2011) overall employee job satisfaction and employee performance is underpinned by pay satisfaction, which is the most important outcome of working. On the other hand Sadri and Bowen (2011), argue that while employees tend to list pay and pay satisfaction as critically important aspects of a job, it was found in a study that only 20 percent of an employee's job satisfaction was attributed to pay satisfaction, which is an indicator that employees need several other needs to be satisfied in order to remain motivated in their jobs
Positive Organisational Behaviour (POB)	Schraeder and Jordan (2011)	This effectively means that, when the organisation responds positively to employees, then their levels of moral, motivation and associated performance all increase

Job characteristics/ attributes	Bristow et al. (2011)	Characteristics which included that of autonomous decision making, appropriate levels of challenge, task variety and associated interest that the job presented, played an important role in driving employee motivation and performance.
Proactivity – Constructs: 'proactive personality', 'taking charge', 'voice' and 'personal initiative'	Thomas, Whitman and Viswesvaran (2010)	The success of proactive employees, in dynamically complex environments, is attributed to their persistence in creating a set of circumstances that helps them to achieve their goals and in so doing are able to obtain both organisational and personal success - proactivity is seen to be a significant driver of employee performance
Human Resource Management (HRM) practices - 'High commitment performance management (HCPM)'	Farndale, Hope-Hailey and Kelliher (2011)	HCPM moderated by the employees' level of trust in their employer, includes "…performance management practices which are designed to engender commitment from employees through involvement and personal development, such as regular appraisal feedback, input into the process of target setting, choosing pay and benefit options, and appraisals leading to development opportunities and new targets."
Incentives, Rewards and Recognition	(Danish et al., 2015); Kaufman (2009) and Schraeder and Jordan (2011)	A reward management system is a practical approach that has been found to be an effective appreciation system, which can be used to retain talented employees while at the same improving their motivation and performance levels, which contributes to the organisations overall success. Rewards are not only expressed in monetary terms but may also be of the non-monetary type, which includes examples of employee participation in the organisational decision making process, a work environment that offers employees flexibility, access to growth and promotion opportunities, training and development and the like. However, Kaufman (2009) argues that incentives and rewards can be effective in delivering organisation value but it must be aligned and applied correctly or could result in de-motivation
Security of employment	Bristow et al. (2011)	Employees are motivated to perform when they have a sense of job security or are not threaten by imminent loss of employment in the foreseeable future
Promotion/career growth	Danish et al. (2015) and Guha (2010)	Classified as extrinsic rewards which served to increase an employee's motivation. With an increased level of motivation it was found that an employee's performance also increased.
Empowerment	Denton (2010).	For leaders to promote employee empowerment, they should create an environment that acts as a place of safety where employees feel comfortable to take charge and express their ideas, without the fear of being victimised or ridiculed. This method of collaboratively setting goals and solving workplace problems was found to be and effective means to improve employee self-control, empowerment and performance
Performance appraisals	Schraeder and Jordan (2011)	Performance appraisals are particularly effective in improving employee performance when the process itself employs methodologies which are aligned with the organisations goals
Coaching and mentoring	Schraeder and Jordan (2011)	Coaching and mentoring is deemed to be a popular approach towards increasing employee performance as it represents a platform through which effective feedback can be communicated to the employee.
Training and development	Schraeder and Jordan (2011); Flowers et al. (2010) and Guha (2010)	Training and development initiatives in support of employee skills development are viewed positively towards improving employee performance
Communication and feedback	Mayfield and Mayfield (2002)	According to Mayfield and Mayfield (2002) high levels of communication produces employee commitment which could increase employee productivity by 11%. In addition, communication results in increased levels of mutual trust between employees and leadership
Fun in the workplace	Lamm and Meeks (2009)	Fun in the workplace has the ability to positively impact both employees and companies, where studies undertaken have shown positive links between fun in the workplace, to that of employee satisfaction, reduced levels of absenteeism, increased levels of innovation and positive organisational behaviour
Work Centrality (Expressive work events)	Sharabi and Harpaz (2010)	Refers to the degree of general importance that work has in an individual's life at any given time. A longitudinal study by Sharabi and Harpaz found that "expressive work events ("autonomy, interest, variety, responsibility, promotion, advancement to managerial positions and qualifications") caused an increase in 'work centrality' and associated job performance.
Satisfying employee needs	Sadri and Bowen (2011) and Schraeder and Jordan (2011)	The framework presented through Maslow's hierarchy of needs, indicates that there are five levels of needs that all human beings possess, which ultimately influenced the way they are motivated to behave and act. Management practices that are aligned towards fulfilling employee needs display a very strong tendency of becoming successful organisations through the efforts of motivated employees.

Organisational Culture	Kernan, Watson, Chen, and Kim (2011) and Schraeder and Jordan (2011)	Cultural preferences and practices have implications for communication and employee management, which has a direct bearing on employee performance - if left unmonitored could result in employee dissatisfaction and negative implications for organisational growth and success
Working environment	Staren (2009)	Healthy, motivational and productive work environments are characterised by the following attributes and practices: Talented employees are adequately compensated, company policies and procedures are fair, communication is open, managers express employee respect, empowerment & trust and enable employees to do their jobs by providing them with the tools and resources required to perform tasks effectively
Trust and Respect	Sadri and Bowen (2011); Quaquebeke, Zenker and Eckloff (2008) and Sharkie (2009)	Employees that do not trust the organisations leadership eventually becomes disengaged and their performance decreases, which then leads to employees leaving their organisations in search of other opportunities - leadership trustworthiness is a strong determinant which affects employee performance. Interpersonal respect sits deeply within an employee's value ranking system and therefore high levels of interpersonal respect impacts employee behaviour towards improvement in employee effort
Bureaucratic control systems	Paarlberg and Lavigna (2010)	Bureaucracy has the unintended outcome of limiting and reducing employee performance
Leadership	Paarlberg and Lavigna (2010); Higgs (2009); Flowers, Jones and Hogan (2010) and Inceoglu, Thomas, Chu, Plans, and Gerbasi, (2017)	Transformational leadership has the capability of creating "values- based" management practices, which strives to create mutual benefit for and between employees, and the organisation at large. Transactional leadership is framed as being 'self-interested' for both parties. 'Bad' leadership has the ability to create 'dysfunctional performance' and an unproductive organisational environment which destroys 'employee health and well-being' (manifested as job satisfaction).
Goal setting and participation	Schraeder and Jordan (2011)	The act of defining and setting organisational goals together with employees is seen to be positively correlated with employee performance. When employees are involved in such organisational processes they believe that their views, ideas and feelings are valuable to the organisation, which further motivates them and increases their productivity
Job Resources	Bakker & Demerouti (2017); Schraeder and Jordan (2011)	With a lack of job resources, employees levels of motivation decrease which negatively affects their productivity
Quality of Work Life	Saklani (2010)	QWL programs can be used improve employee-organisation relations and can be used effectively in dealing with problems related to employee churn, work attendance, alcoholism and poor performance, through improved self-esteem, job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Therefore a high QWL has the potential to improve employee performance

3. Chapter three: Research questions

The research questions to follow have been derived from the literature review and are constructed towards meeting the objectives and primary aim of this research study.

3.1 Research question 1:

What are the factors perceived to enable semi-skilled employee performance, as seen from the perspective of semi-skilled employees?

3.2 Research question 2:

What are the factors perceived to enable semi-skilled employee performance, as seen from the perspective of semi-skilled employee managers?

3.3 Research question 3:

How do the perceptions compare between semi-skilled employees and their managers, in terms of the enabling factors of semi-skilled employee performance?

3.4 Research question 4:

What are the factors perceived to inhibit semi-skilled employee performance, as seen from the perspective of semi-skilled employees?

3.5 Research question 5:

What are the factors perceived to inhibit semi-skilled employee performance, as seen from the perspective of semi-skilled employee managers?

3.6 Research question 6:

How do the perceptions compare between semi-skilled employees and their managers, in terms of the inhibiting factors of semi-skilled employee performance?

4. Chapter four: Research methodology

4.1 Research design

My philosophical position in the context of this research study was that of Interpretivism, which employed a critical realist perspective in gaining greater insights into the study of "social phenomena in their natural environment", synonymous with organisational complexities (Saunders and Lewis, 2012).

The research approach taken in this study was deductive and served to define the research questions. Data was collected using the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) and the results analysed thereafter to determine findings and to make suitable recommendations. The research choice was mono-method using a qualitative research design, as this research choice was suitable to effectively answer the defined research questions given the type of data collected (i.e. qualitative data: text) (Saunders and Lewis, 2012).

The research study employed an exploratory research design, as this design was particularly suited to qualitative methods, which asked questions and assessed topics, with a view to seeking new insights. In addition, this type of design was well suited for discussions in groups to obtain different views on a particular subject and therefore supported the author's intention of using the nominal group technique, with open ended questions to the 2 stakeholder groups (i.e. Semi-skilled employees and managers of semi-skilled employees), to collect the required data, for analysis, recommendations and conclusions (Saunders and Lewis, 2012 and Zikmund, Babin, Carr, and Griffin, 2010).

In addition, a Cross-section design was used, given that the nominal group discussions to collect data from the participants, was held at only one period in time (i.e. 'snapshot' in time), within a single organisation but across two business units within the same umbrella organisation (Saunders and Lewis, 2012).

The use of the nominal group technique and open-ended questions, to facilitate the nominal group discussions, was done to solicit as much data as possible, without the participants feeling intimidated or lead in anyway (Lennon, 2012).

4.2 Population

According to Kremer and Maskin (1996), manufacturing production workers could be classified as either manual or non-manual employment. Kremer and Maskin went further to sub-classify manual employment as either being,

- Unskilled,
- Semi-skilled and
- Skilled,

while similarly sub-classifying non-manual employment into that of,

- Clerical, secretarial & administrative staff
- Supervisors & foremen,
- Junior technical / professional,
- Senior technical / professional and
- Middle/senior management.

Swanepoel (2016) then expanded the definition of semi-skilled workers, to be those employees that earned a minimum stipulated wage, in a range that was between that of unskilled and skilled employees.

Now, while semi-skilled workers remains the primary population focus of this research study, the managers of such semi-skilled workers was also included and sampled as part of the population, so as to understand their perceptions of the inhibiting and enabling factors that drive semi-skilled employee performance. This approach to sampling will allow for analysis through the triangulation of data collected from the semi-skilled workers and their managers to that of the theory which currently exists.

Therefore, in the context of this research study, a deductive approach was applied, specifically to semi-skilled workers, who are currently employed at a manufacturing company in South Africa. The company is a large manufacturer of electrical power cables, which employs in excess of 1500 employees, across 3 manufacturing business units and 8 nationally distributed, service centers.

The choice of this company was made on the basis that a) it has the full hierarchical structures as described by Drotter (2010) and Kremer and Maskin (1996) and b) the author was able to gain meaningful access to and the ability to co-ordinate the activities of the participating nominal group's participants, as required by the nominal group technique (NGT).

As such, the population for this research study included all semi-skilled workers and their managers, currently employed by the identified cable manufacturer, in South Africa.

4.3 Sampling method and size

Given that all members of the population would not have an equal opportunity of being selected for the sample, the technique of non-probability sampling was applied in selecting the participants for the identified sample groups. Moreover, purposive/judgmental sampling was used to ensure that the samples selected, were adequately representative and illustrative of the population (Saunders and Lewis, 2012).

Semi-skilled workers, in the context of organisational hierarchy are those employees that form the base the employee pyramid and are also referred to as managers of self, while on the other hand the managers of these semi-skilled employees are referred to as managers of others (Drotter, 2010 and Louw, 2012). This bears importance, in that this was the only criterion used to select the participants of the identified nominal focus groups.

As such, this study drew samples of the population for the identified nominal group discussions, from 2 of the 3 business units within this cable manufacturing company (i.e. PE and GOC Business Units). The sampling used the Nominal Group technique, which included that of 2 x semi-skilled employee groups and 1 x group of semi-skilled employee managers, from each of these business units. This effectively meant that 6 nominal groups, comprising a total of 54 participants, was used as the basis on which data was collected from – these sample groups, are summarised in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Summary of sampling – Nominal Focus Groups

Business Unit	Sampling - Nominal Groups	Level description according to Drotter (2010)	Level description according to Kremer and Maskin (1996)	No of participants (Actual)
PE	Group 1	Managing Self	Semi-skilled employees	6
PE	Group 2	Managing Self	Semi-skilled employees	7
PE	Group 3	Managing Others	Managers of Semi-skilled employees	7
GOC	Group 4	Managing Self	Semi-skilled employees	11
GOC	Group 5	Managing Self	Semi-skilled employees	14
GOC	Group 6	Managing Others	Managers of Semi-skilled employees	9

4.4 Unit of analysis

The responses received from the participants of the nominal focus groups, on their perceptions of the factors that inhibit and enable employee performance, was the unit of analysis.

4.5 Data collection instrument

The Nominal Group Technique (NGT) is defined by Lennon (2012, p. 1) as "…an evaluative methodology, which allows for the generation of ideas and thoughts from group participants, through the posing of a single question, whilst maintaining anonymity throughout". Lennon (2012) further stated that NGT is a cost effective and democratic technique that is non-hierarchical and is capable of generating many ideas from only one session, with a single group of identified participants. In this research study, NGT using employee focus group discussions, was used to determine the factors that enable and inhibit employee performance.

The data collection methodology required that a single question be posed at a time, to which responses from the participants were generated in silence and thereafter voted on, through a secret ballot process, in order to determine ranking of each of the responses received. The ranking of the responses received (data) was determined by each participant voting from the list of constructs/responses, for what they believed to be first and second most important factors that either enabled or inhibited employee performance. Each nominal group discussion/session lasted approximately 1.5 to 2 hours each, where participants were only expected to attend one of the planned sessions.

The generation of responses using the silent approach, where no discussion was allowed between participants or clarifications from the facilitator, ensured that all participants were capable of generating their own ideas without pressure from the other participants; and the secret voting process, ensured anonymity and confidentiality of participants and their responses throughout the entire nominal group sessions. Therefore the NGT sessions provided each participant the freedom to express their true feelings, without the fear of any potential victimisation or intimidation (Lennon, 2012; Louw, 2012 and CDC, 2006).

4.6 Data collection

The approach taken in collecting the research data was through hosting and facilitating nominal group discussions at cable manufacturers, Port Elizabeth and Gauteng Business units, with group discussions comprising of 2 x Semi-skilled employee groups and 1 x Manager group of semi-skilled employees, at each of these identified business units.

All nominal group discussions/sessions were facilitated by an external organisational behavioural (OB) consultant, in order to ensure confidentiality and impartiality through the NGT process, in the best interest of the participants. Given that the researcher currently holds a senior management role in the same organisation, it was believed that risk existed in the integrity of the data collected, had the researcher facilitated the nominal group discussions, as employees (participants) may feel intimidated by the presence of a senior

manager hence compromising their responses. In addition, the participation of all employees was completely voluntary and no employee was forced to participate in any way or form. As such, each participant was given an informed consent form, for them to sign and accept before the group session commenced (Appendix 2).

To further ensure integrity and application of the NGT process by the external OB facilitator, the researcher met with the OB facilitator and trained the facilitator on using the NGT technique, via a full Pilot test session, before the OB consultant commenced with facilitating any of the nominal group discussions. The OB facilitator also signed a non-disclosure and confidentiality agreement.

The NGT sessions began with the facilitator providing an introduction to the participants the purpose of the nominal group sessions, the research topic and the concept of employee performance. The participants were then advised that their responses would be kept completely anonymous throughout the entire NGT process and of their right to participate or not. The participants that consented to participating were then asked to sign the consent form before each of the sessions commenced.

Thereafter each participant was given two (2) response sheets, which served to collect their responses on the 2 research questions posed and to later make record of their voting preferences during the same NGT group session. The data in this regard was collected through a structured 5 step process, as described below (McMillan, 2014; Lennon, 2012; Boddy, 2012; CDC, 2006):

1. **Silent generation of ideas/responses/statements** – During this step, the facilitator posed the first of the two research questions intended to be discussed and answered in the focus group i.e. Q1: What are the factors that inhibit/decrease employee performance? The participants were then directed to write down as many of their ideas in short statements, words or phrases on a blank hard copy sheet, which was handed out at the start of the session. During this stage no discussion between participants

or clarifications from the facilitator was allowed. The generation of responses using the silent approach ensured that all participants were capable of generating their own ideas without pressure from the other participants. This stage of the sessions lasted approximately 10 minutes.

2. **Recording of the ideas/responses/statements** – Once the 10 minutes of idea generation was completed, the facilitator requested that the participants fold their idea generation response sheets in half and to drop these response sheets, into the ballot box provided. The facilitator then collected all the idea generation response sheets from the ballot box and then requested a volunteer from the participants to come forward and to read out from the response sheets, each response that was noted. While this was done the facilitator recorded each response on an excel spreadsheet which was simultaneously displayed using a projector as each of the responses were being captured, until no further responses were left to be expressed and recorded - at this stage it is said that saturation was achieved. During this step there was still no debate or discussion allowed between the participants or with the facilitator.

3. **Clarification discussion on ideas/responses/statements** – Once all the responses were received and recorded on excel, the facilitator opened the floor for any possible discussions in order to clarify and confirm the meaning of any of the responses recorded, by asking if there were any questions or comments that any of the group participants had about the responses recorded. At this stage, some responses were amalgamated but only when there was group consensus that any two or more ideas listed, in essence had the same meaning and that such amalgamation would not change the meaning of the original responses recorded.

4. **Ranking of ideas/responses/statements** – Once the group of participants had finalised the clarification discussion on the responses to the first question asked, the facilitator displayed the final list of responses using a projector and then numbered each of the responses from the top

left corner, all the way through until each of the responses had a unique number allocated to it. Thereafter, the facilitator asked each of the participants in the group to select only 5 responses from the main list of responses displayed and to write down the response description, along with the unique number allocated to it, using the first response sheet. Once the participants had written down their top 5 responses onto their response sheets, the facilitator requested that each of the participants then select from their 5 responses, the top 2 responses they believed to be the most important and to write this down on their response sheets as well (Appendices 3 and 4). Once this process was completed the participants were asked to fold their response sheets in half and to drop these response sheets, into the ballot box once again.

5. **Voting and collation of ideas/responses/statements** – Thereafter, the response sheets were collected by the facilitator from the ballot box, and then requested a volunteer from the group participants to come forward and to read out from the response sheets, each of the 5 responses as well as the top 2 responses as selected by each of the participants.

The facilitator then captured the number of times each response was mentioned as part of the participants top 5 responses, to determine its frequency, as well as the number of times each response was selected as being part of the top 2 responses from each of the participants, in order to determine its strength and level of importance to the group. The facilitator then tallied up the final scores to determine the final frequencies and strengths of each of the listed responses.

The above 5 steps were then repeated, in order to collect the data to answer the second research question i.e. Q2: What are the factors that increase/enable employee performance? Thereafter, a closing discussion was held on the final results and all response sheets that were completed by the participants were collected for record keeping and for confidential storage.This data collection process was applied to all 6 nominal group sessions as identified to be the research sample.

4.7 Data analysis

The final results of all six NGT focus group sessions were captured on excel spreadsheets for the purpose of data analysis. Through this process a listing of all the enabling and inhibiting factors of employee performance, as identified by the semi-skilled employee and semi-skilled manager groups, together with their relative strength and frequencies, were derived. This listing of factors was then used as the basis to conducting comparative analysis to answer the defined research questions.

In addition, theoretical constructs as identified by the literature study were then assessed and critiqued to identify any possible links or disparities it had with the actual data as collected from the 6 nominal group discussions. This comparative assessment revealed that while many of the theoretical constructs were similar to the actual results, there were also new factors enabling and inhibiting employee performance that were not identified in the literature review. These outcomes are presented in Chapter 6.

In addition, the answers to the research questions then formed the basis of developing a force field model, to assist with management application.

4.8 Reliability and validity

According to Louw (2012), the nominal group technique is an appropriate method to use when individual efforts are being reviewed in a group for problem identification. The study conducted by Boddy (2012) evaluated the nominal group technique for its effectiveness in conducting management research and found that the technique was effective in generating many ideas in a short time and was more favourable than brainstorming, in the context of generating ideas/responses through interactive group discussions, thereby validating the reliability of the nominal group technique as a research instrument. These findings by Boddy (2012) were also strongly supported by the study conducted by McMillan (2014), which further supported the NGT process as a reliable and valid research instrument, even the field of management sciences.

In addition, according to the study by Lloyd (2011), it was found that the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) yielded valid and reliable data, in both domain and content definitions, by virtue of key stakeholder involvement in the definition of key constructs. Further, the nominal group technique was found to be effective in reducing the impact of dominant and assertive individuals over less extroverted individuals in the group discussion, thus allowing for all members of the group to contribute equally. This is important in allowing for the entire groups creativity to emerge in the generation of ideas and responses, which will not be biased or influenced by the dominant members of the group. This outcome is facilitated through an inherent step within the NGT process, where the generation of responses/ideas using the silent approach ensures that all participants are capable of generating their own ideas, without pressure from the other participants (Lennon, 2012; Louw, 2012 and CDC, 2006).

Further, the voting portion of the NGT process is done through secret ballot voting, where all ideas have an equal chance of being used in the ranking process that follows thereafter. The secret voting process, maintains anonymity throughout the entire session, which serves to further reduce any biases from creeping into data collection process.

Also, as previously mentioned, all nominal group discussions/sessions were facilitated by an external organisational behavioural (OB) consultant, in order to ensure confidentiality and impartiality through the NGT process, in the best interest of the participants. In addition, the participation of all employees was completely voluntary and no employee was forced to participate in any way or form. To further ensure integrity and application of the NGT process by the external OB facilitator, the researcher also met with the OB facilitator and trained the facilitator on using the NGT technique, via a full Pilot test session, before the OB consultant commenced with facilitating any of the nominal group discussions.

Further, the NGT process was shown to be successful in reviewing individual perceptions in a group and an equally effective method that could be used in problem solving and organisational change management, through group discussions (Lloyd, 2011). In addition, the process of NGT is cost and time efficient, provided that the research questions are adequately prepared before the nominal group sessions commence (Lennon, 2012).

Finally, the researcher and facilitator were also cognisant not to allow for their personal biases in any way, to influence the participant's responses or analysis thereof, thereby further ensuring that the data collected was valid and reliable.

4.9 Research limitations

The following research limitations should be noted:

- The composition of the sample groups for the NGT discussions was done using non-probability judgemental sampling, which can limit the ability to generalise findings (Lennon, 2012 and Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

- The rigidity and formality of the NGT Technique, is argued as a potential weakness in the process itself, as it is seen to be a single topic meeting with a small number of participants, where the 'random' vote of a single participant has the ability to affect the overall ranking of scores hence the risk of skewing the overall results (Lennon, 2012 and CDC, 2006).

- The population and sampling is based on a single company and the data collection, analysis and associated results may therefore not necessarily represent that of the industry at large.

- However, the studies conducted by Boddy (2012), Louw (2012) and McMillan (2014) show that the NGT technique is valid & reliable and that it is suitable for business and management research studies.

5. Chapter five: Results

5.1 Description of sample

The technique of non-probability purposive sampling was applied in selecting the participants for the identified focus groups (Saunders and Lewis, 2012). The key criterion used in selecting the participants was based on organisational hierarchy, in that semi-skilled employees and their managers were identified to participate in the focus group discussions (Drotter, 2010 and Louw, 2012).

As such, this study drew samples of the population which included that of 2 x semi-skilled employee groups and 1 x group of semi-skilled employee managers, from two business units. This effectively meant that 6 nominal groups, comprising a total of 54 participants, was used as the basis on which data was collected from – these sample groups, are summarised in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Summary of sampling – Nominal focus groups

Business Unit	Sampling - Nominal Groups	Level description according to Drotter (2010)	Level description according to Kremer and Maskin (1996)	No of participants (Actual)
PE	Group 1	Managing Self	Semi-skilled employees	6
PE	Group 2	Managing Self	Semi-skilled employees	7
PE	Group 3	Managing Others	Managers of Semi-skilled employees	7
GOC	Group 4	Managing Self	Semi-skilled employees	11
GOC	Group 5	Managing Self	Semi-skilled employees	14
GOC	Group 6	Managing Others	Managers of Semi-skilled employees	9

5.2 Research question 1:

What are the factors perceived to enable semi-skilled employee performance, as seen from the perspective of semi-skilled employees?

The approach taken in collecting the research data from all 4 groups of semi-skilled employees was through hosting and facilitating focus group discussions. Two groups of semi-skilled employees participated in the focus group discussions at each of these business units, comprising a total of 38 semi-skilled employees, as shown in Table 3 earlier.

All focus group sessions were facilitated by an external organisational behavioural (OB) consultant to ensure confidentiality in the best interest of the participants. The NGT focus group sessions all began with the facilitator providing an introduction on the research topic and the concept of employee performance. Thereafter, the data was collected through the 5 step process, as previously described, by McMillan (2014), Lennon (2012), Boddy (2012) and CDC (2006). The ranking of the responses through this process was done by displaying the final list of responses using a projector and then asking each of the participants to select only 5 responses from the final list and then in addition to select the top 2 responses from their selection of 5 responses, that they believed to be the most important and second most important (Refer Appendices 3 and 4).

The 4 semi-skilled employee focus groups, comprising of 38 participants, produced a total of 156 responses, when having responded to the first focus group question: i.e. **Q1: What are the factors that enable/increase employee performance?,** of which 56 of these responses received votes.

The frequency of the results for the four groups is reflected in Tables 4, 5, 6 and 7, where N = the number of participants:

Table 4: Group 1- Enablers of high performance:

Semi-skilled worker perceptions, N = 6

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	Better Salary	5	1	3
2	Teamwork - amongst team members	4	1	1
3	Motivational Reward System	3	1	1
4	Training and Development	3		
5	Opportunity for growth - career growth	3	1	1
6	Challenging work	3	1	
7	Caring about us	2		
8	Motivation - encourage us, believe in us	2		
9	Equality in the workplace	2		
10	Positive feedback/appreciation for work done	1		
11	Clear job instruction/description	1	1	
12	Transparent leaders	1		

Table 5: Group 2 - Enablers of high performance: Semi-skilled worker perceptions, N = 7

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	Recognition of employees by management	5	1	1
2	Fair treatment from management	4	1	
3	Employee growth - career growth	4	1	
4	Better salary structures	3	1	1
5	Motivated by incentives	3		1
6	To be on salary instead of wages	3	1	1
7	Motivation - encouragement from management	3		2
8	Transparency from management	3		1
9	Appreciation by management	3		
10	Respect from management - to be treated equally	2	1	
11	Employee development - opportunity to grow	1		
12	Communication - management feedback	1	1	

Table 6: Group 4 - Enablers of high performance: Semi-skilled worker perceptions, N = 11

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	Teamwork - amongst team members	7	3	1
2	Fair salary	5	4	
3	Training and Development - opportunity to grow skills	5		2
4	Respect from management - to be treated equally	5	2	1
5	Good approach and communication from management	5		
6	Honesty and trust - management don't lie to us	4		3
7	Work smart	3		
8	Production - to have the materials I need for my job	3	1	
9	Achieving targets - customer satisfaction	3		2
10	Commitment - managers be interested and stand up for us	3		1
11	Motivating to have a full job for the day - all materials available	3	1	
12	Health and Safety of the employees	2		
13	Opportunity to grow	2		1
14	Internationally recognised company	2		
15	Opportunity to learn different tasks	1		
16	Working instructions are clear	1		
17	Interact with us on company performance	1		

Table 7: Group 5 - Enablers of high performance:
Semi-skilled worker perceptions, N = 14

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	Paid fairly	8	5	1
2	Good leadership - managers must be involved, fair, interested & develop us	6		1
3	Training and Development - skills development	6		2
4	Recognition of employees by management	6		
5	Respect from Management - to be treated equally	5	1	2
6	Communication - management feedback on decisions made	5	3	
7	Bonus/incentives/fair reward	5	1	1
8	Teamwork - amongst team members	4	2	1
9	Trust/Honesty - management trust in us	4		1
10	Management don't take us for granted	4		2
11	Fairness - treat workers equally	2		
12	Transparency - no secrets from management	2		1
13	Good conducive environment - Health and Safety	1		
14	Feedback on performance by management	1		
15	Pride - team pride from working together	1		

* Note - GOC focus group no. 5 had 14 participants; however, 2 of the voting ballots were incomplete and as such were considered spoilt ballots. Therefore, the voting outcomes from these 2 ballots were completely disregarded from the results as reflected herewith.

However, on examination of the 56 voted on responses, from the 4 semi-skilled focus group discussions, it was observed that many responses were common between the groups, so much so that they could be grouped into 17 unique responses or constructs. The combined scores of these constructs from the 4 groups were then totalled and these totals are shown in the table below:

Table 8: Enablers of high performance:

Semi-skilled worker groups combined, N = 38

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	Better Salary/Pay	24	12	6
2	Recognition and appreciation for work done - management don't take us for granted	19	1	3
3	Teamwork - amongst team members	16	6	3
4	Training and Development - opportunity to grow skills	16		4
5	Good leadership - managers must be involved, transparent, fair, interested & develop us	15		4
6	Respect from management - to be treated equally - care about us	14	4	3
7	Communication - management feedback on company and indiv. Performance	13	4	
8	Bonus/Reward /Incentives system (Extrinsic) - Motivational Reward System	11	2	3
9	Opportunity for growth - career growth/promotions	9	2	2
10	Job resources - to have the materials I need for my job - to satisfy customer	9	2	2
11	Equality in the workplace/Fair treatment from management	8	1	
12	Honesty and trust - management don't lie to us	8		4
13	Challenging work/work smart	6	1	
14	Motivation - encourage us, believe in us	5		2
15	Health and Safety of the employees - conducive work environment	3		
16	Clear job instruction/description	2	1	
17	Internationally recognised company	2		

5.3 Research question 2:

What are the factors perceived to enable semi-skilled employee performance, as seen from the perspective of semi-skilled employee managers?

The approach taken in collecting the research data from the two groups of semi-skilled employee managers was also done through hosting and facilitating focus group discussions. One group of semi-skilled employee managers participated from each of the two business units, comprising a total of 16 semi-skilled employee managers, as shown in Table 3 earlier.

The managers were asked to answer the same question, as were the semi-skilled employees *i.e. Q1: What are the factors that enable/increase employee performance?* The responses of the semi-skilled employee managers were collected through the same process as previously described, where each of the participants eventually selected their top 5 responses, along with the top 2 responses they believed to be the most important from their 5 responses and noted these on their first response sheet.

Thereafter, the voting process commenced when the response sheets were collected by the facilitator, who recorded the number of times each response was mentioned as part of the participant's top 5 responses and top 2 responses respectively, in order to determine response frequency and strength.

The 2 semi-skilled employee manager focus groups, comprising of 16 participants, produced a total of 69 responses, when having responded to the first focus group question: i.e. **Q1: What are the factors that enable/increase employee performance?,** of which 23 of these responses received votes.

The frequency of the results for the two groups is reflected in Tables 9 and 10, where N = the number of participants.

Table 9: Group 3 - Enablers of high performance:
Semi-skilled employee managers perceptions, N = 7

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	Incentives - to encourage and motivate employees	6		1
2	Training and Development	6	1	
3	Opportunity for growth - provide growth for our people and honest feedback	5	2	1
4	Good working environment - provide canteen, clinic, ambient conditions, H&S)	3	1	
5	Above average renumeration - fair pay	3		3
6	Recognition - don't take teams for granted, show appreciation	3	1	
7	Right person for the job - be fair, avoid favouritism in appointments	2		2
8	Provide clear understanding of job description	2	1	
9	Good communication - feedback to employees on decisions made	2		
10	Team support/team work - give employees the support they need	2		
11	Good leadership - lead our teams by example	1	1	

Table 10: Group 6 - Enablers of high performance:
Semi-skilled employee managers perceptions, N = 9

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	Respect - treat employees equally	6	1	3
2	Good and stable working environment	5	2	3
3	Good leadership	5	1	
4	Recognition - show appreciation to our teams	4		
5	Training and Development - provide skills growth	4	1	
6	Incentives - to motivate employees	4	1	
7	Job satisfaction	4	1	1
8	Growth - provide growth for our people and honest feedback	3		
9	Good salary - equitable pay	3	1	
10	Company Vision - share the vision with the team 'bigger picture'	3	1	1
11	Engagement - make employees feel like a partner in the business	3		1
12	Reliable Machinery - no breakdowns	1		

On examination of the 23 voted on responses, from the 2 semi-skilled employee manager focus group discussions, it was observed that many responses were common between the groups, so much so that they could be grouped into 16 unique responses or constructs. The combined scores from the 2 groups were then totalled and these totals are shown in the table below:

Table 11: Enablers of high performance -
Semi-skilled employee managers perceptions combined: N = 16

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	Training and Development - provide skills growth	10	2	
2	Incentives - to encourage and motivate employees	10	1	1
3	Good working environment - provide canteen, clinic, ambient conditions, H&S	8	3	3
4	Opportunity for growth - provide growth for our people and honest feedback	8	2	1
5	Recognition - don't take teams for granted, show appreciation	7	1	
6	Good leadership - lead our teams by example	6	2	
7	Fair and equitable pay - above average renumeration	6	1	3
8	Respect - treat employees equally	6	1	3
9	Job satisfaction	4	1	1
10	Company Vision - share the vision with the team 'bigger picture'	3	1	1
11	Fairness - Right person for the job - avoid favouritism in appointments	3		1
12	Engagement - make employees feel like a partner in the business	2	1	
13	Provide clear understanding of job description	2		2
14	Good communication - feedback to employees on decisions made	2		
15	Team support/team work - give employees the support they need	2		
16	Job resources - Reliable Machinery - no breakdowns	1		

5.4 Research question 3:

How do the perceptions compare between semi-skilled employees and their managers, in terms of the enabling factors of semi-skilled employee performance?

The top 5 enablers perceived to enable employee performance, as seen from the perspective of semi-skilled employees and their managers is summarised in Table 12:

**Table 12: Top 5 enablers of high performance -
Comparison between semi-skilled employees and their managers**

Ranked order	Top 5 Factors of Semi-skilled employees - Groups 1,2,4 & 5	Total no. of selections (Frequency)
1	Better Salary/Pay	24
2	Recognition and appreciation for work done - management don't take us for granted	19
3	Teamwork - amongst team members	16
4	Training and Development - opportunity to grow skills	16
5	Good leadership - managers must be involved, transparent, fair, interested & develop us	15

Ranked order	Top 5 Factors - Managers of semi-skilled employees - Groups 3&6	Total no. of selections (Frequency)
1	Training and Development - provide skills growth	10
2	Incentives - to encourage and motivate employees	10
3	Good working environment - provide canteen, clinic, ambient conditions, H&S)	8
4	Opportunity for growth - provide growth for our people and honest feedback	8
5	Recognition - don't take teams for granted, incentives	7

In comparing the top 5 enablers of employee performance, between the summary results of semi-skilled employees and their managers, as shown in tables 8 and 11 respectively, it becomes clearly evident that there are distinct disparities in both type and importance, of the enabling factors perceived to drive employee performance between these two groups of organisational stakeholders

5.5 Research question 4:

What are the factors perceived to inhibit semi-skilled employee performance, as seen from the perspective of semi-skilled employees?

The approach taken in collecting the research data from all 4 groups of semi-skilled employees was done again through the hosting and facilitating focus group discussions. Two groups of semi-skilled employees participated in the focus group discussions, at each of these business units, comprising a total of 38 semi-skilled employees, as shown in Table 3 earlier.

These 4 semi-skilled employee focus groups, comprising of 38 participants, produced a total of 151 responses, when having responded to the second focus group question: i.e. **Q2: What are the factors that inhibit/decrease employee performance?,** of which 56 of these responses received votes.

The frequency of the results for the four groups is reflected in Tables 13, 14, 15 and 16 respectively, where N = the number of participants.

Table 13: Group 1 - Inhibitors of high performance - Semi-skilled worker perceptions, N = 6

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	Poor salaries	4	1	
2	No growth opportunities	4	1	1
3	Poor management	3	1	
4	Favouritism - Buddy/Buddy system by management	3		1
5	Lack of communication from management	2		2
6	Lack of training	2		
7	Unfair job selection - favouritism, no equality from management	2	1	1
8	Unfair treatment by management - treat people differently, no equality	2		
9	Taken for granted - not appreciated by management	2		1
10	No transparency from management	2		
11	Poor teamwork amongst team members	1	1	
12	Poor motivation provided by management	1	1	
13	Health and Safety in the workplace	1		
14	Not clearly knowing your job description	1		

**Table 14: Group 2 - Inhibitors of high performance -
Semi-skilled worker perceptions, N = 7**

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	Poor salary	6	3	1
2	Poor communication - on decisions made by management	5		1
3	Poor labour practice - treated unfairly	4	1	2
4	Lack of employee growth	4	1	1
5	Favouritism - favourites are chosen for promotion, process not fair	3	1	
6	Not recognising our qualifications	3		
7	Lack of motivation and inspiration by management	2		
8	Lack of recognition - no appreciation by management when we do well	2	1	
9	No transparency - secrets from management	2		
10	Attitude - negative attitude from management	2		2
11	Being taken for granted - no appreciation, treated as a number	2		

**Table 15: Group 4 - Inhibitors of high performance -
Semi-skilled worker perceptions, N = 11**

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	No respect from leaders	8	1	2
2	Leadership - poor, negative attitude & victimisation	7	2	1
3	Working under pressure - too much workload	6		3
4	Poor salary	5	4	
5	Bad future of the company	4	1	2
6	No good communication from management	4		
7	Bad safety in the workplace	3		1
8	Company likes to gain alone	3		1
9	Poor planning of jobs	3		
10	Not getting support from team members and management	3		
11	Not enough orders/jobs causing short time	3	2	
12	Bad co-operation between fellow workers - no teamwork	2		1
13	Nepotism - family recruited or promoted over others	2	1	
14	Fighting in company - fighting between people in the factory	1		
15	Making non-conformance product	1		

Table 16: Group 5 - Inhibitors of high performance - Semi-skilled worker perceptions, N = 14

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	Poor planning from Management	8	1	3
2	Poor leadership from management	7	3	1
3	Long working hours	6	1	2
4	Unfairness - disciplinary cases	6		2
5	Low salary - not paid equally	5	4	
6	Pressure - work overload and poor planning	4		1
7	Disrespect - unfair treatment by management	4	1	
8	No communication from management	3		1
9	Underrating - not recognised for contributions	3		1
10	Short-time and layoffs - demotivating	3	1	
11	Appreciation - being taken for granted	3		
12	Too many breakdowns (quality of machinery)	2		1
13	Bonus/Incentives	2	1	
14	Teamwork - poor working relations amogst team members	2		
15	No recognition of employees by management	1		
16	Non-conducive environment - health and safety	1		

* Note - GOC focus group no. 5 had 14 participants; however, 2 of the voting ballots were incomplete and as such were considered spoilt ballots. Therefore, the voting outcomes from these 2 ballots were completely disregarded from the results as reflected herewith.

However, on examination of the 56 voted on responses, from the 4 semi-skilled focus group discussions, it was observed that many responses were common between the groups, so much so that they could be grouped into19 unique responses or constructs. The combined scores from the 4 groups were then totaled and these totals are shown in the Table 17 below:

**Table 17: Inhibitors of high performance -
Semi-skilled worker groups combined, N = 38**

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	Inequality and Unfairness - (Nepotism/Favouritism) - Unfair/Unequal treatment by management	28	4	7
2	Working under pressure - too much workload, poor planning by management, long working hours	27	2	9
3	Poor salary /wage - not paid equally	20	12	1
4	Poor leadership by management - negative attitude & victimisation	19	6	4
5	Lack of communication from management	14		4
6	Lack of recognition and appreciation by management - taken for granted, treated as a number	13	1	2
7	No respect from leaders	12	2	2
8	Poor teamwork - amongst team members and with management, fighting between people in the factory	9	1	1
9	Lack of employee growth opportunities	8	2	2
10	Short-time and layoffs - Not enough orders/jobs causing short time	6	3	
11	Poor work environment - Health and Safety in the workplace	5		1
12	Poor leadership - No transparency from management	4		
13	Bad future of the company	4	1	2
14	Poor motivation provided by management	3	1	
15	Lack of training & development	2		
16	Job resources - Too many breakdowns (quality of machinery)	2		1
17	Poor Bonus/Incentives	2	1	
18	Not clearly knowing your job description	1		
19	Making non-conformance product	1		

5.6 Research question 5:

What are the factors that are perceived to inhibit semi-skilled employee performance, as seen from the perspective of semi-skilled employee managers?

The managers were asked to answer the same question, as were the semi-skilled employees *i.e. Q2: What are the factors that inhibit/decrease employee performance?* The responses of the semi-skilled employee managers were collected through the same process as previously described, where each of the participants eventually selected their top 5 responses, along with the top 2 responses they believed to be the most important from their 5 responses and noted these on their first response sheet.

Thereafter, the voting process commenced when the response sheets were collected by the facilitator, who recorded the number of times each response was mentioned as part of the participant's top 5 responses and top 2 responses respectively, in order to determine response frequency and strength.

The 2 semi-skilled employee manager focus groups, comprising of 16 participants, produced a total of 58 responses, when having responded to the second focus group question: i.e. **Q1: What are the factors that enable/increase employee performance?,** of which 21 of these responses received votes.

The frequency of the results for the two groups is reflected in Tables 18 and 19, where N = the number of participants.

Table 18: Group 3 - Inhibitors of high performance - Semi-skilled employee managers perceptions, N = 7

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	Incorrect recruitment - wrong people in the job	6	2	1
2	Low remuneration (Salary)	5	1	2
3	Lack of skills and knowledge of employees	5	2	1
4	No motivation - managements focus on negative, not on positive	4	1	1
5	Leadership issues - poor leadership	3		
6	Poor Communication - across all levels of the business	3		
7	Negative attitude by management	2		
8	Lack of accountability - we create blockages in the system by not making decisions	2		1
9	Lack of ownership - management not being accountable around decision making	2		
10	Limited growth opportunities for employees	2		1
11	Increased admininistration	1	1	

**Table 19: Group 6 - Inhibitors of high performance -
Semi-skilled employee managers perceptions, N = 9**

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	Uncertain future of the company	7		1
2	Poor leadership - don't inspire or show appreciation	6	3	
3	Unfair treatment of employees	6	2	1
4	Lack of decision making by management	5	2	2
5	Unstable working environment	5		1
6	Attitude - negative attitude by management	5	1	3
7	Favouritism - be fair, avoid favouritism	5		1
8	Personal issues - unfair and temperamental behaviour by management	4		
9	Lack of operator skills - Training and development	1	1	
10	Not having the proper tools to do the job	1		

On examination of the 21 voted on responses, from the 2 semi-skilled employee manager focus group discussions, it was observed that many responses were common between the groups, so much so that they could be grouped into 12 unique responses or constructs. The combined scores from the 2 groups were then totalled and these totals are shown in the Table 20.

**Table 20: Inhibitors of high performance -
Semi-skilled employee managers perceptions combined, N = 16**

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	Uncertain/Unstable future of the company	12		2
2	Unfair treatment of employees - be fair, avoid favouritism	11	2	2
3	Poor leadership - negative attitude and unfair tempremental behaviour by management, don't inspire	9	4	3
4	Lack of accountability/ownership by management - creates blockages in the system by not making decisions	9	2	3
5	Negative attitude by management	7		
6	Inadequate training and development - Lack of skills and knowledge of employees/operators	6	3	1
7	Incorrect recruitment - wrong people in the job	6	2	1
8	Low salary (remuneration)	5	1	2
9	No motivation - managements focus on negative, not on positive	4	1	1
10	Personal issues - unfair and temperamental behaviour by management	4		
11	Poor Communication - across all levels of the business	3		
12	Limited growth opportunities for employees	2		1
13	Increased admininistration	1	1	
14	Job resources - Not having the proper tools to do the job	1		

5.7 Research question 6:

How do the perceptions compare between semi-skilled employees and their managers, in terms of the inhibiting factors of semi-skilled employee performance?

The top 5 inhibitors perceived to decrease employee performance, as seen from the perspective of semi-skilled employees and their managers is summarised in Table 21:

**Table 21: Top 5 inhibitors of employee performance -
Comparison between semi-skilled employees and their managers**

Ranked order	Top 5 Factors of Semi-skilled employees - Groups 1,2,4 & 5	Total no. of selections (Frequency)
1	Inequality and Unfairness - (Nepotism/Favouritism) - Unfair/Unequal treatment by management	28
2	Working under pressure - too much workload, poor planning by management, long working hours	27
3	Poor salary /wage - not paid equally	20
4	Poor leadership by management - negative attitude & victimisation	19
5	Lack of communication from management	14
Ranked order	Top 5 Factors - Managers of semi-skilled employees - Groups 3&6	Total no. of selections (Frequency)
1	Uncertain/Unstable future of the company	12
2	Unfair treatment of employees - be fair, avoid favouritism	11
3	Poor leadership - negative attitude and unfair tempremental behaviour by management, don't inspire	9
4	Lack of accountability/ownership by management - creates blockages in the system by not making decisions	9
5	Negative attitude by management	7

In comparing the top 5 inhibitors of employee performance, between the summary results of semi-skilled employees and their managers, as shown in tables 17 and 20 respectively, it becomes clearly evident that there are distinct disparities in both type and importance, of the inhibiting factors perceived to drive employee performance between these two groups of organisational stakeholders.

5.8 Conclusion

The 6 focus group sessions conducted (4 x semi-skilled employee groups and 2 semi-skilled employee manager groups), all served to discuss and produce answers to 2 questions, namely;

Q1: What are the factors that enable/increase employee performance? and

Q2: What are the factors that inhibit/decrease employee performance?

In responding to **Q1**, the 4 semi-skilled employee focus groups, comprising of 38 participants, produced a total of 156 responses and a consolidated listing of 17 unique responses that were voted on to determine a rank order of importance to the groups. On the other hand, the 2 semi-skilled employee manager focus groups, comprising of 16 participants, produced a total of 69 responses and a consolidated listing of 16 unique responses that were voted on to determine a rank order of importance to the groups.

Similarly, in responding to **Q2**, the 4 semi-skilled employee focus groups, comprising of 38 participants, produced a total of 151 responses and a consolidated listing of 19 unique responses that were voted on to determine a rank order of importance to the groups. In addition, the 2 semi-skilled employee manager focus groups, comprising of 16 participants, produced a total of 58 responses and a consolidated listing of 12 unique responses that were voted on to determine a rank order of importance to the groups.

In comparing the top 5 enablers and inhibitors of employee performance, between the summary results of semi-skilled employees and their managers, it becomes clearly evident that there are distinct disparities in both type and importance, of the enabling and inhibiting factors perceived to impact employee performance between these two business stakeholder groups.

6. Chapter six: Discussion of results

The primary aim of this study was to empirically determine the factors which both enabled and inhibited semi-skilled employee performance, whilst simultaneously aiming to identify, on a secondary level, any differences that may exist in terms of these factors between the identified stakeholder groups (i.e. Semi-skilled employees and their managers). This approach was employed with a view of highlighting the differences that may exist in the perceptions of these factors, such that these differences could be resolved between the identified stakeholder groups, in an effort towards fostering high performance employees that would be able to support the creation of high performance sustainable organisations.

Chapter 5 presented the results of this research study, while this chapter now deals with the interpretation of those results. Data was collected through the use of the nominal focus group discussions, which involved 4 groups of semi-skilled employees and 2 groups of semi-skilled employee managers, constituting a total of 54 participants. The discussions to follow in this Chapter draws reference to the literature review of Chapter 2, the identified research questions of Chapter 3 and the results of Chapter 5, all in the context of the primary aim of the study, which effectively satisfied all the research objectives.

6.1 Research question 1:

What are the factors that are perceived to enable semi-skilled employee performance, as seen from the perspective of semi-skilled employees?

The 4 semi-skilled employee focus groups, comprising of 38 participants, produced a total of 156 responses, of which 56 of these responses received votes. However, on examination of the 56 voted on responses, from the 4 semi-skilled worker focus group discussions, it was observed that many responses were common between the groups, so much so that they could be grouped into 17 unique constructs enabling employee performance. The combined scores from the 4 groups, for the top 10 enabling constructs (factors), is shown in the table below:

Table 22: Top 10 enablers of high performance –

Semi-skilled worker groups combined, N = 38

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	Better Salary/Pay	24	12	6
2	Recognition and appreciation for work done - management don't take us for granted	19	1	3
3	Teamwork - amongst team members	16	6	3
4	Training and Development - opportunity to grow skills	16		4
5	Good leadership - managers must be involved, transparent, fair, interested & develop us	15		4
6	Respect from management - to be treated equally - care about us	14	4	3
7	Communication - management feedback on company and indiv. Performance	13	4	
8	Bonus/Reward /Incentives system (Extrinsic) - Motivational Reward System	11	2	3
9	Opportunity for growth - career growth/promotions	9	2	2
10	Job resources - to have the materials I need for my job - to satisfy customer	9	2	2

According to the study conducted, these top 10 factors driving employee performance as perceived by semi-skilled workers, can be grouped into 6 common themes as listed below:

- No. 1: Fair Pay (Constructs: 1 & 8)
- No. 2: Recognition and appreciation (Construct 2)
- No. 3: Teamwork (Construct 3)
- No. 4: Training and development (Constructs 4 & 9)
- No. 5: Good leadership (Constructs: 2,5,6 & 7)
- No. 6: Job resources (Construct 10)

Analysis of the above results in the context of the literature study undertaken has the following outcomes:

6.1.1 Interpretation of results

6.1.1.1 Fair pay

The requirement for better pay was identified to be the No. 1 enabler of semi-skilled employee performance, as voted on by the participants of the semi-skilled worker groups. 'Better pay/salary', as a construct, had a frequency of 24 selections thus representing 66.7% of the groups' participants. This finding, while agreeable with some aspects of the literature, also finds itself in contradiction with other aspects of the literature.

The literature in alignment with this finding states that compensation satisfaction is seen to be a key element that influences employee behaviour in terms of employee turnover, motivation, commitment and performance (Danish et al., 2015; Bhanu, 2011; Sadri and Bowen, 2011; Burgess et al., 2010 and Bristow et al., 2011). This alignment in the literature is also mirrored in Maslow's hierarchy of needs model, which identified being paid a fair wage/salary as the basic building block referred to as 'physiological needs' at the base of the pyramid (Sadri and Bowen, 2011 and Schraeder and Jordan, 2011). This view is also supported by the study conducted by Saklani (2010), where it was found that economic well-being, in line with Maslow's' first level of physiological needs, surfaced as the key driver of Quality of work life (QWL) and associated motivation & performance, where salary/wages are fundamental towards meeting employee needs, before they progress to higher order needs, needing to be satisfied.

However, Hertzberg's two-factory theory on the other hand, identifies two key themes namely, job satisfaction (i.e. 'Motivator factors') and job dissatisfaction (i.e. 'Hygiene factors'), which stipulates that motivator factors which created job satisfaction did not create job dissatisfaction when they were not present, while hygiene factors when present, reduced dissatisfaction but did not increase satisfaction or motivation, towards improvement in employee performance (Guha, 2010 and Harell and Daim, 2010). In this context, Hertzberg identified wages/salary to be a hygiene factor, meaning that it will not lead to improvement in employee satisfaction or motivation when removed. Clearly the findings of this study, strongly contradicts Hertzberg's theory, in that it identified better 'salary/wage' as the No.1 'motivator factor' driving employee motivation, satisfaction and associated performance.

6.1.1.2 Recognition and appreciation

Approximately 53% of the groups' participants selected recognition and appreciation, as a key enabler driving semi-skilled employee performance, thus placing recognition and appreciation as the second most influential factor enabling semi-skilled employee performance.

This finding appears to agree with the literature, where recognition was identified to be one the key enablers of productive organisational energy which integrally improved employee productivity (Louw, 2012). In parallel, in the context of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, recognition finds itself at the pen-ultimate level of the pyramid, before self-actualisation (Sadri and Bowen, 2011) and is similarly identified as a 'motivator factor' in Hertzberg's 2 factor theory increasing employee satisfaction, performance and organisational success (Denton, 2010; Guha, 2010 and Harell and Daim, 2010).

In addition, reward and recognition systems can be used as a practical means to improve employee recognition and appreciation (Danish et al, 2015 and Schraeder and Jordan, 2011), however such reward system and its measurement indices must be aligned towards creating discretionary effort from employees, otherwise the process runs the risk of creating the unintended result of de-motivation (Kaufman, 2009). It is therefore clear that semi-skilled employees in South Africa have a strong desire to be acknowledged and appreciated, as this serves to intrinsically motivate and improve their performance.

6.1.1.3 Teamwork

Other than for the study by Anitha (2014) which identified team & co-worker interactions, as specific factors that had significant impact on employee engagement in driving employee performance, the literature study remained vague on the impact of team work on employee performance. While having said that though, it was cited in the study by Makikangas et al. (2016) that the perception of team performance was integrally associated with both individual and teamwork engagement but no clarification was drawn in terms of teamwork engagement on employee performance. However, one can infer from the study by Bhanu (2011) on pay dispersion, that pay differentials have negative effect on employee satisfaction and performance where organisations require team members to work closely and collaboratively. Nonetheless, South African semi-skilled workers rank teamwork as a very important enabler of performance given it was selected by approximately 45% of the groups' participants.

6.1.1.4   Training and development

The finding of 'training and development' as being an enabler of semi-skilled employee performance, was ranked equally as important as 'teamwork' (i.e. selected by approximately 45% of the groups' participants), tends to agree with the literature, where "training & career development", was found to be one of the key determinants of employee engagement, which subsequently had significant impact on driving employee performance (Anitha, 2014). In addition and specifically in the context of JD-R theory, training and development was clearly identified as a Job resource that improved employee engagement and associated employee performance (Schaufeli, 2017; Bakker and Demerouti, 2017 and Demerouti et al., 2001).

In this context, performance management is defined as "an integrated process in which managers work with their employees to set expectations, measure and review results, and reward performance, in order to improve employee performance, with the ultimate aim of positively affecting organisational success", where training and development is seen to be an integral means to improving one's skills (Farndale et al., 2011, p. 7).

It can therefore be inferred, that South African semi-skilled employees attach high importance towards learning and personal development, with the aim of improving their competency and skills levels. It could be argued that this focus by semi-skilled workers towards personal development and growth, which is classified as a non-monetary token of organisational appreciation (Danish et al., 2015; Schraeder and Jordan, 2011; Flowers et al., 2010 and Guha, 2010), is underpinned by the need to obtain better pay, which is normally associated with promotions to the next higher level of skilled work.

6.1.1.5   Good leadership

This study identified the extrinsic motivator of leadership, as being the 5th highest enabler of semi-skilled employee performance, with this construct being selected by approximately 42% of the groups' participants. As a theme,

leadership encompasses elements of management feedback, transparency, equality & respect and finds significant agreement with the literature.

In the context of the literature, leadership overarches the entire organisational strategy and in order for leadership to create a clear vision and direction for the organisation and its employees it becomes imperative that good leadership focus their attention towards the antecedents of employee engagement namely, "work environment, clear communication, purpose, workplace well-being, compensation, company policies, training & career development, team & co-worker interactions", given that employee engagement was found to have a major impact on driving employee performance (Flowers et al., 2010 and Anita, 2014). Further, transformation leadership is a key driver of employee satisfaction, which seeks to motivate employees through appealing to their values of morality, which goes well beyond the ideology of self-interest and individualistic gains, which is underpinned by goal setting theory and self-determination theory (Paarlberg and Lavigna, 2010). Semi-skilled workers therefore look towards management (leadership) to chart the waters and provide direction and guidance in terms of where the organisation is headed and how they should prioritise their work efforts.

6.1.1.6   Job resources

Approximately 23% of the semi-skilled employee groups' participants selected Job resources to be an enabler of performance, thereby giving this construct a ranked order of 10th place. However, what was interesting to note was that while the literature states job resources, in the context of JD-R theory, is promulgated as a motivational process leading to employee engagement and improved performance (Demerouti et al., 2001 and Van Woerkom et al., 2016), South African semi-skilled workers identified job resources as tools to do their job better but with the end goal of enhancing customer satisfaction, as opposed to being just an extrinsic motivation factor.

6.1.2 Conclusion of research question 1

There is a mixture of extrinsic motivators/enablers (i.e. pay, training and development, job resources) and intrinsic motivators/enablers (i.e. teamwork, recognition and reward) all of which are facilitated by management (i.e. leadership).

South African semi-skilled workers identified fair pay as the most important enabler of employee performance, which contradicts the findings of Hertzberg's 'two-factor theory', where salary/wage is indicated to be a hygiene factor, that if removed will not improve employee satisfaction or motivation (Guha, 2010).

Recognition and appreciation then ranked as the second most influential factor suggesting that semi-skilled workers are intrinsically motivated to improve their performance, by virtue of their strong desire to be acknowledged and appreciated. Equally interesting to note was the gap in the literature regards the impact of teamwork on performance, which incidentally semi-skilled workers ranked to be the third highest enabler of performance. Semi-skilled employees also believed that training and development enabled their performance through improving their competency and skills levels, while felt that leadership should provide direction in terms of where the organisation is headed and guidance on how they should prioritise their work efforts. Finally, job resources emerged as a construct that identified semi-skilled workers wanted the tools to enable them to do their job better, with the end goal of enhancing customer satisfaction.

6.2 Research question 2:

What are the factors that are perceived to enable semi-skilled employee performance, as seen from the perspective of semi-skilled employee managers?

The 2 semi-skilled employee manager groups, comprising of 16 participants, produced a total of 69 responses, of which 23 of these responses received votes. However, on examination of the 23 voted on responses, from the

2 semi-skilled employee manager group discussions, it was observed that many responses were common between the groups, so much so that they could be grouped into 16 unique constructs (factors) driving employee performance. The combined scores from the 2 groups, for the top 10 enabling constructs, are shown in the table below:

Table 23: Top 10 enablers of high performance -

Semi-skilled employee managers perceptions combined: N = 16

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	Training and Development - provide skills growth	10	2	
2	Incentives - to encourage and motivate employees	10	1	1
3	Good working environment - provide canteen, clinic, ambient conditions, H&S)	8	3	3
4	Opportunity for growth - provide growth for our people and honest feedback	8	2	1
5	Recognition - don't take teams for granted, show appreciation	7	1	
6	Good leadership - lead our teams by example	6	2	
7	Fair and equitable pay - above average renumeration	6	1	3
8	Respect - treat employees equally	6	1	3
9	Job satisfaction	4	1	1
10	Company Vision - share the vision with the team 'bigger picture'	3	1	1

According to the study conducted, these top 10 factors driving employee performance as perceived by the managers of semi-skilled workers, can be grouped into 5 common themes as listed below:

- No. 1: Training and job growth (Constructs 1 & 4)
- No. 2: Incentives and recognition (Constructs 2 & 5)
- No. 3: Working Environment (Construct 3)
- No. 4: Good leadership (Constructs: 6,8 and 10)
- No. 5: Fair pay and job satisfaction (Constructs: 7 & 9)

Analysis of the above results in the context of the literature study undertaken has the following outcomes:

6.2.1 Interpretation of results

6.2.1.1 Training and job growth

The finding of 'training and development' was identified to be the most important enabler/construct driving semi-skilled employee performance, as voted on by the managers of the semi-skilled worker groups. 'Training and development'', as a construct, had a frequency of 10 selections thus representing 62.5% of the groups' participants. This finding, tends to agree with the literature, where "training & development", was found to be one of the key extrinsic determinants of employee engagement and job resources (Guha, 2010 and Anitha, 2014), which subsequently had significant impact on driving employee performance and organisational success (Anitha, 2014; Danish et al., 2015; Schaufeli, 2017; Bakker and Demerouti, 2017; Demerouti et al., 2001 and Farndale et al., 2011). In this context, the practice of mentoring by management serves as a practical means to develop and grow an employee in the organisation which has a positive effect on employee performance (Schraeder and Jordan, 2011).

In the context of the research results, it can be inferred that South African (S.A) managers of semi-skilled workers placed the highest importance on training and developing their employees, as a means to improving employee competency and performance (Guha, 2010; Danish et al., 2015 and Schraeder and Jordan, 2011). Therefore, it can be argued that this focus by semi-skilled managers towards employee personal development and growth is underpinned by the country's political history, which in the past offered little chance for semi-skilled workers to access training and development opportunities. In addition, current government policies and regulations have been developed in such a way that it incentivises firms to invest in training and development of employees, which may also be driving this focus and/or perception held by the managers of semi-skilled employees.

6.2.1.2   Incentives and recognition

The construct of 'incentives' was found to be a significant enabler of semi-skilled employee performance, which was incidentally ranked to be equally important as the previous construct of 'training and development' (i.e. selected by approximately 62.5% of the groups' participants). The results obtained tend to agree with the literature, where recognition was identified to be one the key enablers of productive organisational energy (Louw, 2012), a precursor to self-actualisation in the framework of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Sadri and Bowen, 2011) and a 'motivator factor' in Hertzberg's 2 factor theory, all of which contributed to increasing employee satisfaction, performance and organisational success (Denton, 2010; Guha, 2010 and Harell and Daim, 2010). Further, incentive programmes were found to be an effective rewards and recognition system that represented a practical, non-monetary approach, which firms could implement in an effort towards improving employee motivation and performance levels (Danish et al., 2015 and Schraeder and Jordan, 2011).

Given the research results, it was clear that South African managers of semi-skilled workers placed very high importance on the construct of 'incentives', similar to 'training and development', where 'incentives' was found to be a significant enabler of semi-skilled employee performance. Given the nature of these two constructs, it can be inferred, that S.A. managers are strongly focussed on extrinsic, non-monetary type of motivators to improve semi-skilled employee performance. However should incentives be used as a reward system, managers must align its measurement indices towards creating discretionary effort from employees; otherwise the process runs the risk of creating the unintended result of de-motivation, which is underpinned by Vrooms expectancy theory (Danish et al., 2015; Harell and Daim, 2010 and Kaufman, 2009)

6.2.1.3   Work environment

Approximately 50% of the groups' participants selected 'good working environment', as a key enabler driving semi-skilled employee performance, thus placing 'good working environment' as the third most influential construct/factor enabling semi-skilled employee performance.

This finding seems to agree with the literature in considering the study by Anita (2014), where the antecedent work environment, was found to have a significant impact on employee engagement, which in turn had a major impact on employee performance. In addition, JD-R theory also identified physical work environment as an antecedent of job demands, which if un-conducive, placed employees at high risk of getting exhausted and burnt-out (Demerouti et al., 2001 and Van Woerkom et al., 2016). Further, a work environment that offers employees flexibility, access to growth and promotion opportunities, training and development and the like, could also serve as a non-monetary type of reward or incentive that increases employee motivation and performance (Danish et al., 2015 and Schraeder and Jordan, 2011).

Worth mentioning as well, is that the data collected did not specifically mention or make reference to workplace fun, as an element within the ambit of a 'good working environment' but this did get mentioned in the literature as a strong and stimulating factor which was identified by the literature as an indicate that fun in the workplace has the ability to positively impact both employees and companies, where studies undertaken have shown positive links between fun in the workplace, to that of employee satisfaction, reduced levels of absenteeism, increased levels of innovation and positive organisational behaviour (Lamm and Meeks, 2009).

Therefore, it would seem that South African managers of semi-skilled workers take onus, cognisance and the responsibility of creating healthy and balance work environments, that will foster improved employee performance (Guha, 2010; Danish et al., 2015 and Schraeder and Jordan, 2011). In addition, it was interesting to note that the construct of 'good working environment' could also

be seen as an extrinsic, non-monetary type of reward that increases employee motivation and performance (Danish et al., 2015 and Schraeder and Jordan, 2011).

6.2.1.4   Good leadership

This study identified the extrinsic construct of 'good leadership', as being the sixth highest enabler of semi-skilled employee performance, with this construct being selected by approximately 37.5% of the groups' participants. As a theme, leadership encompasses elements of respect, vision and team leadership and finds significant agreement with the literature, where it becomes imperative that good leadership focus their attention towards the antecedents of employee engagement namely, "work environment, clear communication, purpose, workplace well-being, compensation, company policies, training & career development, team & co-worker interactions", given that employee engagement was found to have a major impact on driving employee performance (Flowers et al., 2010 and Anita, 2014),   which goes well beyond the ideology of self-interest and individualistic gains, which is underpinned by goal setting theory and self-determination theory (Paarlberg and Lavigna, 2010).

It therefore emerges that S.A. managers of semi-skilled workers are tacitly cognisant that their leadership styles and practices, extrinsically impacts employee satisfaction & performance. Therefore in order for employees to remain productive, management needs to provide direction to their teams in line with the organisations vision, goals and objectives (Flowers et al., 2010).

6.2.1.5   Fair pay and job satisfaction

The finding of 'fair and equitable pay', although identified as being part the top 10 constructs enabling, ranked fairly low at seventh position in terms of the importance attached to this construct, by the participants of the manager groups of semi-skilled employees. Nonetheless, 'fair and equitable pay' as a construct finds both agreement and contradiction with the literature. On the one hand, similar to that of semi-skilled employees, 'fair pay' was again associated with

being a 'motivator factor', as opposed to a hygiene factor, as defined by Hertzberg's 2 factor theory (Guha, 2010 and Harell and Daim, 2010). This finding strongly contradicts Hertzberg's theory, in that it conversely identified 'fair and equitable pay' as a motivator factor, which was perceived to positively influence employee motivation, satisfaction and associated performance.

On the other hand the construct of 'fair and equitable pay' found alignment with the literature in that 'pay satisfaction' was found to be a key element that influenced employee behaviour (job satisfaction) in terms of employee turnover, motivation, commitment and performance (Danish et al., 2015; Bhanu, 2011; Sadri and Bowen, 2011; Burgess et al., 2010 and Bristow et al., 2011).

Similarly, this alignment with the literature is also mirrored in Maslow's hierarchy of needs model, which identified being paid a fair wage/salary as a 'physiological need' at the base of the pyramid (Sadri and Bowen, 2011 and Schraeder and Jordan, 2011). This view is also supported by the study conducted by Saklani (2010), where it was found that economic well-being, in line with Maslow's' first level of physiological needs, surfaced as the key driver of Quality of work life (QWL) and associated motivation and performance.

So while 'fair and equitable pay' ranked fairly low on the scale of importance by managers of semi-skilled employees, it was nonetheless an acknowledgement that this construct had bearing on employee motivation and performance (Danish et al., 2015; Bhanu, 2011; Sadri and Bowen, 2011; Burgess et al., 2010 and Bristow et al., 2011).

6.2.2 Conclusion of research question 2

The enablers of semi-skilled employee performance, as viewed by the managers of semi-skilled workers, were all observed to be extrinsic motivators (i.e. training and development, recognition and reward, job resources, working environment, leadership and fair pay).

South African managers of semi-skilled workers identified 'training and development' to be the most important enabler of semi-skilled employee performance, (Guha, 2010; Danish et al., 2015 and Schraeder and Jordan, 2011). In addition, these managers ranked the construct of 'incentives', within the theme of recognition and reward, to be the second most important construct improving employee performance, suggesting that semi-skilled workers are perceived to be extrinsically motivated.

Working environment then ranked as the third most influential factor, thus inferring that S.A. managers of semi-skilled workers take onus, cognisance and the responsibility of creating healthy and balance work environments, that will be able to foster improved employee performance (Guha, 2010; Danish et al., 2015 and Schraeder and Jordan, 2011). In addition, the construct of 'leadership' ranked at fourth place, which indicated that managers were aware that their leadership styles and practices, also extrinsically impacted employee satisfaction & performance and that it was their responsibility to provide direction to their teams (Flowers et al., 2010).

Finally, fair pay was identified to be a 'motivator' factor by the managers of semi-skilled employees further contradicting the findings of Hertzberg's 'two-factor theory', where salary/wage is indicated to be a hygiene factor, that if removed will not improve employee satisfaction or motivation (Guha, 2010).

6.3 Research question 3:

How do the perceptions compare between semi-skilled employees and their managers, in terms of the enabling factors of semi-skilled employee performance?

In comparing the top 5 enablers of employee performance, between the summary results of semi-skilled employees and their managers, as shown in tables 8 and 11 respectively of Chapter 5, it becomes clearly evident that there are distinct disparities in both type and importance, of the enabling factors perceived to drive employee performance between these two groups of organisational stakeholders. The top 5 enablers perceived to enable employee performance, as seen from the perspective of semi-skilled employees and their managers is summarised in the Table 24, while the percentage frequency, as a function of the number of participants, is graphically shown in figures 5 and 6 further below:

Table 24: Top 5 enablers of high performance - Comparison between semi-skilled employees and their managers

Ranked order	Top 5 Factors of Semi-skilled employees - Groups 1,2,4 & 5	Total no. of selections (Frequency)
1	Better Salary/Pay	24
2	Recognition and appreciation for work done - management don't take us for granted	19
3	Teamwork - amongst team members	16
4	Training and Development - opportunity to grow skills	16
5	Good leadership - managers must be involved, transparent, fair, interested & develop us	15

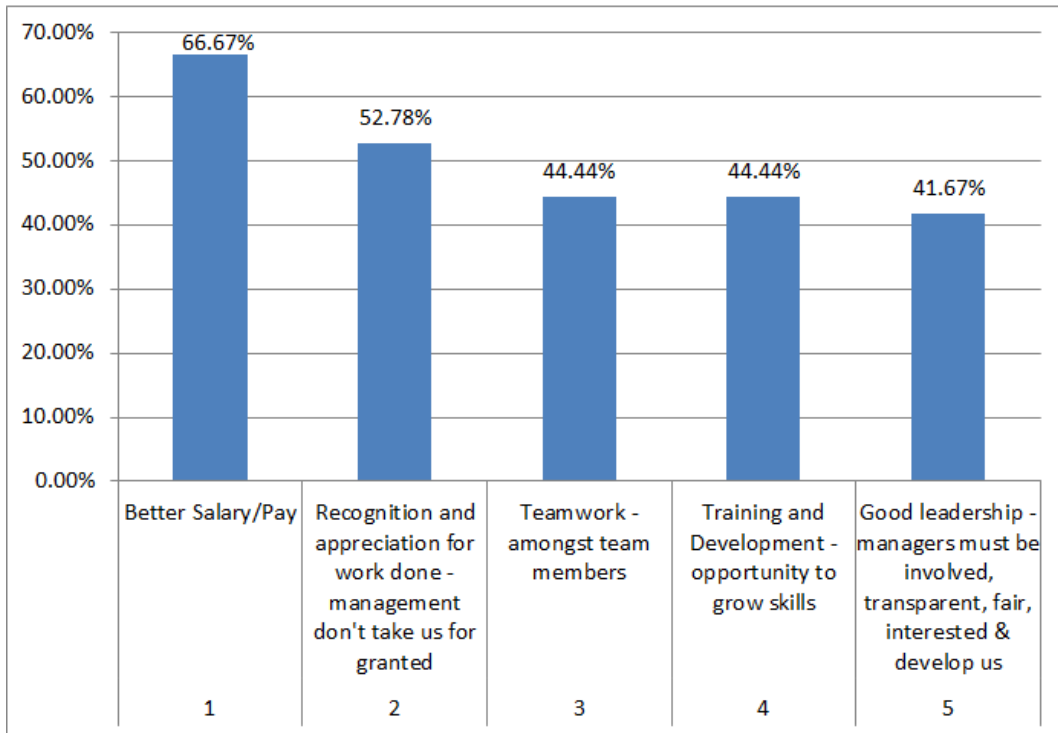| Ranked order	Top 5 Factors - Managers of semi-skilled employees - Groups 3&6	Total no. of selections (Frequency)
1	Training and Development - provide skills growth	10
2	Incentives - to encourage and motivate employees	10
3	Good working environment - provide canteen, clinic, ambient conditions, H&S)	8
4	Opportunity for growth - provide growth for our people and honest feedback	8
5	Recognition - don't take teams for granted, incentives	7

**Figure 5: Top 5 enablers based on frequency of selection -
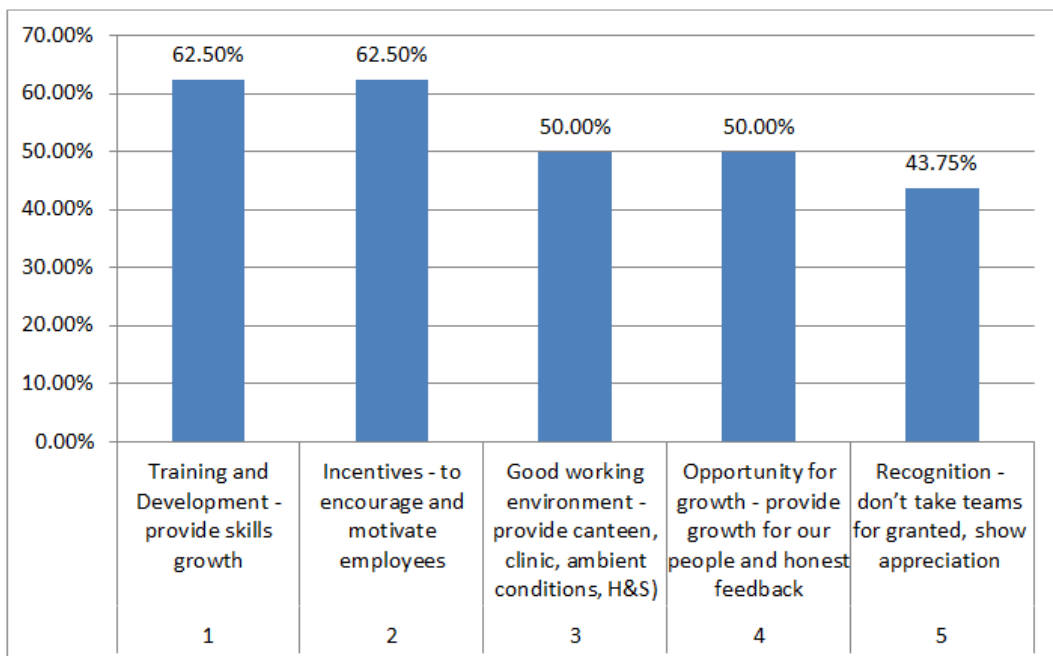Semi-skilled employees**

**Figure 6: Top 5 enablers based on frequency of selection -
Semi-skilled employee managers**

6.3.1 Interpretation of results

The perceptions held by the participants of the semi-skilled employee manager group's, specifically in terms of the themes extracted in considering the top 10 enablers of semi-skilled employee performance, was interestingly similar to that of the perceptions held by the semi-skilled employee groups', in which both stakeholder groups identified the themes of training and development, recognition and reward, good leadership and fair pay.

However, having said that, while the themes between these two stakeholder groups (i.e. semi-skilled employees and their managers) were very similar in nature, the specific constructs constituting these themes was noted to have very different rankings of importance, between these organisational stakeholder groups. Comparing specifically the top 5 enablers (factors) driving semi-skilled employee performance between semi-skilled employees and their managers, as shown in Table 24, the following are noted:

- Semi-skilled employees identified better pay as the most important construct (factor) enabling performance, yet this construct does not appear in the top 5 most important enablers by their managers

- Recognition was identified as a construct in both groups, however it should be noted that this construct was more intrinsic when identified by the semi-skilled employees as seeking "appreciation", while on the other hand this construct was viewed to be more extrinsic by virtue of 'incentives' as identified by the manager groups. Recognition ranked as the second most important to semi-skilled workers while ranking last for the manager groups, in the framework of the top 5 enablers

- Similar to fair pay, teamwork was identified to enable employee performance as perceived by the semi-skilled worker groups, while this construct did not appear on the list of the top 5 enablers of their managers. It is also important to note that teamwork also served as an intrinsic motivator of performance as viewed by semi-skilled workers.

- Training and development was identified as enablers by both stakeholder groups, but held much lower importance to the semi-skilled employee groups, as opposed to their managers who ranked this construct as the most important enabler of employee performance

- Good leadership as a construct, was only identified by semiskilled workers to be an enabler of performance albeit it having the lowest importance to them, in the framework of the top 5 enablers

- Good working environment did not feature in the top 5 enablers as perceived by semi-skilled workers, but did however appear as the third most important enabler of performance as identified by the manager groups

- Opportunity for growth, as identified by the manager groups, while not appearing on the top 5 enablers of semi-skilled employees, is somewhat synonymous with training and development as previously discussed

6.3.2 Conclusion of research question 3

These findings clearly indicate that S.A. managers are strongly focussed on extrinsic, non-monetary type of motivators, to improve semi-skilled employee performance (Danish et al., 2015; Harell and Daim, 2010 and Kaufman, 2009), while on the other hand semi-skilled workers identified a mixture of both extrinsic motivators/enablers (i.e. pay, training and development, job resources) and intrinsic motivators/enablers (i.e. teamwork, recognition and appreciation) all of which are believed to be facilitated by management (i.e. leadership). Semi-skilled workers are therefore driven by their emotions through the support of effective team work and appreciation, while being primarily driven by better pay as the No. 1 motivator of improved performance. Managers of semi-skilled workers on the other hand, did not identify any intrinsic motivators of performance and in all instances of the top 5 enablers, had completely misaligned perceptions of what drives employee performance, to that of what semi-skilled workers actually attached order of importance to. This outcome indicating the differences or misalignment in viewpoints between the identified

stakeholders, presents an opportunity for management to change some practices, in order to improve the performance of their semi-skilled employees.

6.4 Research question 4:

What are the factors that are perceived to inhibit semi-skilled employee performance, as seen from the perspective of semi-skilled employees?

The 4 semi-skilled employee focus groups, comprising of 38 participants, produced a total of 151 responses, of which 56 of these responses received votes. However, on examination of the 56 voted on responses, from the 4 semi-skilled worker focus group discussions, it was observed that many responses were common between the groups, so much so that they could be grouped into 19 unique constructs (factors) enabling employee performance. The combined scores from the 4 groups, for the top 10 inhibiting constructs, is shown in the table below:

**Table 25: Top 10 inhibitors of high performance –
Semi-skilled worker groups combined, N = 38**

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	Inequality and Unfairness - (Nepotism/Favouritism) - Unfair/Unequal treatment by management	28	4	7
2	Working under pressure - too much workload, poor planning by management, long working hours	27	2	9
3	Poor salary /wage - not paid equally	20	12	1
4	Poor leadership by management - negative attitude & victimisation	19	6	4
5	Lack of communication from management	14		4
6	Lack of recognition and appreciation by management - taken for granted, treated as a number	13	1	2
7	No respect from leaders	12	2	2
8	Poor teamwork - amongst team members and with management, fighting between people in the factory	9	1	1
9	Lack of employee growth opportunities	8	2	2
10	Short-time and layoffs - Not enough orders/jobs causing short time	6	3	

According to the study conducted, these top 10 factors inhibiting employee performance as perceived by semi-skilled workers, can be grouped into 6 common themes as listed below:

- No. 1: Inequality and unfairness (Construct 1)
- No. 2: Poor working environment (Constructs 2 &10)
- No. 3: Low salary/wage (Constructs 3 & 9)
- No. 4: Poor leadership (Constructs 4, 5 & 7)
- No. 5: Lack of recognition and appreciation (Construct 6)
- No. 6: Poor Teamwork (Construct 8)

Analysis of the above results in the context of the literature study undertaken has the following outcomes:

6.4.1 Interpretation of results

6.4.1.1 Inequality and unfairness

Semi-skilled employees identified 'inequality and unfairness' to be the No. 1 inhibitor of semi-skilled employee performance. 'Inequality and unfairness', as a construct, had a frequency of 28 selections thus representing approximately 78% of the groups' participants.

This significant finding seemed to agree with the literature in the context of equity theory, which suggests that employees are motivated when they perceive the organisations practices as being impartial when it comes to rewarding employees for their efforts in performing their jobs (Danish et al., 2015 and Harell and Daim, 2010). In this context, it can be inferred that employees expect to be rewarded the same for equal effort invested in executing tasks failing which will result in demotivation, thus resulting in job dissatisfaction, employee turnover and reduced performance (Danish et al., 2015; Harell and Daim, 2010).

Given the very high frequency of this construct it can be inferred that semi-skilled employee performance will reduce when they believe that management practices are unfair and without equality. Further, it may be argued that underpinning this construct is the perception of whether pay dispersion is fairly practiced (Bhanu, 2011) which may result in employee dissatisfaction and negatively impacted pay satisfaction (unfairness), which could cause employees to leave the organisation altogether, given their dissatisfaction. Additionally, the finding of this construct may be an indicator that there may be a clash of cultural differences between organisational and individual cultural beliefs, which could be perceived by employees as being unfair if unduly imposed (Schraeder and Jordan, 2011). This view also goes hand in hand with equity theory, which speaks to employee perception of the fairness of organisational practices (Danish et al., 2015; Harell and Daim, 2010 and Kernan et al., 2011).

6.4.1.2   Poor working environment

Approximately 75% of the groups' participants selected 'working under pressure' (with elements of long working hours, high work load and poor planning) as a key construct inhibiting semi-skilled employee performance, thus placing 'working under pressure' as the second most influential factor inhibiting semi-skilled employee performance.

This finding appears to agree with the literature, largely in the context of Job demands-resources theory (JD-R theory) which identified high physical workload and routinely run shift work (amongst other factors) as being antecedents of job demands, thus exposing employees to high risk of exhaustion and burnt-out which could result in workplace injuries, absenteeism and reduced performance (Schaufeli, 2017; Demerouti et al., 2001 and Van Woerkom, Bakker and Nishii, 2016). In this context, Staren (2009) identified several other factors that contributed to unproductive work environments, which included that of deficient company policies & procedures, lack of talent management, poor compensation and irregular/poor communication.

It can therefore be inferred that a poor 'working environment' has significant impact on semi-skilled employee performance, would could be attributed to semi-skilled employees becoming disengaged from their jobs due to an increase in personal and work life imbalances, thus resulting in mounting work pressure and reduced employee performance and associated reduction in organisational competitiveness (Jha and Kumar, 2016). Managers should therefore demonstrate positive interpersonal behaviour that expresses employee respect, empowerment & trust and lead through management practices that are transparent & integrity based (Staren, 2009).

6.4.1.3   Low salary/wage

The construct of 'poor salary/ wage' ranked as the third most important factor inhibiting employee performance as perceived by the semi-skilled employee groups, which was selected by approximately 56% of the groups' participants.

The literature in alignment with this finding states that Maslow's hierarchy of needs identifies the first level of physiological needs, to be the perception of being paid a fair wage/salary. Once this level is reasonably satisfied, employees then move to the second higher level of needs required to be met (Sadri and Bowen, 2011). Similarly, Hertzberg's two-factory theory identified wages/salary to be a hygiene factor, meaning that it will lead to employee dissatisfaction when perceived to be unfair, thus resulting in demotivation and reduced employee performance (Guha, 2010 and Harell and Daim, 2010).

This alignment in the literature is also mirrored in the study conducted by Saklani (2010), where it was found that economic well-being, in line with Maslow's' first level of physiological needs, surfaced as the key driver of Quality of work life (QWL), which was found to drive motivation and performance.

Similar to the discussions in section 6.1.1.1, where 'fair pay' was identified to be the most important factor driving employee performance, it therefore comes as no surprise that this construct featured as a significant factor inhibiting semi-skilled employee performance, as perceived by the semi-skilled employee

group participants (Guha, 2010 and Harell and Daim, 2010. Also interesting to note, is that this finding contradicts the finding by Sadri and Bowen (2011), who argued that while employees tend to list pay and pay satisfaction as critically important aspects of a job, it was found in a study that only 20 percent of an employee's job satisfaction was attributed to pay satisfaction, whereas in this study approximately 60% of the participants selected this factor as an inhibitor of employee of performance.

6.4.1.4 Poor leadership

This study identified the extrinsic inhibitor of 'poor leadership', as being the fourth highest enabler of semi-skilled employee performance, with this construct being selected by approximately 53% of the groups' participants. As a theme, poor leadership encompasses elements of management feedback, management power, transparency, equality & respect and finds significant agreement with the literature.

In conjunction with the discussions of 6.1.1.5, Higgs (2009) states that 'bad' leadership has the ability to create 'dysfunctional performance' and an unproductive organisational environment. Such 'bad' leadership attributes generally manifest themselves through the abuse of positional power for personal gain, abusive treatment that damages employee well-being & self-efficacy, obsession with perfectionism and practicing unethical, illegal &corrupt behaviours. In addition, these bad leadership attributes have adverse effects on employee well-being, job satisfaction, motivation and affective commitment, which then have adverse effects on employee performance and organisational performance in the long term (Higgs, 2009). Further, if employees do not trust the organisations leadership, they will eventually become disengaged and their performance decreases, which then leads to employees leaving their organisations in search of other opportunities (Sadri and Bowen, 2011). Furthermore, according to Sadri and Bowen (2011, p. 46), it "can cost organisations from 30 percent to 400 percent of that worker's annual salary" in replacing a talented employee that has left the organisation.

Poor leadership as a construct, surfaced to be quite a significant factor inhibiting semi-skilled employee performance, as perceived by the participants of the semi-skilled employee groups. Similar to the finding, where semi-skilled employees identified 'good leadership' as being an important construct enabling performance (i.e. 47% frequency of selection), so too was 'poor leadership' identified as being an inhibiting factor, reducing semi-skilled employee performance. Arguably, lack of trust in and poor communication from leadership could be contributors to the view held by semi-skilled employees regarding the construct of 'poor leadership', because through trust in leadership, employees develop organisational co-operation which serves to enhance their organisational commitment and discretionary effort towards ensuring the success of their organisation. Therefore, leadership trustworthiness is a strong determinant which affects employee performance Sharkie (2009).

6.4.1.5   Lack of recognition and appreciation

Within this theme, the study identified the intrinsic inhibitor of 'lack of recognition and appreciation' as the sixth highest inhibitor of semi-skilled employee performance, with this construct being selected by approximately 34% of the groups' participants.

This finding seems to agree with the literature, where recognition was identified to be one the key enablers of productive organisational energy which integrally improved employee productivity (Louw, 2012). In parallel, in the context of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, recognition finds itself at the level of the pyramid, before self-actualisation (Sadri and Bowen, 2011) and is similarly identified as a 'motivator factor' in Hertzberg's 2 factor theory, thus when employees feel they are not recognised and appreciated, then there is a strong likelihood that employee satisfaction and performance will decrease. (Denton, 2010; Guha, 2010 and Harell and Daim, 2010). It is therefore be inferred that recognition and appreciation serves to intrinsically motivate and improve S.A. semi-skilled employee performance.

6.4.1.6   Poor teamwork

South African semi-skilled workers ranked the construct of 'poor teamwork' as a key inhibitor of performance, given it was selected by approximately 24% of the groups' participants.

However, the literature studied remained vague on the impact of team work on employee performance, other than the study by Anitha (2014) which identified team & co-worker interactions, as specific factors that had significant impact on employee engagement in driving employee performance. Nonetheless based on the study by Bhanu (2011), one can argue that pay differentials in teams negatively influenced employee satisfaction and performance.

6.4.2   Conclusion of research question 4

The collective themes in the framework of the inhibitors of semi-skilled employee performance, as identified by the semi-skilled employee groups were identified to be a mixture of extrinsic demotivators/inhibitors (i.e. poor working environment, low pay, poor leadership and poor teamwork) and intrinsic demotivators/ inhibitors (i.e. lack of recognition and inequality & unfairness).

Semi-skilled employees identified 'inequality and unfairness' to be the No. 1 inhibitor of semi-skilled employee performance with a frequency of selection of approximately 78% of the groups' participants. It can therefore be inferred that semi-skilled employee performance will reduce when they believe that management practices are unfair and without equality or when pay dispersion or organisational practices are not done equally (Bhanu, 2011; Danish et al., 2015; Harell and Daim, 2010 and Kernan et al., 2011). Similarly, 'working under pressure' was identified to be the second most influential factor inhibiting semi-skilled employee performance, where JD-R theory identified that high physical workload exposed employees to high risk of exhaustion and burnt-out which could result in workplace injuries, absenteeism and reduced performance (Schaufeli, 2017; Demerouti et al., 2001 and Van Woerkom, Bakker and Nishii, 2016). Managers should therefore demonstrate positive interpersonal behaviour

that expresses employee respect, empowerment & trust and lead through management practices that are transparent & integrity based (Staren, 2009).

The construct of 'poor salary/ wage' ranked as the third most important factor inhibiting employee performance, which served to be a key driver of Quality of work life (QWL), which was found to drive motivation and performance (Saklani, 2010). Poor leadership as a construct also surfaced to be quite a significant factor inhibiting semi-skilled employee performance, which is arguably underpinned by the lack of trust in management (Sharkie, 2009).

Lastly, a lack of recognition & appreciation and poor teamwork, were identified as being intrinsic inhibitors that reduced semi-skilled employee performance, which indicates that S.A. semi-skilled employees desire recognition and social acceptance into teams, in order to improve their performance.

6.5   Research question 5:

What are the factors that are perceived to inhibit semi-skilled employee performance, as seen from the perspective of semi-skilled employee managers?

The 2 semi-skilled employee manager groups, comprising of 16 participants, produced a total of 58 responses, of which 21 of these responses received votes. However, on examination of the 21 voted on responses, from the 2 semi-skilled employee manager group discussions, it was observed that many responses were common between the groups, so much so that they could be grouped into 12 unique constructs (factors) driving employee performance. The combined scores from the 2 groups, for the top 10 inhibiting constructs, are shown in the table below:

**Table 26: Top 10 inhibitors of high performance -
Semi-skilled employee managers perceptions combined, N = 16**

Ranked order	Factors/Responses	Total no. of selections (Frequency)	Total no. of selections for 1st most important	Total no. of selections for 2nd most important
1	Uncertain/Unstable future of the company	12		2
2	Unfair treatment of employees - be fair, avoid favouritism	11	2	2
3	Poor leadership - negative attitude and unfair tempremental behaviour by management, don't inspire	9	4	3
4	Lack of accountability/ownership by management - creates blockages in the system by not making decisions	9	2	3
5	Negative attitude by management	7		
6	Inadequate training and development - Lack of skills and knowledge of employees/operators	6	3	1
7	Incorrect recruitment - wrong people in the job	6	2	1
8	Low salary (remuneration)	5	1	2
9	No motivation - managements focus on negative, not on positive	4	1	1
10	Personal issues - unfair and temperamental behaviour by management	4		

According to the study conducted, these top 10 factors inhibiting employee performance, as perceived by the managers of semi-skilled workers, can be grouped into 5 common themes as listed below:

- No. 1: Job security (Construct 1)
- No. 2: Inequality and unfairness (Constructs 2, 3 & 10)
- No. 3: Poor leadership (Constructs 4, 5 & 9)
- No. 4: Inadequate training & development and Human Resources (HR) recruitment practices (Constructs 6 & 7)
- No. 5: Low salary/wage (Construct 8)

Analysis of the above results in the context of the literature study undertaken has the following outcomes:

6.5.1 Interpretation of results

6.5.1.1   Job security

The finding of 'job security' was identified to be the most important construct inhibiting semi-skilled employee performance, as voted on by the managers of the semi-skilled worker groups. 'Job security', as a construct, had a frequency of 12 selections thus representing 75% of the groups' participants.

This finding tends to agree with the literature, where "job security" which is found at the second level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, indicates the basic need for 'safety' in the workplace, which is generally met by a sense of job security (Sadri and Bowen, 2011). It may therefore be inferred that managers of semi-skilled workers believe that semi-skilled employees that have a sense of job security will be engaged and energised towards improved productivity, whilst the converse of such will lend itself to reduced productivity (Louw, 2012). In addition, employees are motivated to perform when they have a sense of job security because they are not threaten by imminent loss of employment in the and will therefore be focussed on being more productive, given that they can plan their future more predictively, failing which will lead to employee disengagement and reduced productivity (Bristow et al., 2011). Lastly, job security, contributes to employee well-being by reducing employee stress and burnout (Demerouti et al., 2001 and Van Woerkom, Bakker and Nishii, 2016).

6.5.1.2   Inequality and unfairness

The managers of semi-skilled employees identified 'inequality and unfairness' to be the second highest inhibitor of semi-skilled employee performance. 'Inequality and unfairness', as a construct, had a frequency of 11 selections thus representing approximately 68% of the groups' participants.

Similar to the discussions of section 6.4.1.1, this finding finds agreement with the literature in the context of equity theory, which suggests that employees are motivated when they perceive the organisations practices as being impartial when it comes to rewarding employees for their efforts in performing their jobs (Danish et al., 2015 and Harell and Daim, 2010). In this context, employees expect to be rewarded the same for equal effort invested in executing tasks, failing which will result in demotivation, thus resulting in job dissatisfaction, employee turnover and reduced performance (Danish et al., 2015; Harell and Daim, 2010).

As such it may be indicative that managers of semi-skilled employees are cognisant that organisational practices, if enforced without fairness and equity in the workplace could negatively impact semi-skilled employee satisfaction and performance (Schraeder and Jordan, 2011; Danish et al., 2015; Harell and Daim, 2010 and Kernan et al., 2011).

6.5.1.3 Poor leadership (Lack of ownership and bureaucratic control)

This study identified the extrinsic inhibitor of 'poor leadership', as being the third highest inhibitor of semi-skilled employee performance, with this construct being selected by approximately 56% of the groups' participants. As a theme, poor leadership encompasses elements of management accountability, attitude, recruitment practices, temperament & ownership and finds significant agreement with the literature.

In conjunction with the discussions of 6.1.1.5, 'bad' leadership has the ability to create 'dysfunctional performance' and an unproductive organisational environment (Higgs, 2009). Such 'bad' leadership attributes generally manifest themselves through the abuse of positional power for personal gain, abusive treatment that damages employee well-being, obsession with perfectionism and practicing unethical, illegal & corrupt behaviours, which collectively serve to reduce employee performance (Higgs, 2009). Trust in leadership, has also been shown to have negative impact on employee engagement, thus resulting in reduced employee performance (Sadri and Bowen, 2011).

Poor leadership as a construct, surfaced to be a significant factor inhibiting semi-skilled employee performance, as perceived by the participants of the semi-skilled employee manager groups. Therefore given the high importance associated with the construct of 'poor leadership', as an inhibitor of semi-skilled employee performance by the managers of semi-skilled employees, it can be inferred that managers acknowledge the impact of their leadership practices on semi-skilled employee performance. Therefore, leadership trustworthiness is a strong determinant which affects employee performance, where managers should avoid increasing bureaucratic controls as a means to increasing

performance (Sharkie, 2009). Bureaucracy, represents an approach which goes against a growing base of literature that indicates people, have a natural affinity towards helping others to grow and a desire to make a positive difference in the lives of others (i.e. leadership). Therefore, such bureaucracy rather has the unintended outcome of limiting and reducing employee performance (Paarlberg and Lavigna, 2010).

6.5.1.4 Inadequate training & development and Human Resources (HR) recruitment practices

The finding of 'inadequate training and development' as an inhibitor of semi-skilled employee performance, was selected by approximately 45% of the groups' participants, tends to agree with the literature, where "training & career development", was found to be one of the key determinants of employee engagement, which subsequently had significant impact on driving employee performance (Anitha, 2014; Schaufeli, 2017; Bakker and Demerouti, 2017 and Demerouti et al., 2001).

It can therefore be inferred, that managers of semi-skilled employees attach high importance towards training and development as a means to improving employee competency and associated semi-skilled employee performance. It could be argued that this focus by semi-skilled employee managers towards personal development, is an indicator of a non-monetary token of organisational appreciation (Danish et al., 2015; Schraeder and Jordan, 2011; Flowers et al., 2010 and Guha, 2010). Similarly, the manager group participants believed that HR recruitment practices must seek to place the right people in the job.

6.5.1.5 Low salary/wage

Approximately 31% of the groups' participants selected 'low salary/wage' as a construct inhibiting employee performance. The construct of 'poor salary/ wage' ranked as the least important theme of inhibitors of employee performance, as perceived by the managers of semi-skilled employees.

As discussed in section 6.4.1.3, the literature in alignment with this finding states that Maslow's hierarchy of needs identifies the first level of physiological needs, to be the perception of being paid a fair wage/salary (Sadri and Bowen, 2011). Similarly, Hertzberg's two-factory theory identified wages/salary to be a hygiene factor, meaning that it will lead to employee dissatisfaction when perceived to be unfair, thus resulting in demotivation and reduced employee performance (Guha, 2010 and Harell and Daim, 2010). This alignment in the literature is also mirrored in the study conducted by Saklani (2010), where it was found that economic well-being, in line with Maslow's' first level of physiological needs, surfaced as the key driver of Quality of work life (QWL), which was found to drive motivation and performance.

This view by semi-skilled employee managers is a clear indicator of their much lower focus on this construct and its effects on employee performance, in fact 'low salary/wage', according to the groups' participants, was identified as the construct with the least importance.

6.5.2 Conclusion of research question 5

The collective themes in the framework of the inhibitors of semi-skilled employee performance, as identified by the managers of semi-skilled employees, were identified to be largely extrinsic in nature (i.e. job security, poor leadership, inadequate training and development and low salary/wage) with the exception of one intrinsic inhibitor (i.e. inequality & unfairness).

The finding of 'job security' was identified to be the most important construct inhibiting semi-skilled employee performance, as voted on by the managers of the semi-skilled worker groups. Job security, contributes to employee well-being by reducing employee stress and burnout (Demerouti et al., 2001 and Van Woerkom, Bakker and Nishii, 2016).

The managers of semi-skilled employees then identified 'inequality and unfairness' to be the second highest inhibitor of semi-skilled employee performance, where it can be inferred that employees expect to be rewarded

the same for equal effort invested in executing tasks, failing which will result in demotivation, thus resulting in job dissatisfaction, employee turnover and reduced performance (Danish et al., 2015; Harell and Daim, 2010). The manager group participants then went further to identify the extrinsic inhibitor of 'poor leadership', as being the third highest inhibitor of semi-skilled employee performance'bad', where leadership has the ability to create 'dysfunctional performance' and an unproductive organisational environment (Higgs, 2009 and Sadri and Bowen, 2011).

Inadequate training and development, ranked as the fourth most important construct inhibiting employee performance, which is arguably a non-monetary token of organisational appreciation deployed by managers (Danish et al., 2015; Schraeder and Jordan, 2011; Flowers et al., 2010 and Guha, 2010).

Lastly, the construct of 'poor salary/ wage' ranked as the least important factor in the list of the top 10 inhibitors of employee performance, as perceived by the managers of semi-skilled employees.

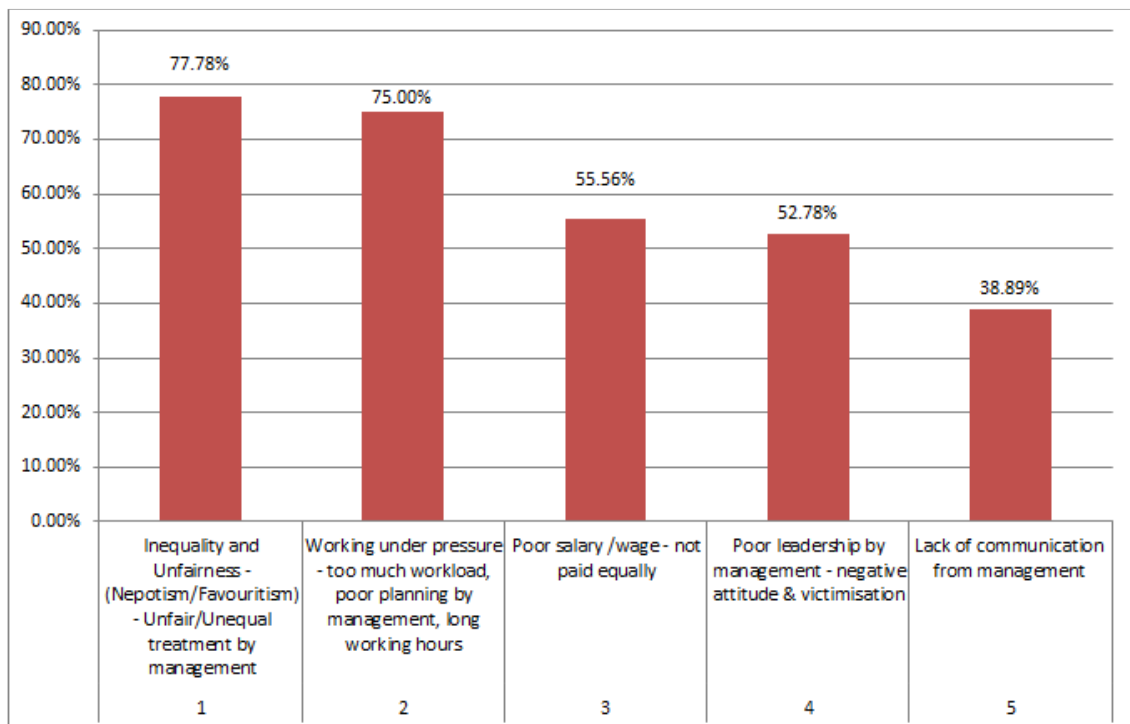## 6.6   Research question 6:

How do the perceptions compare between semi-skilled employees and their managers, in terms of the inhibiting factors of semi-skilled employee performance?

In comparing the top 5 inhibitors of employee performance, between the summary results of semi-skilled employees and their managers, as shown in tables 17 and 20 respectively of Chapter 5, it becomes clearly evident that there are distinct disparities in both type and importance, of the inhibiting factors perceived to inhibit employee performance between the two groups of organisational stakeholders. The top 5 inhibitors perceived to decrease employee performance, as seen from the perspective of semi-skilled employees and their managers is summarised in the Table 27, while the percentage frequency, as a function of the number of participants, is graphically shown in figures 7 and 8 further below:

Table 27: Top 5 inhibitors of employee performance -

Comparison between semi-skilled employees and their managers

Ranked order	Top 5 Factors of Semi-skilled employees - Groups 1,2,4 & 5	Total no. of selections (Frequency)
1	Inequality and Unfairness - (Nepotism/Favouritism) - Unfair/Unequal treatment by management	28
2	Working under pressure - too much workload, poor planning by management, long working hours	27
3	Poor salary /wage - not paid equally	20
4	Poor leadership by management - negative attitude & victimisation	19
5	Lack of communication from management	14
Ranked order	Top 5 Factors - Managers of semi-skilled employees - Groups 3&6	Total no. of selections (Frequency)
1	Uncertain/Unstable future of the company	12
2	Unfair treatment of employees - be fair, avoid favouritism	11
3	Poor leadership - negative attitude and unfair tempremental behaviour by management, don't inspire	9
4	Lack of accountability/ownership by management - creates blockages in the system by not making decisions	9
5	Negative attitude by management	7

Figure 7: Top 5 inhibitors based on frequency of selection -
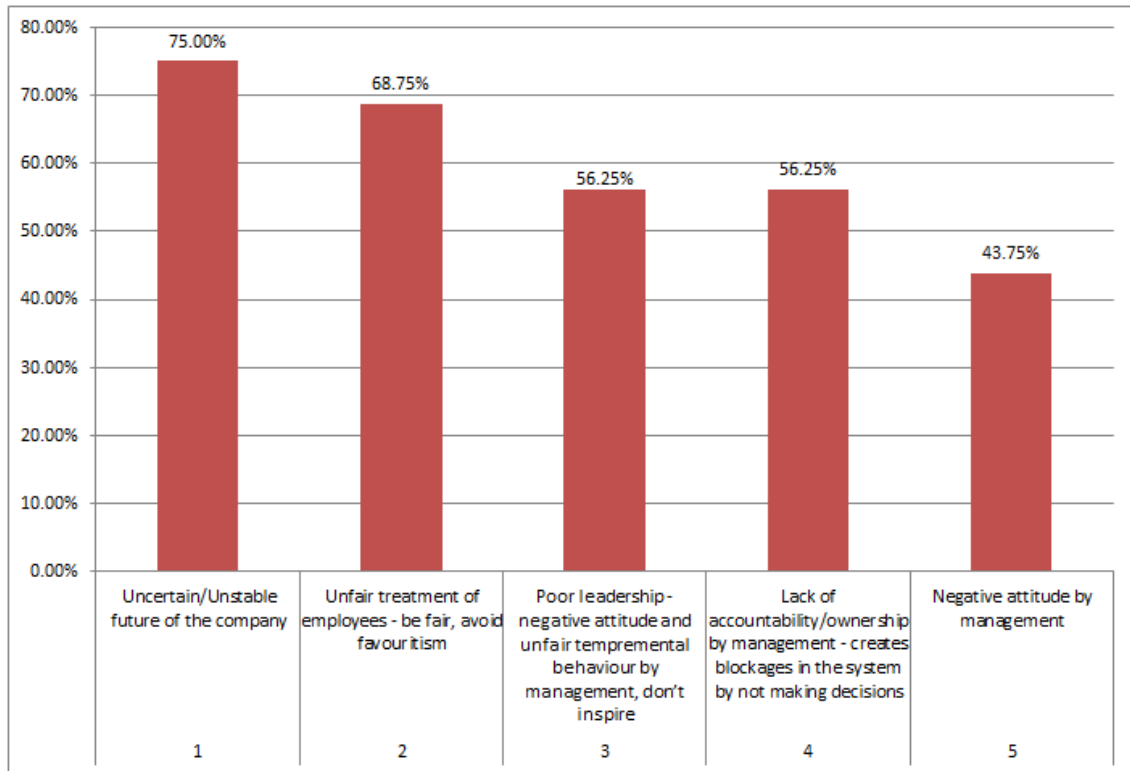
Semi-skilled employees

Figure 8: Top 5 inhibitors based on frequency of selection - Semi-skilled employee managers

6.6.1 Interpretation of results

The perceptions held by the participants of the semi-skilled employee manager group's, specifically in terms of the themes extracted in considering the top 10 inhibitors of semi-skilled employee performance, was similar in many ways to that of the perceptions held by the semi-skilled employee manager groups', in which both stakeholder groups identified the themes of inequality & unfairness, poor leadership and low pay.

However, having said that, while some themes between these two stakeholder groups (i.e. semi-skilled employees and their managers) were very similar in nature, the specific constructs constituting these themes was noted to have very different rankings of importance, between these organisational stakeholder groups. Comparing specifically the top 5 enablers (factors) driving semi-skilled employee performance between semi-skilled employees and their managers, as shown in Table 24, the following are noted:

- Semi-skilled employees identified 'inequality and unfairness' to be the most important construct inhibiting their performance, while the managers of semi-skilled employees ranked this construct as the second most important. However it may be inferred that semi-skilled employees attributed their view on unequal pay dispersion to this construct, while semi-skilled employee managers did not make the same linkage, as they believed salary to be the least important construct inhibiting performance

- 'Working under pressure', was identified as a construct inhibiting semi-skilled employee performance, but by only the semi-skilled employee groups, with the manager groups not identifying any constructs related to working environment in the framework of the top 5 inhibitors.

- Semi-skilled employees identified the construct of 'poor salary/ wage' to be a significantly important factor inhibiting employee performance, which ranked as the third most importantly factor inhibiting employee performance. However, the construct of 'poor salary/ wage' ranked as the least important theme of inhibitors and did not even feature in the top 5 inhibitor constructs as identified by the manager participants.

- 'Poor leadership' as a construct was identified by both semi-skilled employees and their managers to be an inhibitor of performance. However, interesting to note was that semi-skilled employees placed less importance on this construct, as opposed to the managers of semi-skilled employers who identified 3 of the top 5 inhibiting factors, as being related to the theme of poor leadership (i.e. lack of accountability, ownership & negative attitude by management)

- The lack of communication is grouped within the theme of 'poor leadership' and therefore ties in with the above discussion.

- Job security as a construct, quiet interestingly, was identified to the most important inhibitor reducing employee performance, but was not identified by the semi-skilled employee groups.

6.6.2 Conclusion of research question 6

These findings clearly indicate that S.A. managers of semi-skilled employees predominantly identified extrinsic, non-monetary type of inhibitors, as factors that could reduce employee performance (i.e. job security, poor leadership, inadequate training and development and low salary/wage) with the exception of one intrinsic inhibitor (i.e. inequality & unfairness).On the other hand semi-skilled workers identified a mixture of both extrinsic inhibitors (i.e. poor working environment, low pay, poor leadership and poor teamwork) and intrinsic inhibitors (i.e. lack of recognition and inequality & unfairness) all of which are believed to be facilitated by management (i.e. leadership).

Semi-skilled worker performance is therefore inhibited by their emotions when they feel that communication is lacking, leadership is poor and unfairly practiced, all while being paid low salaries and yet being expected to work under pressure.

That said, it will be noted that there are more similarities about the inhibitors of performance between the two stakeholder groups, than there are between the identified enablers as previously discussed.

7   Chapter seven: Conclusion

7.1 Principal findings

The primary aim of this study was to empirically determine the factors which enable and inhibit semi-skilled employee performance, whilst aiming to identify on a secondary level, any differences that may exist in terms of the perception of these factors between semi-skilled employees and their managers. This approach was employed with a view of highlighting the differences that may exist in the perceptions of these factors, such that these differences could possibly be resolved between the two groups. This will assist towards fostering high performance semi-skilled employees that would be able to support the creation of high performance sustainable organisations. To this end the principal findings of the research study are presented in sections 7.1.1 & 7.1.2.

7.1.1   Enablers of semi-skilled employee performance

This study found that semi-skilled workers identified a mixture of both extrinsic enablers (i.e. pay, training and development, job resources) and intrinsic enablers (i.e. teamwork, recognition and appreciation) as the primary drivers of their performance, all of which are believed to be facilitated by the extrinsic enabler of good leadership (i.e. management). Semi-skilled workers are therefore driven by their emotions based on the support of effective team work and appreciation, while being primarily driven by fair pay, as the most important motivator of improved performance.

On the other hand it was found that managers of semi-skilled workers are primarily focussed on extrinsic, non-monetary type of enablers (i.e. training & development, incentives, good working environment and opportunity for growth) as primary drivers of improved semi-skilled employee performance, which were completely misaligned with the perceptions of what drives employee performance as held by the semi-skilled workers. This outcome indicates an important difference in viewpoints, which presents an opportunity for management to change some practices in order to improve the performance of their semi-skilled employees, by closer alignment between these differences.
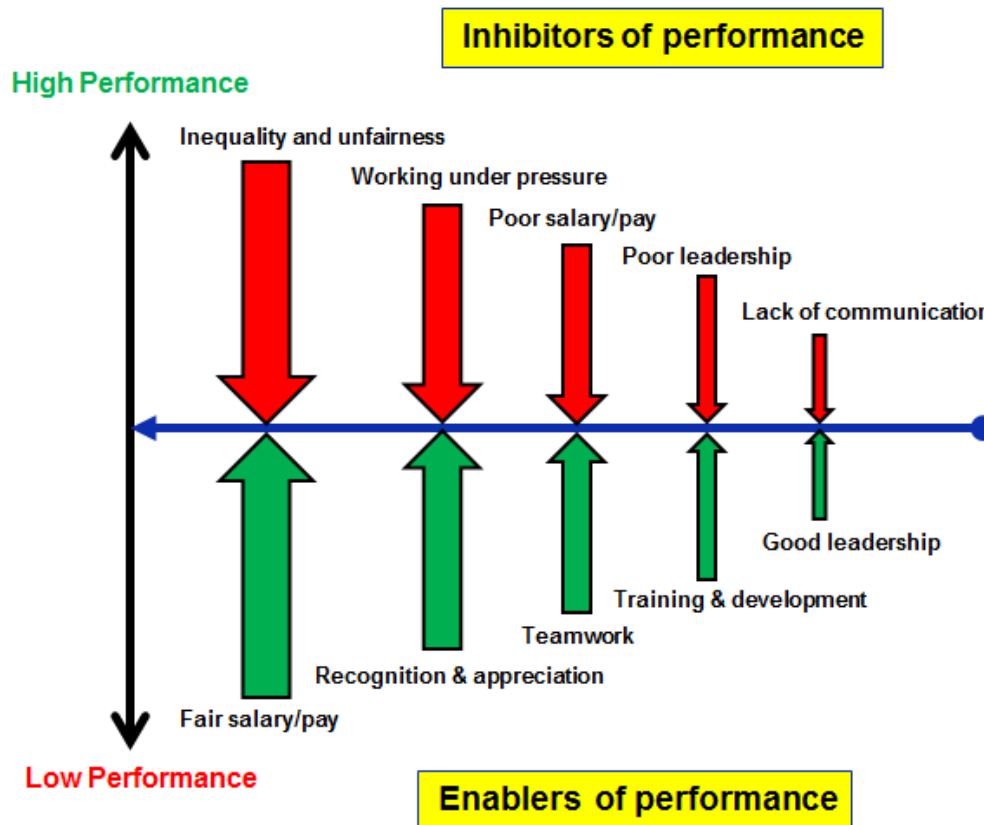
7.1.2 Inhibitors of semi-skilled employee performance

This study found that semi-skilled workers identified a mixture of both extrinsic inhibitors (i.e. poor working environment, low pay and poor teamwork) and intrinsic inhibitors (i.e. lack of recognition and inequality & unfairness) to be the primary inhibitors decreasing their performance, all of which are believed to be facilitated by the extrinsic inhibitor of poor leadership (i.e. management). Semi-skilled worker performance is therefore inhibited by their emotions when they feel that communication is lacking, leadership is poor and unfairly practiced, all while being paid low salaries and yet being expected to work under pressure.

On the other hand it was found that managers of semi-skilled employees predominantly identified extrinsic, non-monetary type of inhibitors, as factors that could reduce employee performance (i.e. job security, poor leadership, inadequate training and development and low salary/wage) with the exception of one intrinsic inhibitor (i.e. inequality & unfairness). The emergence of inequality and unfairness as a key construct inhibiting performance is particularly interesting to note, as this is an acknowledgment by managers of a behaviour that needs to be corrected by themselves.

That said, it will be noted that there are more similarities in terms of the inhibitors of performance between the two stakeholder groups albeit them being of different levels of importance between the groups, than there are between the identified enablers which differed quite significantly between the groups.

The findings of this research study are summarised and presented in the force field model of figure 9 below, which illustrates the top 5 enablers and inhibitors of performance, as perceived by semi-skilled employees (with reference to Tables 24 and 27 respectively).

Figure 9: Force Field Analysis:

Enablers and Inhibitors of Semi-skilled employee performance

The force field technique of analysis was first developed by Kurt Lewin (Louw, 2012), to evaluate the impact of forces on a particular situation. The Y-axis (vertical axis) measures the performance of the individual (i.e. High to Low), while the X-axis (horizontal axis) moves either up the Y-axis towards improved performance or down the Y-axis towards reduced performance, depending the net effect of the enabling and inhibiting forces, that are acting in opposition to one another. The thickness and the length of each of the arrows is reflective of the level of importance allocated to each construct (Mogale and Sutherland, 2010) and represents the top 5 enabling and inhibiting constructs, as identified by the semi-skilled employee groups. The status quo of an employee's performance is represented by the current position of the horizontal line and the force field advocates that managers should use the enablers to 'push up' performance, while reducing the inhibiting factors to further improve employee performance (Mogale and Sutherland, 2010), as indicated in figure 9 above.

7.2 Implications for management

According to Jha and Kumar (2016) and Warrick (2016), high performance employees are those that are emotionally committed to their organisations and are vested in learning and achieving success, as both individuals and in teams. Similarly, high performance individuals are focussed on achieving organisational goals and in so doing create high performance organisations. Therefore, high performance employees are considered to be the most valued and strategic assets of an organisations, because people that are properly engaged are difficult to imitate by other organisations and as such, organisations that have high performance employees are able to gain increased levels of competitive advantage and organisational effectiveness (Jha and Kumar, 2016; Warrick, 2016 and Anitha, 2014).

Kaufmann (2009) further indicate that studies have shown that engaged employees, through improved performance can lead to higher profit organisations. In addition, according to Jha and Kumar (2016) a workforce that is fully engaged has the capability of improving its productivity by 78% and profitability by more than 40%. Therefore, employee performance in recent times has become viewed as a strategic factor in terms of driving organisational performance for sustainable competitive advantage. In this context semi-skilled workers form the base of the employee pyramid and is generally reflective of where the bulk of the employees in most manufacturing organisations reside (Louw, 2012 and Drotter, 2010). Hence, an improvement in employee performance at this level within the organisation should have a significantly positive impact on the overall performance and efficiency of such organisations (Jha & Kumar, 2016 and Warrick, 2014), however the opinions of semi-skilled workers are often overlooked in practice and in academic literature.

Therefore, in order to enhance or improve semi-skilled employee performance management should focus their efforts towards eliminating or reducing the inhibiting factors which decrease employee performance, whilst simultaneously directing energy towards the enhancement of the enabling factors which increase employee performance.

To this end the force-field model of figure 9 serves as a quick visual guide to management in both identifying the factors that enable and inhibit employee performance together with its relative impact (strength) on driving or inhibiting semi-skilled employee performance.

7.3 Limitations of the research

The population and sampling is based on a single company (albeit the sampling being done across 2 different business units set geographically apart) and the data collection, analysis and associated results may therefore not necessarily represent that of the industry at large.

7.4 Suggestions for future research

- The sampling drawn in this study was done between two identified stakeholder groups (i.e. semi-skilled employees and their managers). It would be interesting to perform a similar study that would aim to identify the enablers and inhibitors of skilled employee performance in a manufacturing environment, so that comparative analysis can be drawn between semi-skilled and skilled employees together with their immediate line managers.

- Similarly of interest, would be to identify and compare the enablers and inhibitors of employee performance as perceived between the different management levels i.e. Senior, middle and junior management levels.

- This study identified the extrinsic construct of leadership to be an important facilitator across all factors enabling and inhibiting semi-skilled employee performance. Therefore a potential area for further research would be to understand the importance and implication of different leaders / leadership styles on semi-skilled employee performance.

7.5 Conclusion

It has been shown that high performance employees make a significant and positive contribution towards companies becoming high performance organisations thus ensuring their future sustainability. However, while literature studies showed that there is a plethora of factors which drive employee performance, the studies reviewed offered very little clarity on the extent to which these enabling or inhibiting factors influenced or applied to semi-skilled employee performance. This research study is therefore significant as it empirically determined the factors that enabled and inhibited semi-skilled employee performances, in a manufacturing environment while simultaneously being able to compare these findings with the views held by the managers of these semi-skilled employees. To this end the study produced a force field model that serves as a guideline to management towards improving semi-skilled employee performance, with the mutual aim of meeting both employee well-being and organisational goals.

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9 Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethics committee approval

Gordon Institute of Business Science
University of Pretoria

25 June 2018

Munilall Anandran

Dear Anandran

Please be advised that your application for Ethical Clearance has been approved.

You are therefore allowed to continue collecting your data.

Please note that approval is granted based on the methodology and research instruments provided in the application. If there is any deviation change or addition to the research method or tools, a supplementary application for approval must be obtained

We wish you everything of the best for the rest of the project.

Kind Regards

GIBS MBA Research Ethical Clearance Committee

Appendix 2: Qualitative nominal group schedule and informed consent:

Dear, Participant

I am currently studying towards the completion of my MBA degree through the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS), University of Pretoria. In order for me to complete the MBA degree I am required to conduct business research, which in part forms a compulsory component of the qualification.

My research topic is titled "**Enablers and inhibitors of high performance of semi-skilled manufacturing employees"**. It has been found in existing literature studies that high performance employees make a significant and positive contribution towards companies becoming high performance organisations, which then ensures the long term sustainably of such organisations into the future.

Therefore this research study is aimed at helping me to determine the factors that enable and inhibit employee performance and their order of significance.This session will be a group session of approximately 1.5 to 2 hours, whereby group thinking will be used to identify these enabling and inhibiting factors of employee performance.
Your view of these factors will be recorded on the two "Factor and Ballot" sheets given to you, which will be used for analysis at a later stage in the research study. **Your participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without any consequence**. I must assure you that all data collected throughout this session will be kept strictly confidential and your identity will remain undisclosed in the research report that will be generated.

If you have any queries or concerns, please feel free to contact the below:

	Researcher	**Supervisor**
Name:	Wayne Munilall	Prof. Margaret. Sutherland
Email:	-	-
Phone No.:	-	-

Name of Participant: _____

Signature:_____ Date:_____

Signature of Facilitator:_____Date:_____

Appendix 3: Factor and Ballot Sheet – Enabling factors of employee performance

Factors Driving Employee Performance	

Focus Group Number:	

Factory Site	

Employee Group/ Management Group (E/M)	

Enabling Factors :	1)
	2)
	3)
	4)
	5)

Ranking/Scoring of Enabling Factors Driving Employee Performance	1)
	2)

Please hand in this answer sheet when completed.

Thank you sincerely for your participation

Appendix 4: Factor and Ballot Sheet – Inhibiting factors of employee performance

Factors Inhibiting Employee Performance

Focus Group Number:	

Factory Site	

Employee Group/ Management Group (E/M)	

Inhibiting Factors :	1)
	2)
	3)
	4)
	5)

Ranking/Scoring of Inhibiting Factors Driving Employee Performance (Top 2)	1)
	2)

Please hand in this answer sheet when completed.

Thank you sincerely for your participation