Gordon Institute of Business Science
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Organisational design considerations for performance through responsibility and accountability

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441425

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Abstract

Organisational performance, and how this performance can be influenced, continue to be primary concerns for managers. Although many motivational and performance related theories are presented by literature, the role and importance of responsibility and accountability as concepts within the organisation and in performance theory have been neglected, to the point that authors clearly highlight the need for further research in this regard (Mero, Guidice, & Werner, 2014; Greenwood & Miller, 2010).

This research developed a *speculative model* which integrates organisational design theory with responsibility and accountability theory. The aim of the *speculative model* is to enhance managers' understanding of how responsibility and accountability fit into the organisation and how an organisation can be designed to strengthen these concepts to the extent that performance can be positively influenced. The study also presented guiding principles as examples of the practical implication inferred from the results of the study and the *speculative model* developed.

The qualitative research was conducted at an engineering firm in South Africa. Fifteen in-depth interviews were conducted with employees in positions at different levels (organisational level, group level and individual level) of the organisation. These interviews enabled the researcher to explore mechanisms related to responsibility and accountability and inductively develop the *speculative model*.

It was found that the various links that determine how strong responsibility and accountability are present in a specific context could successfully be linked to different design components within the organisation, highlighting a specific area of focus within the organisation when a specific link of responsibility or accountability needs to be addressed.

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Keywords

Responsibility, Accountability, Organisational design, Organisational performance, Model.

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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.

_____

JT (Kobus) Griesel

9 November 2015

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1. Introduction to the Research Problem

1.1 Introduction

All companies aim to create an environment in which employees can flourish. Employee needs will be fulfilled to a different extent depending on the environment, consequently effecting employee well-being and performance to a different degree (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009). Organisational design and development encompass the process of creating this environment (Marshak & Grant, 2008) from which it can be concluded that a key mechanism to effect employee behaviour has to do with the organisational design.

Within organisations, where two or more people collaborate to achieve a common set of goals, accountability (as the acceptance of responsibility and answerability for specific outcomes) is considered a necessary requirement for functioning (Mansouri & Rowney, 2014). The extent to which accountability is therefore incorporated in organisations' design and how it influences the environment in which employees must function is an important and relevant question for managers focusing on organisational performance.

The essence of this study is therefore to explore and discuss themes around three specific, but linked areas of interest. These areas are understood and can be described with reference to Figure 1 below. In order to achieve *organisational performance* as a key management objective, it is argued that the *organisation be designed* in a manner that considers multiple dimensions and elements in creating a favourable environment within the organisation. One such consideration is the importance of *responsibility and accountability* characteristics in this design of the organisation and how a design should look that incorporates responsibility and accountability to such an extent that organisational performance is enhanced.

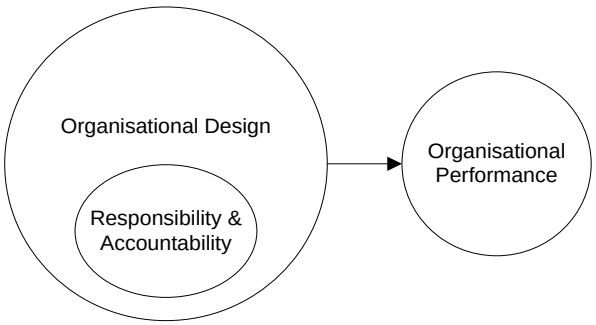

Figure 1: Study Areas of Interest

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1.1.1 Human Behaviour

In his article "The People Make the Place", Schneider (1987) strongly argues that environments are functions of people behaving in them, in contrast to popular research stating that behaviour is a function of people finding themselves in specific environments (Robbins & Judge, 2013). Depending on the level of analysis there could be arguments that both can be true. For the purpose of this study, behaviour is considered to be a function of people finding themselves in specific environments. However, irrespective of the way one chooses to look at it, there is no denying that human behaviour and the environment in which humans operate are interlinked.

This understanding led to numerous studies related to human behaviour in different environments. Theories of motivation include early and well-known theories like Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, Frager, & Cox, 1970), to more contemporary ones like self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), work engagement theory (Kahn, 1990), goal-setting theory (Locke, 1968) and self-efficacy theory (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). All these theories highlight how human behaviour can be effected by the presence or absence of specific elements in an environment.

As a necessary requirement for organisational functioning, the extent to which responsibility and accountability is promoted in organisations is one such element. Organisations should therefore consider how these concepts effect human behaviour in general and as motivational elements impacting how specific, measurable goals are achieved to help the organisation win – thus leading to enhanced organisational performance (Hofrichter & McGovern, 2001).

1.1.2 Responsibility and Accountability

The Oxford English dictionary (*World English*) defines the term responsibility as "the state or fact of having a duty to deal with something" and accountability as being "required or expected to justify actions or decisions". Although these terms are discussed in context and at length in following chapters, the essence of what they imply remains. It is clear that both these concepts are critical for organisational functioning, where a multitude of stakeholders expect and depend on specific organisational outcomes.

Accountability as a term has been widely (and mostly) used in reference to corporate social responsibility (CSR) related topics for companies as well as in public management studies where government administrations are accountable to societies. These studies refer to the different organisations being accountable for specific objectives to stakeholders outside of the organisation.

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Within these organisations, however, task or group accountability forms part of the environment created by the organisation's design and the extent thereof is of interest to this study.

1.1.3 Organisational Design

Recent studies have confirmed that an organisation's structure effects the behaviour of employees (Maduenyi, Oke, Fadeyi, & Ajagbe, 2015). This finding draws back to motivational theories where employee behaviour is effected by specific factors in an environment and in the case of Maduenyi et al. (2015), this environment was shaped by the structure as a component of the organisation's design.

The possibilities to influence behaviour, brought about by the characteristic of an organisation's design to shape the environment in which employees function, are infinite. The benefit, if a favourable design can be implemented, is well understood by managers and academics alike, with subjects like organisational development ("OD"), human behaviour and human resources management ("HRM") being extensively researched and published.

1.1.4 Practical Considerations

In many instances, small businesses grow through various stages, facing many different challenges along the way. Amongst others, these challenges might include issues as proposed by Greiner (1972) in his five phases of growth model: the crisis of leadership, the crisis of autonomy, the crisis of control and the crisis of red tape. It is understandable that in dealing with these day to day challenges of growing and managing a business, very few organisations seem to apply thought into detailed design elements that could result in a performance encouraging environment.

Organisational design guidelines that assist managers to shape environments to the most favorable extent could be valuable to many companies. Combining the organisational design elements with components of responsibility and accountability in this study will create such guideline in the form of a *conceptual framework* (Baxter & Jack, 2008), tested through the exploratory study to develop a well-defined *speculative model* (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Considering these guidelines could some day lead to accountability as practice being part of the organisation's culture, achieving what is already the case with leading global organisations, including the highly competitive Apple Inc. (Richards, 2012).

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1.2 Need for the Research

1.2.1 Motivation for Research

Organisations will always have a need for increased effectiveness and performance. Accountability, as the principle of monitoring employee responsibilities to ensure goals and objectives are achieved, is considered a foundational element of organisations (Mero, Guidice, & Werner, 2014; Lerner & Tetlock, 1999). The question remains to what extent an organisational design that promotes employee accountability could ultimately lead to increased task and organisational performance. For managers, task and group performance are key in achieving organisational goals and objectives and any elevation through organisational design would be duly welcomed.

Although the terms “responsibility” and “accountability” have been used since the 17th and 18th centuries, a widely used integrative model of responsibility (that places the components thereof in context) was only produced in 1994 (Mero, Guidice, & Werner, 2014; Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994) while accountability was further characterised in 1999 (Lerner & Tetlock, 1999). Following these core definitions, research of accountability within organisations has been limited, not reflecting the importance thereof for the functioning of organisations (Hall, Zinko, Perryman, & Ferris, 2009).

A clear need to better understand the role of accountability in influencing individual and organisational performance (Mero, Guidice, & Werner, 2014), to examine accountability in the multilevel construct of the organisation (individual, group and organisation level) (Hall, Zinko, Perryman, & Ferris, 2009) as well as to investigate practical considerations of perceived accountability on within-person goals and objectives in achieving task performance (Converse, et al., 2014) are proposed in recent articles on accountability. This study should contribute to a better understanding of these issues.

Apart from this, there is also more research needed to consider methods of assessing accountability in the workplace (Mero, Guidice, & Werner, 2014). This study could also contribute to this through its integration of responsibility and accountability principles with organisational design.

In terms of organisational design, literature also calls for further research, specifically studies related to managing the collective effort through organisational design, with organisational design as the mechanism used to implement strategies (Greenwood & Miller, 2010).

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From a personal perspective, the researcher has observed changes in employees' task performance based on the different roles, responsibilities and level of accountability attributed to them over time. Further personal experience alerted the researcher to the effects of perceived accountability on his own performance, which supported the concept of perceived accountability as a mechanism to effect personal performance. This observation further motivated investigation into the subject matter.

1.2.2 Research Problem

Studies have shown that less than "one in every five workers is actively engaged in their work" (Attridge, 2009). Given this research, it is clear why employee motivation is one of the most researched topics in organisational behaviour (Latham & Pinder, 2005). Although employee motivation and performance is not a new subject, it is still a very important and unresolved matter. Any research furthering the understanding of concepts contributing to the effectiveness and performance of organisations is therefore validated.

In their New York Times bestseller *12: The Elements of Great Managing*, Wagner and Harter (2006) describe one of the fundamental elements influencing task performance of an employee as "Knowing What's Expected" – clearly defined expectations. This can be directly related to the concepts of responsibility and accountability, as being accountable implies the clear definition of what one is accountable for (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994).

With continuous challenges in employee engagement and motivation worldwide, South African organisations should also consider mechanisms to improve engagement and task performance. This study is concerned with the application of responsibility and accountability as factors contributing to performance in South African organisations. The aim is to better understand how responsibility and accountability theory can be integrated into organisational design so that performance is influenced by how employees are held responsible and accountable. The study will aim to do the following:

- Evaluate the nature and state of responsibility and accountability in a South African organisation.
- Explore the extent to which responsibility and accountability are considered to be important for organisational performance.
- Asses the appropriateness of an organisation-wide or multilevel (individual, group and organisation level) approach to responsibility and accountability interventions through organisational design.

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- Develop a well-defined *speculative model*, linking responsibility and accountability theory with design elements of the different levels in an organisation (organisational level, group level and individual level).
- Conceptualise guiding principles for organisational design to achieve greater responsibility and accountability which could lead to improved task and organisational performance.

1.3 Purpose and Approach

1.3.1 Purpose of the Research

As stated before, managers must perform. Important however is that this performance is expected even though human resources available to managers are limited. It is clear that if the performance of these resources could be elevated, the group, organisation and ultimately the individuals can benefit; a win-win scenario at all levels of the organisation.

Although there are many theories and practices today to promote the motivation and performance of human resources (Latham & Pinder, 2005), organisations still experience a lack of engagement and task performance (Attridge, 2009) – highlighting the continuous challenge to create environments in which employees flourish. The purpose of this study is to better understand how responsibility and accountability can be part of this this environment, specifically established in a mechanistic manner through organisational design components.

This purpose is made practical through an aim of the study to conceptualise guiding principles to aid with organisational design processes, with the creation of a practical output from the study being a purpose in itself.

1.3.2 Research Approach

A qualitative approach to explore the multilevel, complex nature of organisational environments, pulling components of responsibility and accountability together with organisational design, is envisaged. The aim of this approach is not to discuss the level of importance that responsibility and accountability mechanisms have in organisations, but rather to start an organisation-level conversation about these concepts and how the environments we create through organisational design, impact employee behaviour.

Further exploration and quantitative research would be required to assess the validity of findings as proposed from this exploratory study and to test the *speculative model*, presented as a practical tool for managers finding the concepts appealing.

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2. Literature Review

Theory and literature review for the intended research was based on the different themes related to the research problem (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). This was done with the aim to obtain a better understanding about the concepts of and links between:

- Organisational Performance
- Responsibility and Accountability
- Organisational Design

Based on the abovementioned areas of review, a *conceptual framework* in which elements of responsibility, accountability and organisational design are integrated will be proposed as the basis of the research (Baxter & Jack, 2008). It is envisaged that a final version of the *conceptual framework*, updated based on an analysis of the data obtained, be presented as a well-defined *speculative model* (Saunders & Lewis, 2012) and as a tool to assist managers in designing organisations that promote responsibility and accountability to an extent that organisational performance is influenced.

2.1 Organisational Performance

With the aim of this study to ultimately contribute to the enhancement of organisational performance, a clear understanding of existing organisational performance principles and practices was called for. It was specifically important to understand how principles of organisational design, responsibility and accountability could fit into the current understanding of organisational performance.

From the onset, organisational performance cannot be reviewed without touching on the practice of performance management. Performance management can be defined as “a process which significantly affects organisational success by having managers and employees work together to set expectations, review results and reward performance” (Grobler, Wärnich, Carrell, Elbert, & Hatfield, 2011). Denisi and Smith (2014) state that performance management is a term referring to all the activities an organisation undertakes to influence and improve an employee’s performance. Although this study may contribute to enhancing the performance management process, the work does not aim to address performance management specifically, but rather contribute more holistically to organisational performance through the design of the organisation. It is however important to note that performance management is considered the “Achilles’ heel” of managing human capital, being the primary process through which work is

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executed in organisations, and should therefore be a top priority to managers (Gruman & Saks, 2011). This further supports studies related to the enhancement and understanding of organisational performance.

Organisational performance is influenced by various internal and external factors to the organisation (Singh, Darwish, Costa, & Anderson, 2012). Amongst others, external factors include the demand for the organisations' product or service, the market structure, macro-economic factors as well as the political environment. Internal factors include, amongst others, the size of the organisation, skill levels within the organisation, growth objectives and strategies, the degree of unionisation, human resource policies and the organisational structure. Given this understanding, it is clear that organisational design plays a definite role as one of the factors influencing the performance of an organisation.

To understand how responsibility and accountability could contribute to organisational performance, it was firstly required to gain a general understanding of how existing behavioural mechanisms relate to organisational performance.

Denisi and Smith (2014) state that although it is so believed, there is currently no empirical evidence of a clear link between employee performance and overall firm performance. However, considerable evidence do suggest that a holistic, "bundled" and multilevel approach to human resource ("HR") practices and organisational performance should be taken. This implies that studies considering employee and organisational performance cannot focus on mechanisms related to the individual only, but that a multilevel view and analysis are required (Denisi & Smith, 2014).

In line with Denisi and Smith's (2014) suggestion, the following sections focused on multiple levels of the organisation, considering both individual and group level aspects associated with the organisation's performance. Firstly, a review of the employee's role in achieving organisational performance, brought about by changes in the environment which effects human behaviour, was conducted. Following this, the topic of group performance was reviewed.

2.1.1 Employee Performance

Employee performance and a performance inducing environment has been widely studied in fields like Human Resource Management and Human Behaviour. Some recently reviewed applications of motivational concepts that were found included studies with reference to aspects of job design, namely the *Job Characteristics Model* (Behson, 2012), getting input for higher-level decisions from non-management employees, *Employee Involvement* (Yang &

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Konrad, 2011) and effective commitment of employees brought about by organisational rewards, *Rewards as Motivation* (Newman & Sheikh, 2012). One uniform aspect of all these studies is that specific organisational design conditions, external to individual employees, effect specific human behaviour and consequent performance. It was therefore concluded that employee performance can be influenced by conditions external to the individual.

In organisations where performance of existing employees has to be considered (which is the case in this study), this understanding is fundamental. In most instances, the only way in which organisational performance can be altered is by management changing the environment in which employees function. This environment consists of many dimensions to which employees are exposed on a daily basis. One such dimension is the extent to which employees or groups in the organisation are responsible and held accountable for specific outcomes.

In general, the concepts of responsibility and accountability are intertwined with existing models of motivation. Although they do not reflect the essence of this study, two instances where the relevance of responsibility and accountability is clear is in the fields of employee work engagement and self-regulation, two well-known theories in human behaviour. These concepts were reviewed and the conclusion drawn that although the importance of responsibility and accountability is evident in these theories, the need (as discussed in chapter 1) for focused studies around the concepts of responsibility and accountability and the influence thereof on employee performance cannot be ignored.

2.1.1.1 Employee Work Engagement

As one of the most resent concepts related to employee performance, work engagement is defined by Kahn (1990) as the simultaneous *employment* and *expression* of an individual's "preferred self" to work related activities, enhancing the individual's connections to work, personal presence and performances. It considers the employee's investment of personal energy and experience of an emotional connection to his or her work. *Employment* of one's "preferred self" underlies organisational behaviour concepts like effort, involvement, flow, mindfulness and intrinsic behaviour, whereas *expression* of one's "preferred self" underlies creativity, the use of personal voice, emotional expression, authenticity and ethical behaviour (Kahn, 1990).

Three characteristics of work engagement are considered noteworthy as practical considerations (Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011):

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- Work engagement refers to a psychological connection with the performance of *work tasks* instead of organisational or job features. This implies that measurements of work engagement should be focused on employees' experiences during *work task* completion and not work conditions.
- Work engagement is not just investing a single aspect of the self, but is a *multidimensional investment* (physical, emotional and cognitive).
- Work engagement should be seen as a "*state*" and not a "trait", implying that engagement varies within persons and between people over time.

Studies show that work engagement has a mediating effect on employee performance, so that higher employee work engagement leads to improved performance (Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011). From the characteristics described above, the degree to which an employee is engaged with his or her work lends itself towards manipulation through external, task-related variables including task responsibility and accountability.

Although task responsibility and accountability are clearly relevant to work engagement, it remains secondary in nature without meaningful contribution to our understanding of the effect on human behaviour given environmental changes related to responsibility and accountability.

2.1.1.2 Self-Regulation

Amongst other factors, an employee's performance is related to within-person goals and effort, where performance achieved mediates the employee's subsequent goals and effort through self-regulation (Converse, et al., 2014). Self-regulation thus refers to how individuals set goals, putting in effort to achieve those goals, monitoring progress and accordingly make adjustments to the goals and effort intensity based on their perceptions of performance/outcome (Carver & Scheier, 1998). A basic illustration of this process can be seen in Figure 2 below:

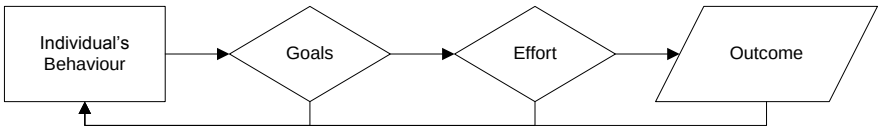

Figure 2: Self-regulation

Findings on self-regulation (relevant to this study) supported the hypothesis that: "Within-person relationships between performance and goals will be moderated by accountability such

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that greater accountability will be associated with weaker performance-goal and performance-effort relationships". This finding concluded, for example, that higher accountability will reduce the effect of negative performance feedback on subsequent within-person goals (Converse, et al., 2014).

Further to this, recent theorising concluded that accountability is a key contextual factor to self-enhancing responses following poor performance, whereas individuals with higher accountability measures will be more likely to engage in self-enhancing activities (Jordan & Audia, 2012). Applied to self-regulation, this implies that more accountability should provoke individuals to set higher goals and consequent effort intensity following poor performance feedback.

The study clearly indicated that greater perceived accountability for employees in an organisation should result in employee self-regulation processes less sensitive to challenges and failures within the organisation (Converse, et al., 2014), a well-received antidote in organisations today. Furthermore, recent theories added to this finding in that accountability mediates the responses (Jordan & Audia, 2012) and could provoke higher within-person goals and effort following poor perceived performance as a means to engage in self-enhancing activities and improve task performance.

These studies provided clear evidence of within-person behavioural changes brought about by accountability, specifically when poor or negative performance is experienced. It did however not address the question of how the extent to which employees are held accountable, will influence employee performance under general conditions.

2.1.2 Group Performance

Robbins and Judge (2013) proposed a Team Effectiveness Model, based on a combination of themes and characteristics related to work team effectiveness (Campion, Papper, & Medsker, 1996) and a heuristic model of group effectiveness (Cohen & Bailey, 1997). This model is shown as Figure 3 below:

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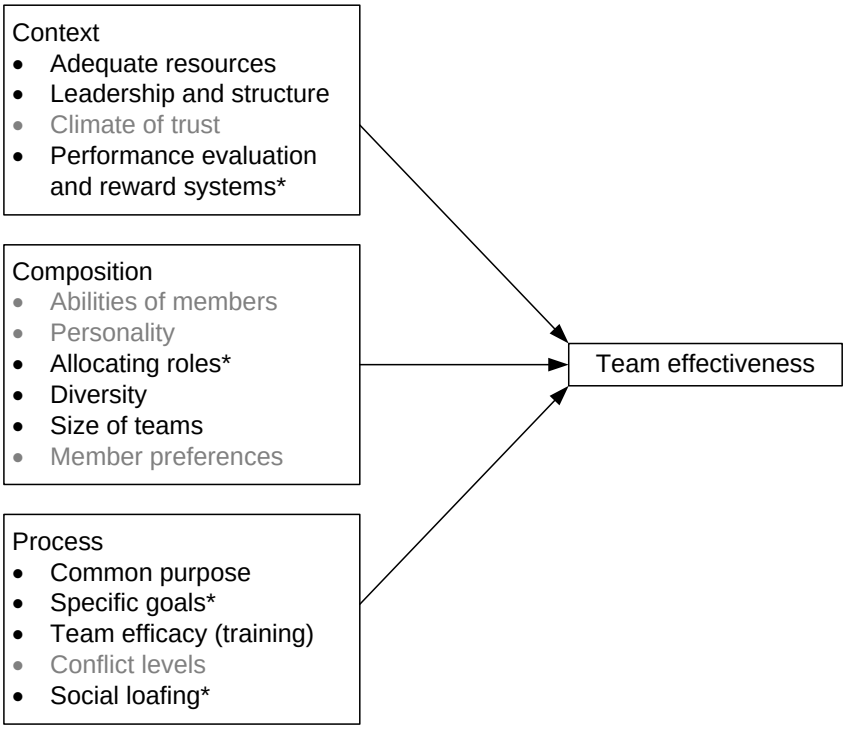

Figure 3: Team Effectiveness Model *(Robbins & Judge, 2013, p. 347)*

In consideration of group performance, this model highlights fifteen key characteristics that influence a group's effectiveness. By reviewing the model, two specific conclusions applicable to this study could be drawn:

- Firstly, from the list of fifteen characteristics, only five (greyed items in the model) can be considered as characteristics inherent to the team members. All other characteristics can clearly be manipulated through the environment created in which the group must function (not that the five characteristics highlighted cannot be influenced by the environment).
- Secondly, at least four of the characteristics (indicated with asterisks in the model) has clear relevance to the concepts of responsibility and accountability, and these are:
  - *Performance evaluation and reward system* – it is stated that rather than holding individual members accountable, management should use hybrid systems with a focus on team performance (Robbins & Judge, 2013).
  - *Allocating roles* – work should be allocated with clear responsibilities associated with team members' strengths (Humphrey, Morgeson, & Mannor, 2009).
  - *Specific goals* – the purpose of the group should be translated into specific and measurable goals (Robbins & Judge, 2013). This implies that stakeholders will hold the group responsible and accountable for specific outcomes.

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- *Social loafing* – social loafing can be undermined by making members accountable for team goals, both individually and jointly (Price, Harrison, & Gavin, 2006).

Based on these conclusions it is clear that group level performance can certainly be influenced by changes in the environment in which the group operates. Furthermore, it was established that the functioning of groups should be specifically influenced by responsibility and accountability related considerations, the means and extent of which were explored as part of this research.

2.2 Responsibility and Accountability

2.2.1 Responsibility

Responsibility is a concept used to understand interaction between people – how people sanction, evaluate and control each other's conduct (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994). The concept was only clearly conceptualised in 1994 by Schlenker et al. in a Psychological Review article (which is cited 347 times in total, 35 times since January 2014).

In the conceptualisation of responsibility, three key elements were defined: (1) *Prescriptions* (as guidance for an actor's conduct); (2) *Event* (that occurred or is anticipated, relevant to the prescriptions) and (3) *Identity* (as an actor's role, conviction, qualities and aspirations). Responsibility is consequently judged by the combined strength of the links between these elements, with the links defined as (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994):

- *Prescription Clarity Link*: Clear Prescriptions applicable to an Event (i.e. how clear the expectation is of *how* a task (*what*) should be performed).
- *Personal Control Link*: Identity (actor) has control over Event (i.e. the degree to which a person (*who*) has control over *what* must be accomplished).
- *Personal Obligation Link*: By virtue of his/her Identity, the Actor is bound by the Prescriptions (i.e. the measure to which, by virtue of *who* the actor is, he or she is bound by *how* the task should be performed).

The elements described above and the links between them are presented in a model called "The Triangle Model of Responsibility" (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994; Schlenker, Schlenker, & Schlenker, 2013), shown in Figure 4 below:

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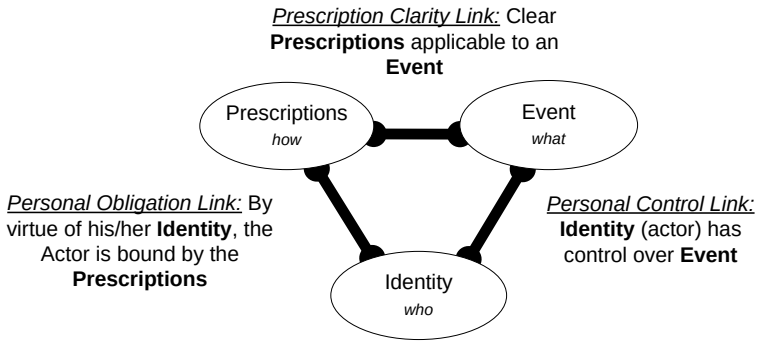

Figure 4: The Triangle Model of Responsibility *(Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994, p. 635)*

It was further shown that psychological engagement (people being more committed and determined to bring about prescribed outcomes; *this is a different concept to work engagement*) is also a function of the strengths of the links (Schlenker, 1997).

The proposed model of responsibility was tested by Britt (1999), finding that the links defined in the model significantly and greatly correlated with engagement such that soldiers' level of disconnection from their tasks was independently predicted by each of the three links in the model. More recently, a path model, tested with 234 college students, supported the triangle model by concluding that psychological engagement is a direct function of the links in the model (Schlenker, Schlenker, & Schlenker, 2013). This added to the wide support for the triangle model by other research, confirming that people are judged by others to be more responsible as the links between the elements in the model becomes stronger (Rudolph, 2006; Tyler & Feldman, 2007).

2.2.2 Accountability

It has been said that there is a disjointedness in the definition of accountability in academic literature and that this has prevented the empirical progress of accountability studies in general (Bovens, 2010). Despite this disjointedness, a distinction between two (equally important but different) concepts of accountability can be made (Bovens, 2010):

- Accountability as a *virtue* (where being accountable is seen as a positive quality of organisations or of government officials, with a focus on standards for and assessment of public agents).
- Accountability as a *mechanism* (where a person is held to account by another person or group).

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In earlier work from the same author, Bovens (2007) refers to other authors' use of accountability in a *broad* sense as an umbrella term to describe various other distinct concepts, for example Koppell's (2005) reference to five dimensions of accountability (transparency, liability, controllability, responsibility and responsiveness). Bovens (2007) also states that accountability can be described, in the most concise and *narrow* use of the concept, as "a relationship between an actor and a forum, in which the actor has an obligation to explain and to justify his or her conduct, the forum can pose questions and pass judgement, and the actor may face consequences".

For the purpose of this study, accountability as a *mechanism* (how human behaviour is influenced by this *mechanism*) and in a *narrow* sense (not as a multi-dimensional concept) is of concern.

In an introduction to a *Human Resource Management Review* special edition on accountability in organisations, Frink and Klimoski (2004) comment on accountability seen as a *mechanism* and highlight two themes involved, one being the *context* (who and what are involved in a given situation) and the second a notion of *judgement* (activities associated with observation, monitoring and evaluation of an agent's behaviour or performance).

This characterisation of accountability is in line with the definition as presented by Schlenker et al. (1994), stating that "accountability refers to being answerable to audiences for performing up to certain prescribed standards, thereby fulfilling obligations, duties, expectations, and other charges".

Furthermore, the conclusions from Frink and Klimoski (2004) could be related back to the triangle model of responsibility in that:

- The first theme of *context* refers to the three elements of the model – who, what and how.
- The second theme of *judgement* refers to an observation activity, added to the model by Schlenker et al. (1994) as an Evaluative Audience "looking down" and appraising the elements of responsibility, creating the "Accounting Pyramid".

The evaluative audience, added to the triangle model in creating the essence of accountability as described above, can be seen in Figure 5 below.

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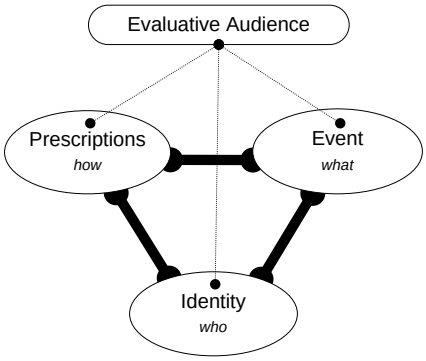

Figure 5: Accountability Pyramid *(Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994, p. 635)*

From the accountability pyramid, it is clear that responsibility, as presented by the triangle model, is a necessary component in achieving accountability within the organisation (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994).

The researcher therefore proposed that both the links of the triangle model as described above as well as mechanisms for the monitoring and evaluation of these links be present in an organisational design which promote accountability.

2.3 Organisational Design

Organisational design has been widely researched in the past, but the rapid societal, scientific and technological developments and changes in the environment make it necessary for organisations to continue evaluating the effective and efficient design of its internal structure and processes to ensure the best possible fit with its environment (Popova & Sharpanskykh, 2009). According to organisational theory, internal structure and processes within the organisation are studied at three levels: (1) *micro* level (individual and work groups); (2) *meso* level (whole organisation); and (3) *macro* level (interaction between organisation and its environment) (Popova & Sharpanskykh, 2009).

For the purpose of this study, where responsibility and accountability within the organisation are explored, the research will focus on the *micro* and *meso* levels described above. Analysis and understanding of the organisational structure and processes on a per-level basis are supported by previous research (Coghlan, 1994), which guided the researcher to explore design elements of the organisation at the following levels within the organisation:

- *Organisational Level* (high level functioning of a total organisation)

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- *Group Level* (divisions or departments in the organisation)
- *Individual Level* (job design within the organisation)

An integration of the design components related to each level, similar to that of popular diagnostic models at organisational level (Weisbord, 1976; Galbraith, 2002), group level (Hackman & Morris, 1975; McCaskey, 1997) and individual level (Herzberg, 1968) were used as the basis of analysis into the best fit for responsibility and accountability mechanisms into the organisational design. These design elements, as per the different levels of the organisation, are shown in Figure 6 below.

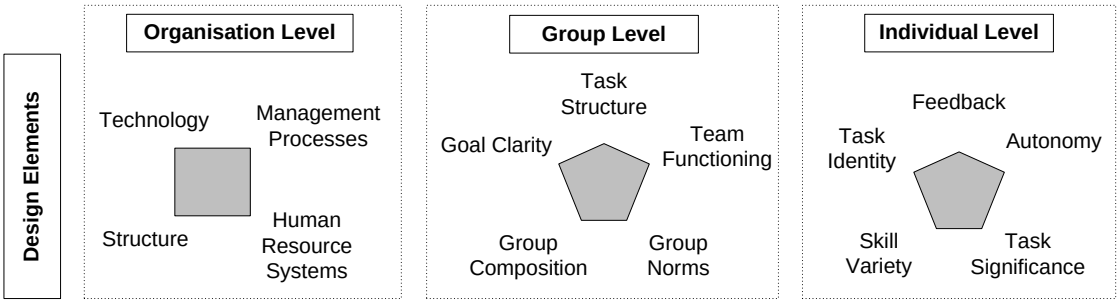

Figure 6: Organisational, Group and Individual Level Design Components *(Cummings & Worley, 2009, p. 95)*

Each of the design components stated above is briefly discussed below.

At **organisational level**, the composition of organisational design comprises four components (Cummings & Worley, 2009):

- The *technology* component represents the core value add or transformational process – how the organisation transforms inputs into outputs. It includes aspects related to workflow, production methods and production equipment.
- Organisational *structure* is the basis for dividing tasks and activities in achieving organisational goals into subunits, distributed within the organisation. It also entails monitoring and coordination of activities within the organisation through managerial hierarchy or lateral mechanisms (e.g. plans, schedules, integrators).
- *Management processes* are mechanisms and methods for controlling the organisation's operation. This include making decisions, processing information and timely, effective sharing of information.

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- *Human Resource Systems* involve the tools and mechanisms used to appoint, manage, reward and develop members of the organisation.

At **group level**, the composition of organisational design comprises five components (Cummings & Worley, 2009):

- *Goal clarity* has to do with the group's understanding of its objectives and how goals are being monitored and measured.
- *Task structure* involves the design of a group's work. It consists of two dimensions: coordination of effort and regulation of behaviour (degree to which members control their own task behaviour).
- *Group composition* refers to how groups are comprised, with factors like demographics and individual needs affecting group dynamics.
- *Team functioning* refers to the underlying functioning of members in the group, how the individuals in the group work together or are in conflict, consequently supporting each other or not. Task-related activities are involved, for example advocacy and inquiry as well as coordinating and evaluating activities.
- *Group norms* are those beliefs by members about the acceptable performance levels of the group and how the group should achieve this performance.

And at **individual level**, the composition of organisational design also comprises five components (Cummings & Worley, 2009):

- *Skill variety* as a measure of the different activities and skills required to perform the job.
- *Task identity* represents the level to which a job entails execution of whole, identifiable pockets of work (the ability to complete tasks from start to finish).
- *Task significance* refers to the significance of a job in others' lives.
- *Autonomy* refers to the freedom an individual has in the job to identify his or her own work methods and schedule the work to his or her own liking.
- *Feedback* involves the measure to which clear and direct feedback is given on task performance in the job.

The design components as discussed above, broken down into the organisation, group and individual levels of the organisation, offered clear units of analysis for the application of responsibility and accountability theory.

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2.4 Responsibility and Accountability Promoted through Organisational Design

Greenwood and Miller (2010) defined organisational design as "the structures of accountability and responsibility used to develop and implement strategies, and the human resource practices and information and business processes that activate those structures". They continued to emphasise the lack of referencing, amongst others, accountability and performance enhancing design elements in organisational scholarship (Greenwood & Miller, 2010). This literature review confirmed the lack of studies that incorporate elements of responsibility, accountability and organisational design; in fact, no significant research was found where these concepts are integrated with the aim to enhance responsibility and accountability in the organisation to the extent that organisational performance is influenced.

To this end, and with the theory background on employee performance, responsibility, accountability and organisational design reviewed, the researcher proposed a *conceptual framework* as the basis of the research.

As the basis of the research, the *conceptual framework* would serve the following purpose (Miles & Huberman, 1994):

- It would assist in determining who to include in the study and who not.
- It would indicate possible relationships that may be present based on logic, experience and/or theory.
- It would assist the researcher to group general constructs into intellectual "collectives".

Although the framework could act as the basis and guide for the study, care will have to be taken to honour an inductive research approach, with a final *conceptual framework* only constructed after the data analysis process (Baxter & Jack, 2008) and only then presented as a *speculative model* as the outcome of the study.

2.4.1 Construction of the Baseline Framework

The four components of responsibility and accountability, namely the (1) *prescription clarity link*, (2) *personal control link* and (3) *personal obligation link* of responsibility together with (4) an *evaluative audience* to ensure accountability (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994) were seen as necessary **criteria** to which an organisation's design (at all levels) should adhere if responsibility and accountability within the organisation were considered important.

This formed the foundation of the framework. The criteria were applied to all levels of the organisation following the reviewed literature that interventions should be "bundled" and

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therefore applied at all levels of the organisation to promote responsibility and accountability throughout the organisation (Denisi & Smith, 2014).

The *conceptual framework* was subsequently constructed by evaluating how best these components of responsibility and accountability as well as the components of organisational design (Cummings & Worley, 2009) can be integrated. The result would act as a guide, indicating *which* organisational design elements (at each of the three levels in the organisation) should adhere to *what* criteria of responsibility and accountability to ultimately achieve greater responsibility and accountability in the organisation.

As an example of the evaluation process to identify how best the different components fit, it was argued that the *prescription clarity link* can best be seen as a necessary criterion to which *management processes* (at the organisational level), *group norms* (at the group level) and *autonomy* (at the individual level) in the organisation should adhere if greater responsibility within the organisation is to be achieved. The criterion of *prescription clarity* was allocated to these three design components by evaluating every design component per level and determining where best the criterion of *prescribed clarity* will fit. For example, at the organisational level, *management processes* refer to "mechanisms and methods for controlling of the organisation's operation", clearly stating that "methods" of controlling the operation are considered under this design component. If *management processes* were consequently designed to be clear in its "methods" of conducting business, it was argued that the criterion of *prescribed clarity* would be met and that responsibility at organisational level would be enhanced.

Similar to the allocation of the *prescription clarity* criterion to design components mentioned above, the researcher allocated the balance of the criteria to other design components. From the definition of different design components, more than one criterion could and were applicable to a specific design component, but this was not considered a problem.

2.4.2 The *Conceptual Framework*

By following the process as described above, all the criteria were allocated to applicable organisational design components. As a result, the design components which (according to the connections made as described above) effect responsibility and accountability in the organisation can be seen highlighted in Figure 7 below.

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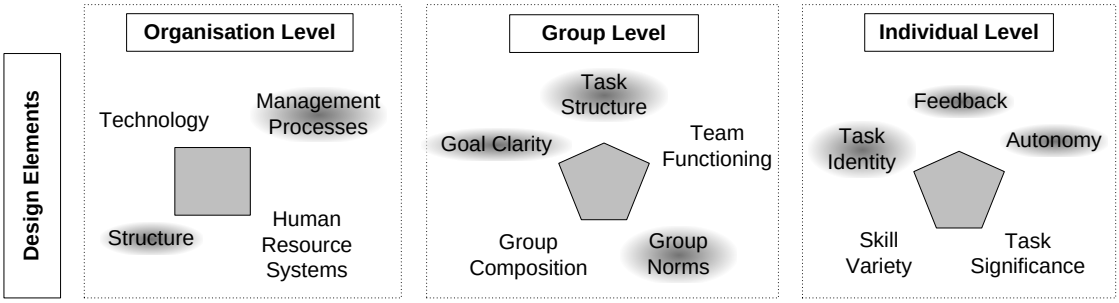

Figure 7: Organisational Design Components effecting Responsibility and Accountability

The details of which criteria could be associated with which design component in the organisation constitute the *conceptual framework* itself and formed the basis of the envisaged research. The *conceptual framework* can be seen in Figure 8 below. Design components at each of the organisational levels (horizontal rows) are shown as the components which have to adhere to the different criteria (vertical columns) in achieving an organisational design promoting responsibility and accountability of members.

		Criteria to promote **Responsibility**			Criteria to promote **Accountability**
		Prescription Clarity	Personal Control	Personal Obligation	Evaluative Audience
Design Level in Organisation	Organisational Level	*Management Processes*	*Structure*	*Structure*	*Management Processes*
	Group Level	*Group Norms*	*Task Structure*	*Task Structure*	*Goal Clarity*
	Individual Level	*Autonomy*	*Task Identity*	*Autonomy*	*Feedback*

Figure 8: Conceptual Framework of Organisational Design Components effecting Responsibility and Accountability within the Organisation

2.4.3 Exploring Responsibility and Accountability around the Framework

The *conceptual framework* was envisaged to be the basis of the proposed research. Although this framework was constructed from theory, it was purely an attempt to guide thinking about and practical implementation of the concepts. Given the inductive nature of the exploratory study, this assumption and way of thinking (thus the linking of organisational design components

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with the components of responsibility and accountability) in itself could possibly be altered or shown not to be relevant.

Through interviews, the researcher planned to explore the presence of typical *characteristics*, associated with meeting the criteria as proposed in the framework, in each of the design components listed above. These c*haracteristics* could include the presence of any practical phenomena that are believed to effect the environment to the extent that the criteria of responsibility and accountability are affected. Typical *characteristics* that could be expected in each of the design components are listed in Table 1 below.

This list was purely a proposed and incomplete compilation of possible *characteristics* based on the researcher's experiences and understanding of the topic. An expansion (and possibly fundamental changes) of the list, given the data obtained, is expected to emerge from the inductive research (Saunders & Lewis, 2012; Baxter & Jack, 2008).

Organisational Level	Link of Responsibility: / Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Prescription Clarity criteria in: Management Processes**
	- Clear processes and procedures guiding activities in the organisation. - Clear organisational goals (for example financial performance goals) and communication of progress.	
	Link of Responsibility: / Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Personal Control criteria in: Structure**
	- Well defined organisational roles (no uncertainties or role sharing regarding who does what). - Support structure available to role players for achieve goals.	
	Link of Responsibility: / Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Personal Obligation criteria in: Structure**
	- Coordination of work through leadership positions within clear hierarchical levels (who reports to whom).	
	Link for Accountability: / Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Evaluative Audience criteria in: Management Processes**
	- Pre-determined periodic (frequency depending on application) progress and status evaluations (without exceptions). - Scrutiny of performance information and projections through 'sanity checks' (not accepting without understanding).	

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Group Level	Link of Responsibility: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Prescription Clarity criteria in:** **Group Norms**
	- Explicit expectations of acting with integrity towards and support between members and to outside the group. - Stated expectations on when members not fully utilised should act and engage with different activities.	
	Link of Responsibility: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Personal Control criteria in:** **Task Structure**
	- Clear and well defined member roles, allocated my managers knowing each member's strengths and weaknesses. - Manageable and focussed areas of business or tasks allocated to group members.	
	Link of Responsibility: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Personal Obligation criteria in:** **Task Structure**
	- Clear within-group hierarchy and reporting (no uncertainty between members on who makes which decision). - Effective middle management members, each overseeing and informing all members of a sub-group.	
	Link for Accountability: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Evaluative Audience criteria in:** **Goal Clarity**
	- Clear within-group hierarchy and reporting (no uncertainty between members on who makes which decision). - Effective middle management members, each overseeing and informing all members of a sub-group.	
Individual Level	Link of Responsibility: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Prescription Clarity criteria in:** **Autonomy**
	- Clear outcomes for each job position defined - what is expected from individual in that position and how is it expected.	
	Link of Responsibility: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Personal Control criteria in:** **Task Identity**
	- The existence of mechanisms to clarify expected task outcomes and address expected shortcomings in a job. - When part of task is executed, portion of task and interactions with others (inputs and outputs) to be clearly defined.	
	Link of Responsibility: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Personal Obligation criteria in:** **Autonomy**
	- Job's fit, position or placement within the organisation and the associated guidelines are available.	
	Link for Accountability: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Evaluative Audience criteria in:** **Feedback**
	- Feedback mechanisms in place through functional feedback and sharing opportunities as a trigger for self-evaluation.	

Table 1: Typical Characteristics of Design Components to meet Criteria

Following the exploratory research and analysis of the feedback, the existence or absence of these *characteristics* as well as the introduction of other characteristics (which may or may not be linked to aspects of the organisational design) will advance understanding of the concepts and the validity (or not) of links in the framework. As stated before, it was envisaged that an updated *conceptual framework*, presented as a well-defined *speculative model*, be an output of the study (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

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3. Research Questions and Propositions

From the literature, a *conceptual framework* was presented as an input and basis for the study. It was also stated in the research question and purpose (Chapter 1) that the aims of the research include exploring the nature of responsibility and accountability in organisations, how it is experienced and how it is considered to influence organisational performance.

These aims, shaped by means of the literature review, will be explored during interviews with employees from Company X. Both research questions and research propositions will be used to address the research problem:

- Given the fundamental uncertainties in current literature about the role of responsibility and accountability in organisational performance (Mero, Guidice, & Werner, 2014), how individuals' behaviour are influenced by accountability in practice (Converse, et al., 2014) and accountability in the multilevel organisation (Hall, Zinko, Perryman, & Ferris, 2009), *research questions* are presented for consideration.
- With the *conceptual framework* being the basis of the study, *research propositions* will be explored to test assumptions made during the construction of the framework (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

3.1 Research Questions

Performance management is a top priority for managers (Gruman & Saks, 2011). Hofrichter and McGovern (2001) further states that organisational performance relates to the achievement of specific, measurable goals to help the organisation win. Recent studies have also confirmed that environmental conditions influence employee performance (Behson, 2012; Yang & Konrad, 2011; Newman & Sheikh, 2012).

However, how responsibility or accountability, with an inherent focus on specific goals (Grobler, Wärnich, Carrell, Elbert, & Hatfield, 2011), influences these environments and how organisational performance is consequently influenced, are under-researched areas of interest (Mero, Guidice, & Werner, 2014; Converse, et al., 2014) relevant to the research problem. With this in mind, the first two research questions were formulated as follows.

- *Research Question 1*: How are responsibility and accountability and the function thereof understood in organisations?
- *Research Question 2*: How important is responsibility or accountability as contributors to organisational performance in South African organisations?

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In line with the questions above, another area of uncertainty relates to responsibility and accountability in the multilevel organisation (Hall, Zinko, Perryman, & Ferris, 2009). The question is validated by noting the importance of a multilevel and bundled approach to human resource ("HR") practices (Denisi & Smith, 2014) as well as studies showing that group level performance can be influenced by changes in the group level environment (Campion, Papper, & Medsker, 1996; Cohen & Bailey, 1997).

- *Research Question 3*: To what extent is organisation-wide responsibility and accountability interventions (at organisational level, group level and individual level), *versus* individual level interventions only, effective in influencing the way employees within the organisation experience responsibility and accountability.

Research Question 3 also serves as a bridge between the research questions and the research propositions issued as part of the study. The question gives context and weight to the *conceptual framework* evaluated through the research propositions.

3.2 Research Propositions

Baxter and Jack (2008) propose that, when a *conceptual framework* is used in a study, the exploratory process should result in a final framework (*speculative model*) to emerge after the data analysis. This implies that the validity and appropriateness of the framework presented as part of the literature review should be assessed. This supports the intent to have the *conceptual framework* as the basis of the research.

Previous research proposed that further studies on how accountability can be measured in the workplace be conducted (Mero, Guidice, & Werner, 2014). This study propose that if a *speculative model* is issued in conclusion of the study, clear design components will be associated with the different criteria of responsibility and accountability. This will enable practical measurement of the different criteria and consequent accountability. Measurement of accountability is therefore not assessed as a primary outcome of this study, but managers should be able to draw secondary conclusions upon completion of the study.

When creating the *conceptual framework* by combining the different criteria for responsibility and accountability (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994; Schlenker, Schlenker, & Schlenker, 2013; Britt, 1999; Schlenker, 1997; Rudolph, 2006; Bovens, 2010; Frink & Klimoski, 2004) with the components of organisational design (Popova & Sharpanskykh, 2009; Coghlan, 1994; Cummings & Worley, 2009; Galbraith, 2002; McCaskey, 1997; Greenwood & Miller, 2010), specific logical assumptions were made in the construction of the links between

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the criteria and the associated design components. These assumptions will be assessed in the study through the following research propositions:

- *Research Proposition 1*: To influence the Prescription Clarity link of responsibility, changes to the organisational design components Management Processes (organisational level), Group Norms (group level) and Autonomy (individual level) will be most effective.
- *Research Proposition 2*: To influence the Personal Control link of responsibility, changes to the organisational design components Structure (organisational level), Task Structure (group level) and Task Identity (individual level) will be most effective.
- *Research Proposition 3*: To influence the Personal Obligation link of responsibility, changes to the organisational design components Structure (organisational level), Task Structure (group level) and Autonomy (individual level) will be most effective.
- *Research Proposition 4*: To influence the Evaluative Audience link of accountability, changes to the organisational design components Management Processes (organisational level), Goal Clarity (group level) and Feedback (individual level) will be most effective.

The two final aims of the research are the following: (1) to propose a well-defined *speculative model* for further research; and (2) to conceptualise guiding principles for organisational design to achieve greater responsibility and accountability. These aims will be addressed in the following propositions:

- *Research Proposition 5*: The final *conceptual framework* as derived from the study can be issued as a well-defined *speculative model* to be used for further research.
- *Research Proposition 6*: Guiding principles, based on the results of the study, can be conceptualised to assist managers in designing organisations that achieve greater responsibility and accountability to the benefit of the organisation.

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4. Research Methodology

The research methodology and design were chosen to be appropriate for the research problem and purpose. Details of the research design, population, sampling, unit of analysis, measurement and expected limitations are discussed in the sections below.

4.1 Research Design

4.1.1 Research Philosophy

The environment in which employees of organisations must function is created by organisational design, and is multi-dimensional and extremely complex (Greenwood & Miller, 2010). Given this complexity, it was envisaged that this study adopt an *interpretivism* approach, executed in the natural environment of a functional organisation through a *qualitative interview* strategy (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

This *interpretivism* philosophy suggests that aspects related to and impacted by complex social factors should be researched in its natural environment (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). This is true for a study on the impact of organisational performance contributed to by responsibility and accountability in the organisation, as multiple and complex factors impact individuals in the organisation. It was therefore argued that research within an operational organisation will suit the research problem better than, for example, experimental research.

4.1.2 Approach

The *conceptual framework* discussed and proposed as part of the study was based on a combination of observation by the researcher and existing theory. By following an *inductive* research approach, these observations and patterns suggested in the framework were planned to be further explored and tested through qualitative research (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Repeated occurrences indicating links between specific components of organisational design and components of responsibility or accountability would enable the researcher to make general conclusions and present the *conceptual framework* as a well-defined *speculative model* to be investigated in future through theoretical hypotheses (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

Given that an *inductive* approach possesses the ability to be more flexible in terms of the research emphasis (Saunders & Lewis, 2012), the researcher was expected to be in a better position to alter original assumptions made regarding the links between organisational design and responsibility or accountability. Also, the emphasis of the four components of responsibility

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and accountability, namely (1) *prescription clarity link*, (2) *personal control link* and (3) *personal obligation link* of responsibility together with (4) an *evaluative audience* to ensure accountability (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994), as the only or valid components could be explored with observations highlighting different components and allowing the researcher to alter the *conceptual framework* in developing the *speculative model*, to be presented upon completion of the study.

4.1.3 Type of Study

As already stated, an *exploratory* study was envisaged. The aim (and also the purpose of this research) was to gain *deeper understanding* of the validity and implications of the *conceptual framework* produced, which would be done through *exploratory* research (Chipp, 2014). Although it was expected that these insights will guide the researcher and add to the understanding of the proposed framework to enable the presentation of a *speculative model*, the findings were not expected to be considered definitive conclusions, but rather act as a guides for further work and future research in the field (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

4.1.4 Research Strategy

The *interpretivism* research philosophy that was chosen proposed that research should be done in the explored factors' natural environment. This led to a proposal that the research be done at an organisation, Company X, which was accessible to the researcher.

Although only *interviewing* as a data collection technique was envisaged for the study, the researcher already had an understanding of the context related to Company X (Saunders & Lewis, 2012) and it was expected that great depth into the subject matter could be gained given Company X's history at the time.

To substantiate the relevance of the subject matter to Company X, it is important to give some of this company's background.

Company X went through a restructuring process recent to the time of the study. The company merged with other smaller companies in the same group of companies and adopted a new organisational structure after the merger. This structure, implemented in March 2013, resulted in significant losses in Company X's business development pipeline and market share. In March 2014, again a different organisational structure was adopted.

It was argued that the second organisational structure (post March 2014) had a specific focus on accountability and interdependence of functions within the organisation (Cummings &

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Worley, 2009). The changes that was implemented in the organisational structure of the business before and after March 2014 can be seen in Figure 9 below.

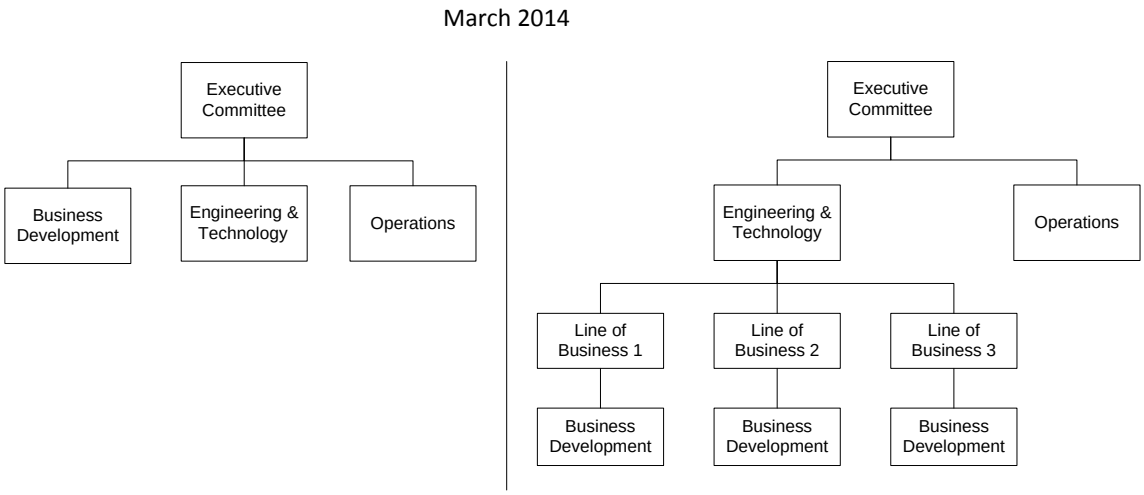

Figure 9: *Company X Organisational Structure – before and after March 2014*

Note that the Business Development (BD) and Engineering & Technology (E&T) functions were combined after March 2014 into Lines of Business (LOB). It was argued that these changes to the structure resulted in changes of employees' responsibility and accountability (following the newly defined lines of businesses with focused BD and E&T personnel).

As a *qualitative interview* strategy to explore and find new insights were envisaged, the experiences of employees in Company X over this time together with their subsequent perception of responsibility, accountability and organisational performance were expected to proof deeply valuable for the defined research problem.

4.2 Population and Sampling

Although statements about the importance of responsibility and accountability in organisations are prevalent in existing studies (Hall, Zinko, Perryman, & Ferris, 2009), no specific distinction about how this importance differ between organisations of different size, origin or industries was made. Even though it was the researcher's belief that conclusions from the study will be applicable to all organisations, the *population* of this study was restricted due to the lack of evidence and the available sample for the study (only Company X).

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Company X was a South African, medium-sized enterprise in the engineering and industrial/mining industries with around 300 full-time employees. The company was also a fully-owned subsidiary of a large corporate and represented many similar enterprises in the corporate world.

Based on the research planned to be conducted through *qualitative interviews* at Company X, the population for this study was restricted to the description below.

- All commercial organisations with the following characteristics:
  - South African-based business.
  - More than 200 full-time employees.
  - Operating in the engineering or industrial/mining industry.

In terms of *sampling*, it was already established that *qualitative interviews* at Company X were planned to be conducted due to the accessibility of the organisation to conduct the study. This implied that *non-probability* (that is, no complete list of the sample exists, nor will the sample be accessible at random (Saunders & Lewis, 2012)), *convenience* (that is, the researcher is using the only available sample, not chosen for its appropriateness specifically, although Company X is deemed appropriate for the study (Saunders & Lewis, 2012)) sampling was to be used for the study.

4.3 Unit of Analysis and Measurement Instrument

The *unit of analysis* identified as applicable to the study was Organisational Design.

The researcher envisaged the use of interview schedules or guides as *instruments* when conducting the *qualitative* interviews.

4.4 Data Gathering and Analysis Approach

As described above, a *qualitative exploratory* study was envisaged. Interviews were planned to be conducted in order to gain insights into the research questions as stated in the literature review section of this proposal. Following the gathering of qualitative data, the data would be analysed and applied to the proposed *conceptual framework* in an attempt to validate components of the framework and produce a well-defined *speculative model*, to be tested in future research.

The researcher envisaged fifteen interviews, with all of these being *in-depth interviews* from Company X (the sample). The interviews were planned to be conducted in the following sequence:

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(1) five “Non-Management” Interviews from Company X (individual level)
(2) five “Executive” Interviews from Company X (organisational level)
(3) five “Senior Manager” Interviews from Company X (group level)

Following prior consent, all interviews would be recorded and transcribed in preparation for analysis.

The researcher planned to utilise a computer-aided qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) package, ATLAS.ti, to *analyse* the data. Although simplified, it was planned that the following steps would be followed as part of the analysis process (Saunders & Lewis, 2012):

- Conduct a holistic review of the data.
- Categorise the information by assigning codes to units of data (coding).
- Assess relevance between codes and gain insights through CAQDAS outputs.

It was envisaged that the insights and outputs from the *analysis* would be applied to the research questions and model as a contribution to the subject matter and as a guide for future quantitative research.

4.5 Research Limitations

The following generic limitations to the research were identified at the time:

- The population as defined was limited and further research into the appropriateness of the study for other organisations could be beneficial.
- The application of the model itself, being multilevel orientated, could be found inappropriate for small enterprises not comprising of multiple levels. Similar models more applicable to these organisations could be considered.

Chapter 7 further highlights limitations considered to be specific to this study and which were highlighted during the data analysis process.

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5. Results

Three research questions and six research propositions were presented in Chapter 3 with the research methodology employed discussed in Chapter 4.

As stated and in accordance with Chapter 4, a total of fifteen one hour interviews were conducted. The data were analysed using ATLAS.ti, with paragraphs coded with relevant codes related to the different research questions and propositions.

This chapter will first describe the sample and details of the data analysis, followed by the actual results. The results are structured and presented against the research questions and propositions.

5.1 Sample Description

As per the research methodology, the researcher scheduled meetings with fifteen staff members of the engineering company, Company X. This was done in line with the permission letter obtained from the company's CEO and the approved study Ethical Clearance obtained in July 2015.

In total, five Non-Management Employees, five Middle Management Employees and five Senior (Executive) Level Employees were approached and invited to participate (thus *convenience* sampling). All candidates agreed to participate and signed an informed consent letter (draft attached as **Annexure A**). When the interviews were conducted, it was discovered that one of the Middle Management Employees that agreed to participate was very new in his/her role. The researcher decided to then re-classify this participant as a Non-Management Participant and not a Middle Management Participant.

The interviews were guided by the interview schedules (as discussed in Chapter 3 and attached as **Annexures B, C and D**). Different interview schedules were used for different types of employees, in line with the methodology discussed in Chapter 4. All the interviews were conducted face to face and a time slot of one hour was pre-booked for each interview. The interviews were conducted over a period of four weeks.

Although all fifteen interviews were conducted, a recording error resulted in one of the Senior (Executive) Level interviews (Interview 9) not being clear enough to be transcribed. Given the limitations to access, this interview could not be re-done neither could a substitute Senior Level Employee be approached. Given the number of interviews already conducted the researcher concluded that saturation in the study would not be influenced by not including this specific

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interview. Subsequently, the data from fourteen interviews were transcribed and analysed. Table 2 below shows details of the interviews conducted and successfully used for this study.

Item	Qty	Unit
Total Number of Interviews	14	units
Non-Management Participants	6	units
Middle Management Participants	4	units
Senior (Executive) Level Participants	4	units
Recordings		
Total Length of all Interviews	802	minutes
Average Length of Interviews	57	minutes
Longest Interview	63	minutes
Shortest Interview	44	minutes
Transcripts		
Total Length of Transcripts	145.3	pages
Average Length of Transcripts	10.4	pages
Longest Transcript	13.3	pages
Shortest Transcript	7.6	pages

Table 2: Summary of Interviews Conducted

All respondents agreed that their interview data could be used anonymously as part of the study. Different employees of Company X, including the CEO, requested feedback once the study is completed, information which could be disseminated in the form of this dissertation.

5.2 Data Analysis

Data analysis could be done after each interview was transcribed. The computer-aided qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS), ATLAS.ti, was used as a tool during the analysis process. All interviews were added as Primary Documents to a single Hermeneutic Unit within ATLAS.ti so that code and quote counts could be done across all fourteen interviews.

One of the challenges when analysing the data was the naming and structure of the codes used. The coding structure needed to allow the researcher to make conclusions from logical connections within the data, appropriate to the different research questions and propositions. This type of analysis is described by Hsieh and Shannon (2005) as *Directed Content* analysis. Although an *inductive* research approach is followed throughout this exploratory study, the need to assess the *conceptual framework* proposed in Chapter 2 required that apart from using primarily an inductive coding philosophy, it was required to create some codes deductively in advance. Codes that were created deductively relate to the different links of responsibility and

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accountability (ten codes), which had to be related and linked to units of data referring to these links.

Most the codes were created during the analysis and were consequently grouped into code families. The code families enabled the researcher to structure the codes into groups relevant to the research questions and propositions. The list of code families, as well as a description of codes relevant to the family are listed in Table 3 below.

Code Family	Codes Associated with This Family
0: Within Specific Company	Codes related to issues specific to Company X
1: Culture	Codes related to the organisational culture
2: Leadership	Codes related to leadership attributes
3: Strategy	Codes related to a company's strategy
DE: Group - Goal Clarity	Codes related to Goal Clarity as a Group Level design component
DE: Group - Group Composition	Codes related to Group Composition as a Group Level design component
DE: Group - Group Norms	Codes related to Group Norms as a Group Level design component
DE: Group - Task Structure	Codes related to Task Structure as a Group Level design component
DE: Group - Team Functioning	Codes related to Team Functioning as a Group Level design component
DE: Ind - Autonomy	Codes related to Autonomy as a Individual Level design component
DE: Ind - Feedback	Codes related to Feedback as a Individual Level design component
DE: Ind - Skill Variety	Codes related to Skill Variety as a Individual Level design component
DE: Ind - Task Identity	Codes related to Task Identity as a Individual Level design component
DE: Ind - Task Significance	Codes related to Task Significance as a Individual Level design component
DE: Org - Human Resource Systems	Codes related to Human Resource Systems as a Organisation Level design component
DE: Org - Management Processes	Codes related to Management Processes as a Organisation Level design component
DE: Org - Org Structure	Codes related to Org Structure as a Organisation Level design component
DE: Org - Technology	Codes related to Technology as a Organisation Level design component
LfA: Evaluative Audience	Codes related to the Evaluative Audience link for Accountability
LfA: Self-Evaluation	Codes related to Self-Evaluation as a link for holding oneself Accountable
LfR: Personal Control	Codes related to the Personal Control link for Responsibility
LfR: Personal Obligation	Codes related to the Personal Obligation link for Responsibility
LfR: Prescription Clarity	Codes related to the Prescription Clarity link for Responsibility
Q1: Understanding of Accountability	Codes related to the participants' understanding of Accountability
Q1: Understanding of Responsibility	Codes related to the participants' understanding of Responsibility
Q2: Importance of Res and Acc on Performance	Codes related to the participants' understanding of how important Responsibility and Accountability is on Organisational Performance
Q2: Performance Impact Level in Organisation	Codes indicating at what level of the organisation Performance is effected by Responsibility or Accountability

Table 3: Code Families

The use of codes through these code families are described in the sections on results below. The full list of codes created is attached as **Annexure E**. Codes were allocated to units of data, categorising the statements made and topics discussed. The coding was also done so that variations of points made were categorised separately by allocating different codes, but grouped

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together through the family structure discussed above. Sometimes these variations were repeated by the same or other participants, but many codes have only one quote associated with them. This led to a large number of codes generated. The benefit of analysis through detailed coding was that the content of quotations could easily be grasped by reading only the codes associated with the relevant unit of data.

Even though codes were generated at this high resolution, it was clear that coding saturation was achieved, as the rate at which new codes was generated declined drastically through the process. This rate was also a function of the type of interviews conducted, as individual level interviews, which were conducted with non-management participants, touched on different aspects than for example organisational level interviews, which were conducted with senior management (executive) participants. This is evident from Table 4 and Figure 10 below indicating the sequence of coding against new codes created.

Coding Sequence (Primary Document)	Interview Name	Interview Schedule Used	New Codes Created during Analysis
P1	IND1	Individual Level	76
P2	IND2	Individual Level	27
P3	IND3	Individual Level	19
P4	IND4	Individual Level	11
P5	IND5	Individual Level	7
P6	IND6	Individual Level	12
P7	GRP1	Group Level	15
P8	GRP2	Group Level	9
P9	GRP3	Group Level	6
P10	GRP4	Group Level	9
P11	ORG1	Organisational Level	10
P12	ORG2	Organisational Level	7
P13	ORG3	Organisational Level	6
P14	ORG4	Organisational Level	4
		Total Codes	**218**

Table 4: Interview Coding Sequence and Codes Created

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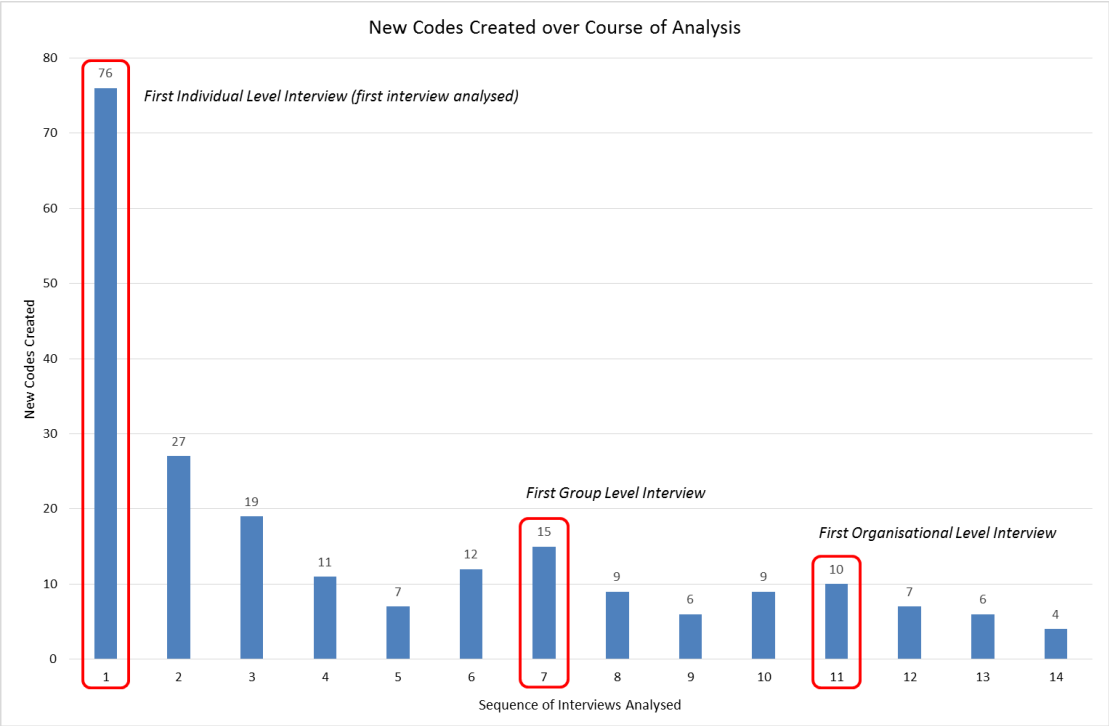

Figure 10: New Codes Created over Course of Analysis

After all transcripts were coded, the researcher reviewed and analysed the categorisation in context of the research questions and propositions so that similar emergent themes are not coded by separate but similar codes (which are not grouped together), which could dilute important findings. An example of this was the fact that many participants mentioned that accountability is contextual, and that accountability differed contextually, with the result that three different codes were generated. By reviewing these codes the researcher could group them and draw clear conclusions about the importance of this emergent theme.

For confidentiality purposes, interviewees' names are not used in the report. As seen in Table 4 above, the interviews are named numerically and according to interviewee type – for example individual level interviews (used for non-management interviewees) are named IND1, IND2 etc. The same naming convention was used for group and organisational level interviews to protect the participants' identity.

5.3 Research Results for Research Question 1

Research Question 1 was presented in Chapter 3 as follows:

- *Research Question 1*: How are responsibility and accountability and the function thereof understood in organisations?

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The purpose of this question was to inductively gain insight into the general understanding of the two concepts, responsibility and accountability, within the organisation. During the data analysis, all references related to a participant's understanding of responsibility and accountability were categorised under the code families "Q1: Understanding of Responsibility" and "Q1: Understanding of Accountability". The researcher recognises that the complete dataset as produced by this research will reflect the participants' understanding of the concepts, but the quotes below represent specific mention or reflection of how responsibility and accountability are viewed in the organisation.

5.3.1 Responsibility

By analysing the codes, the researcher identified the themes that were mentioned by most participants. Table 5 below lists the top five codes that were mentioned and the frequency of mentions across the primary documents' range.

		Mentions														
Applicable Code	Mentioned By	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	Total Mentions
Res: Responsibility is assigned by Others	5 Participants	4	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	9
Res: Can delegate responsibilities to others	4 Participants	4	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	8
Res: My responsibilities refer to the tasks I need to execute	4 Participants	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	4
Res: Personal Attribute	4 Participants	4	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	11
Res: Responsibilities motivates people to perform	2 Participants	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
																34

Table 5: Understanding of Responsibility – Top Five

The results show that in its simplest form, a person's responsibility refers to those tasks that one needs to execute as part of one's role and function in the organisation.

> *"Responsibility, the way I see it, is what am I responsible to, what specific tasks am I responsible to execute and what is the outcomes, what should the outcomes be." (IND6, P6, 2:2)*

> *"Responsibility is kind of your job description, the things you are meant to do on a day to day basis in your 9 to 5 and how you represent the company, that sort of things, that is your responsibilities. Be at work your 8 hours a day, put in your fair amount of flesh." (GRP3, P9, 3:3)*

> *"I normally see accountable and responsible as two different levels of a very similar concept so everybody is responsible for whatever he's got to." (GRP4, P10, 3:3)*

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This responsibility is considered to be assigned or given to a person by others, whereas someone can also delegate his or her responsibility to another person.

> *"Responsibility, they are related, but I think you can delegate responsibility – I am overall responsible for it but I'm making it your responsibility to see that this particular task gets done." (IND4, P4, 3:3)*

> *"No, responsibility is given to somebody. I can give responsibility. You are responsible to execute that task." (GRP1, P7, 6:6)*

> *"Responsibility is something that you are given by an authority, who assigns you a mandate to perform certain tasks, and you have the duty to perform against such a mandate, or duty, or task and deliver goods." (ORG1, P11, 6:6)*

> *"That is very difficult thing to answer. I think we all understand that there is a difference but if you look at responsibility; I think I am responsible for something but I can also have colleagues that are part of that responsibilities and I can also to a large extent delegate responsibilities." (ORG3, P12, 3:3)*

> *"When you made responsible for something I guess it doesn't necessarily mean you are held accountable for the success or failure thereof through incentives or disciplines." (ORG4, P15, 3:3)*

This mechanism to delegate or be assigned one's responsibilities is considered a key characteristic by the participants, jointly cited by all but one participant. The theme is further supported by the observation that the delegation of responsibilities is considered key to the functioning of hierarchical structures in an organisation.

> *"Now obviously, let's say a department head can't take everything on himself, so he then delegates his responsibilities and hold people accountable for it on the next level. So it rolls down to each or to the lowest level. Now, if for instance, a line manager doesn't keep his subordinates accountable, then the full responsible and accountable lies with him." (IND1, P1, 54:54)*

Although responsibilities are assigned to people, the extent to which people accept and embrace these responsibilities is considered a personal attribute, meaning that not all people will take responsibility to the same extent for a specific task given.

> *"So you get different types of people obviously. Some people are inherently responsible and therefore accountable for their actions, and other people, if they are not told they*

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are responsible for certain things then they won't be able to be held accountable, they will just pass the buck." (IND1, P1, 15:15)

"If people gives me something that I've never done, it is a challenge for me so I do it. Not everybody is like that, most people might feel that it is not part of my job, it's not in my job description. That is where the personality comes in." (IND2, P2, 84:84)

"…responsibility is the personal commitment, if you want, that the individual gives to that job or brings to that job. I'm given a certain accountability, and I assume the responsibility for it." (ORG3, P13, 2:2)

Lastly, more than one participant were of the opinion that responsibility can be considered a key if not necessary condition for employee performance.

"Some people don't manage like that, they don't give their people any responsibilities and I don't think people that don't have any responsibilities perform." (IND2, P2, 204:204)

"…one of the things I do very early in the project, is make the project belong to the team. If they take responsibility, they perform and I think that is well within my scope of work to do." (IND3, P3, 71:71)

Comprehensive results regarding the importance of responsibility and accountability for performance are discussed in section 5.4 on Research Question 2.

The top five themes related to the understanding of responsibility that emerged from the results can be summarized in a network diagram, Figure 11, which is also described below.

Responsibility and the extent to which one accepts responsibility is a property of one's makeup, thus a personal attribute. Responsibility is associated with the tasks that one needs to execute as part of one's function, and having responsibilities motivate people to perform in delivering certain outcomes. Very importantly however, is the property of responsibility being assigned by others or delegated to others, which forms the basis of a hierarchical structure in the organization.

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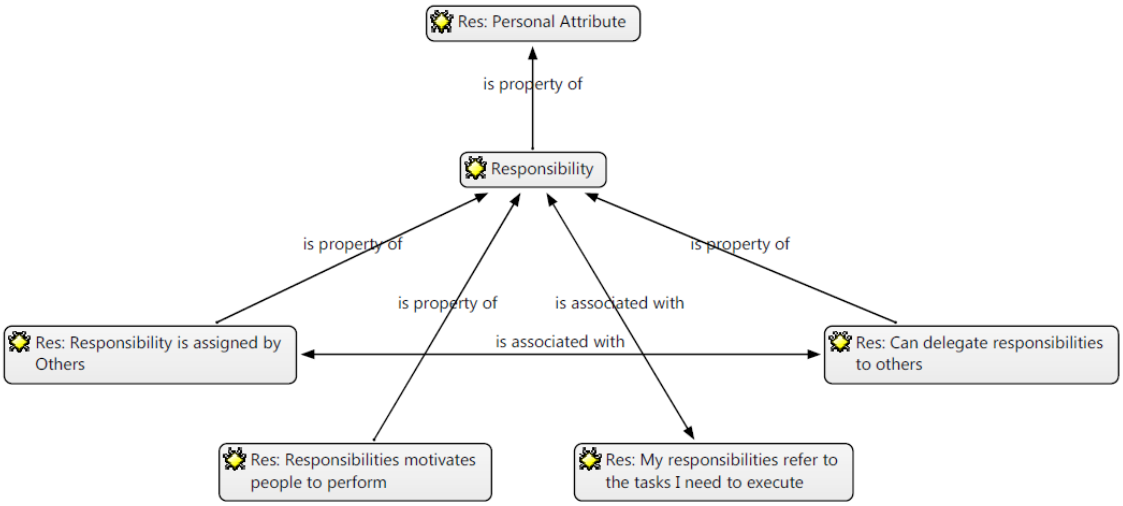

Figure 11: Understanding of Responsibility – Network Diagram

5.3.2 Accountability

Again the themes that were quoted by most participants were identified to highlight the key aspects about how accountability in the organisation is understood. Table 6 below lists the top five codes mentioned and the frequency of mentions across the primary documents' range.

		Mentions													
Applicable Code	Mentioned By	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	Total Mentions
Acc: Held accountable for responsibilities	9 Participants	1	4	1	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	1	1	0	1	13
Acc: Measured or evaluated by Others	9 Participants	2	1	1	1	0	2	1	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	12
Acc: Personal Attribute, how accountable people are and the extent to which they hold themselves acc	7 Participants	0	0	1	3	3	0	2	0	0	1	3	0	0	2	15
Acc: Leader accountable for teams' outcomes	6 Participants	3	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	9
Acc: Contextual, the context influence the degree of accountability	5 Participants	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	6	0	13
																62

Table 6: Understanding of Accountability – Top Five

It is clear from the results that there is a general consensus that people are being held accountable for their responsibilities. This infers a relationship between responsibility and accountability, where one needs to be responsible for a specific outcome before accountability for that outcome can be relevant.

> *"Yes, you are being held accountable for your responsibilities." (IND1, P1, 11:11)*

> *"And if they are held responsible for certain tasks they can't just say, 'Oh well…' because they are accountable for it." (IND2, P2, 30:30)*

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> *"Accountability is, I would say, from the owner of the responsibility side. Can he be held accountable for the responsibility that was given to him?" (GRP1, P7, 4:4)*

> *"With that privilege, responsibility, comes accountability which is how you are measured." (GRP3, P9, 7:7)*

> *"At the end of the day I am responsible to argument's sake for the profitability of the group right down to say the contribution level. If it wasn't in my performance appraisal and directly affiliated with any bonus that we might get one year, then I wouldn't be actually held accountable for it. Then the responsibility to me, means nothing." (ORG4, P14, 7:7)*

By implication, it is clear that two parties should be involved when someone (entity one) is held accountable (by entity two) for his or her responsibilities. This requisite involvement of a second party was made explicit across the range of interviews. At the same time, the results showed that accountability has to do with the evaluation or assessment of a person's work by someone else.

> *"Accountability means, at the end of the day, if something goes wrong, somebody will come and say but you are held accountable, you were supposed to see to it that this thing works fluently – so that's accountability." (IND4, P4, 3:3)*

> *"Accountability I see as, are the outcomes correct and are somebody looking to see if it is correct and if it is wrong, are you held accountable." (IND6, P6, 2:2)*

> *"Accountability to a large extend, my view and sort of what I tried to read up about it is more of being able to measure things and then report back on that so it is more of a control aspect perhaps than necessarily the responsibility." (ORG2, P12, 3:3)*

It was interesting and surprising to note the results showing that an overwhelming belief exist that accountability is, even more so than responsibility, a personal attribute or trait. This implies that people can either be trusted to be accountable or not, suggesting that the extent to which accountability is accepted by the responsible person is effected by that person's personal attributes. The researcher considers this a different concept than being **held** accountable by others, but rather a characteristic of individuals being accountable and taking accountability for their responsibilities.

> *"Once again, I feel that accountability, and particularly within project managers, is an internal as opposed to an external influence." (IND3, P3, 167:167)*

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"That depends on the individual; are you ready to get your head cut off for what you believe in and are you willing to step out of your comfort zone and are you prepared to stand firm for what you believe in, for that is what I think accountability means. Most people in the working environment are not prepared to do that at all." (IND5, P5, 15:15)

"Yes, they should and it is a difficult concept in my mind because you have, I don't want to say levels of people, but let's say certain levels of people that will relate to the concept differently; so he is happy to be responsible for the job but the moment you link accountability to it, then he is not feeling comfortable about it. So, he is doing something and he is taking responsibility for doing it, but the moment he can be held accountable for what he did or didn't do, he is not that happy for the task he has received. So that is how I have experienced it within the different levels in a project or in a business." (GRP4, P10, 7:7)

"Accountability is a moral, ethical thing. It is part of your upbringing. It's how you are made, how your genes are put together, your DNA. You cannot give somebody DNA – he has it or he doesn't have it." (ORG1, P11, 10:10)

Another characteristic of accountability within the organisation is that for groups or teams, there should be an individual (a leader) identified who will be ultimately accountable for the group's outcomes or deliverables. This highlights the understanding that only one person is expected to account for a group's performance, even though all the members in the group are responsible for the outcome.

"The group of people needs to have a manager, a head, that person is responsible, in his personal capacity, for the success of the group. What he then does in that group is to delegate things and to make sure everyone is responsible for a certain task to make the team collective a success. So you can't throw a lot of people together and suspect success out of them without somebody being the leader. So even if it is not a manager, there needs to be a team leader that needs to be held accountable and responsible for the success of the group." (IND1, P1, 62:62)

"…you're still held accountable because you still have to ensure the group goal as an end point should be met. So a perfect example in our organization is that I will be held accountable for the XX group in achieving project targets and that, and each of the project managers is responsible for his projects but I am also responsible for ensuring that they are responsible. So if I sign a specific project to a project manager that is not competent or is off sick or whatever, if there is something to affect that, there is a further

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responsibility on me to ensure that things get done so I am held accountable for the bigger thing." (GRP2, P8, 17:17)

"So you will have a team of people, everybody responsible for a certain aspect within a project or something that needs to be done but ultimately you need to have somebody that is accountable at certain levels. You can't have ten guys working on the same project and all of them are at the same level accountable, but all of them are responsible for something." (GRP4, P10, 3:3)

This finding highlights the hierarchical nature of accountability, where a team leader will in turn hold their team members accountable for their responsibilities, even though he or she is as an individual accountable to senior management for the outcomes of the group as a whole.

The way in which people are held accountable as well as the extent to which they are held accountable are deemed highly contextual. The external environment and the maturity of the organisation and its employees are some of the factors influencing the extent to which people can and should be held accountable.

"For some people you have to spell out what they are responsible for and accountable for and other people sort off, self-starting people, who takes ownership of things, you don't have to force it down their throat the whole time of what their responsibility is and what their accountability is because some people will get demotivated in a sense if you constantly have this voice from management telling you what you are accountable for but you know what you are in fact, accountable for and responsible for." (IND1, P1, 31:31)

"But the example I am trying to use is that I will hold you accountable for making a profit but there might be a very good reason why you make a loss and you are still held accountable but you say well the account is, we were affected by the fact that the rate of exchange went south and we would have made our profit if that didn't happen. And that is outside my control, therefore I cannot be held accountable for that. So you're hold accountable for the actions to make sure that you meet certain metrics but if you are outside that metric, you have to apply reason to that to say why." (GRP2, P8, 104:104)

"I think if you look at the times we are living in, then accountability, and linked to that the various levels of authority within a company, if that is not forming one of the building blocks within a company, then I think you are going to have a big issue." (GRP4, P10, 19:19)

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> *"So in settings where there is not a formal performance management or performance development system or process in place, I suppose the organisation relies on that personal sense of responsibility rather than to ask people to give account which then places them in a position where they have to explain themselves as it were." (ORG3, P13, 4:4)*

> *"My belief is that it is contextual, in a very mature organisation with knowledge workers that have higher degrees and qualifications I would expect people to have a better developed sense of responsible when given accountability. In less matured organisations some of those values have to be taught, have to be guided, have to be mentored and coached." (ORG3, P13, 6:6)*

The key findings can again be summarised by a network diagram, Figure 12, which is described below.

Accountability has to do with how people are being measured or evaluated by the others. The extent to which a person accepts accountability (thus accepting that his or her performance will be measured and evaluated) is effected by the personal attributes of that person. Leaders' personal attributes are therefore expected to be such that accepting accountability would be natural, given that they are held accountable for their teams' outcomes and performance. There is a link between accountability and responsibility in that people are held accountable (by others) for that which they are responsible for. Even though individuals might have the same responsibilities, the extent to which they are held accountable by others will be different due to differences in context, for example individuals' different experience levels, the organisation's maturity level or external factors influencing outcomes at different periods in time.

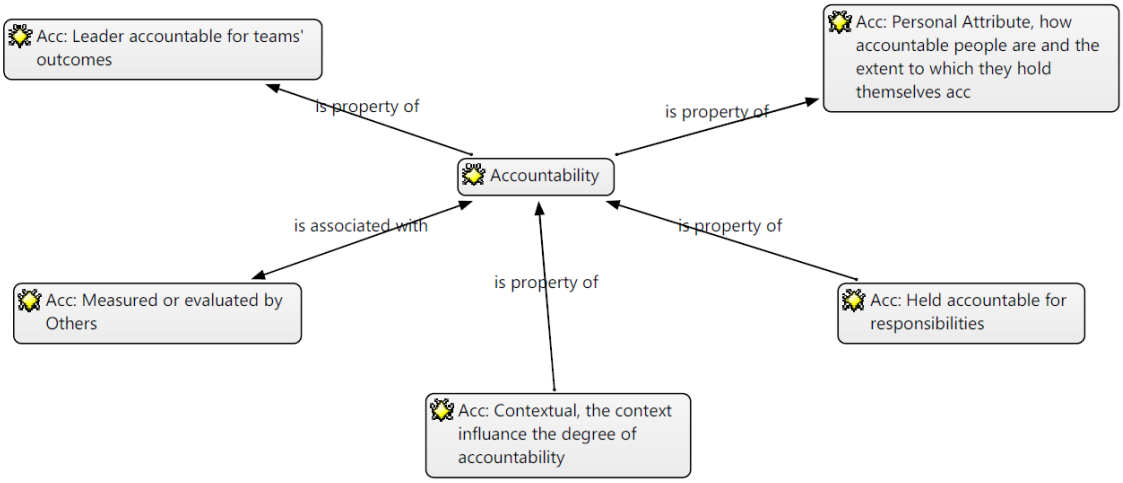

Figure 12: Understanding of Accountability – Network Diagram

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5.4 Research Results for Research Question 2

Research Question 2 was presented in Chapter 3 as follows:

- *Research Question 2*: How important is responsibility or accountability as contributors to organisational performance in South African organisations?

The root of this study, as discussed in the motivation for the research in Chapter 1, is the ever increasing pressure on managers to improve individual and organisational performance. The extent to which changes in responsibility or accountability could impact this performance (either positively or negatively) was explored as part of the study by categorising citations within the code family "Q2: Importance of Res and Acc on Performance". Codes within this code family were further prefixed and categorised within one of three themes:

- "R&A on P: Extremely Important" – citations where responsibility or accountability was considered extremely important as factors influencing performance.
- "R&A on P: Important, but..." – citations where responsibility or accountability was considered important as factors influencing performance, but noting some risks or challenges.
- "R&A on P: Not so Important" – citations where responsibility or accountability was not considered important or noteworthy as factors influencing performance positively.

Apart from this code family and categorisation, citations related to the importance of responsibility and accountability were also categorised as either having an impact on employee behaviour or having an impact on the group or organisational performance. This was done to explore at what level performance changes could be expected as a result of changes to how responsibility and accountability are experienced.

Table 7 below shows the results from the study. Thirteen of the fourteen participants cited that responsibility or accountability is for some reason key to performance, either for individuals, groups or for the organisation as a whole.

		Mentions														
Applicable Code	Mentioned By	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	Total Mentions
R&A on P: Extremely Important	13 Participants	3	5	8	3	3	2	5	2	5	1	0	3	1	1	42
R&A on P: Important, but...	5 Participants	0	0	4	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	2	2	0	11
R&A on P: Not so Important	2 Participants	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
																55

Table 7: Importance of Responsibility and Accountability for Performance

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Only two participants cited that these concepts are not factors influencing performance. A closer look at these comments are warranted, given that they are exceptions in terms of the results. The first comment stating that accountability is not an important factor highlighted that a person's performance is a function or attribute of the person's makeup. Either a person performs or he or she doesn't.

> *"But management should never ever influence or try and influence directly a person's performance. It is something that comes from within and various people perform at various speeds and to various levels of ability within that field. Some people are very good at math, others are not." (IND3, P3, 135:135)*

The second comment was made when a participant was asked if the way in which one is held accountable will effect somebody's personal and task performance. The participant said that it shouldn't, and that a person's performance is a function of his or her skills.

> *"It shouldn't. In my opinion he is employed to perform a specific job. And the outcomes of his performance is based on his education, his skills. So if he can't meet the requirements, then he shouldn't be in that position." (IND6, P6, 14:14)*

Both these comments made reference to the skills set that an employee either has or doesn't have. This indicates to the researcher that the context of the question was probably misunderstood, as the questions around the effect of responsibility and accountability on an individual's performance assume that people have the skills to perform their role, but that the quality or effectiveness of their performance could be influenced by the extent to which they are responsible or held accountable.

The majority of citations around this theme highlighted very strongly the importance of responsibility or accountability as factors influencing individual or organisational performance. Amongst many others, the reasons for this importance ranged from enabling the organisation to manage employees' work to guiding people in working towards the same goals.

> *"If I'm not being held responsible or anything then why do I need to perform? Nobody is ever going to question me. So if I am held responsible for certain things and it is clear to me, this is my role and I am responsible for that and I am empowered to do that and make decisions around that, it will definitely enhance your performance and it goes down to each and every level, even up to your receptionist." (IND2, P2, 192:192)*

> *"The best way is to get people to realize and move in the same direction and that comes from responsibility and understanding what the implications of you are not working*

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together. So your accountability and responsibility within the group is just as important as on an individual level and it must be nurtured in the same fashion." (IND3, P3, 23:23)

Results also show that responsibility and accountability are considered indispensable in running a business.

"Yes, if you can't keep people accountable or give them responsibility then you haven't got a business. Because every action that flows out to the outside world from the business, is allocated by a responsible person. And he must be able to account for his actions. It is probably where everything rises and falls." (GRP1, P7, 14:14)

"Absolutely. You can't not make a person or an individual or a group, you can't not make them accountable. It is like saying go and set your own direction and set your business goals, but if you lose, we don't mind. It is not going to happen. It is an absolute given." (GRP3, P9, 7:7)

When organisations grow larger, responsibility is considered a fundamental mechanism in distributing the workload across the organisation.

"I think it is crucial, responsibilities and why I say so, I think what we've done in the past and as the business grows, if you are in a small business, formal responsibilities and formal delegations are not that crucial. You tend to find that the smaller the organisation is, you have a tighter group of people working together and to some extent they assume responsibility so we are working towards a common goal, therefore this guy who actually should be doing it is not getting to it, therefore, I'll just do it." (ORG2, P12, 19:19)

Responsibility also enables the necessary trust in employees to act in such a way that business objectives can be achieved.

"It is critically important and in the modern organisation where leaders have increasingly lower and less contact with customers and people in the organisation have increasingly more contact with the customer and knowledge of what happens at that interface it is, I would say, an indispensable part of the DNA of the organisation to make the assumption that people at the customer interface will take responsibility for the dynamics of that interaction and for delivery, keeping what have been contracted to the customer." (ORG3, P13, 8:8)

It is also explicitly cited that accountability can result in people behaving differently because they understand the importance of their roles better.

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> *"I think it is fundamental to organizational performance. I think if everybody could be held accountable for the bottom line or felt that they were accountable for the bottom line, then they can't be, not all the way down, but some way it will be ideal because it makes people behave differently." (ORG4, P14, 15:15)*

The results overwhelmingly showed that responsibility and accountability are respectively considered very important factors impacting performance in the organisation. A complete list of codes describing the reasons why responsibility and accountability are considered extremely important factors for performance, thus all the codes with the prefix "R&A on P: Extremely Important", can be seen in Table 8 below. Apart from listing these codes, the table is also a Co-Occurrence table generated from the coded data and indicates the instances and frequency of overlapping categories or codes (thus co-occur).

The two categories analysed for co-occurrences are:

- "PIL: Impact on Employee Behaviour" – citations where changes to responsibility or accountability are considered to have an effect on employee behaviour.
- "PIL: Impact on Group or Org Performance" – citations where changes to responsibility or accountability are considered to have an effect on group or organisational performance as a whole.

The table therefore shows at which level of the organisation (individual level or group/organisational level) performance is considered to be impacted due to changes in responsibility or accountability. For example, the first value (1) under the "PIL: Impact on Employee Behaviour" column indicates that one of the quotes which was coded "Accountability clarify roles and outcomes" also states that changes to responsibility or accountability will have an effect on employee behaviour – both these codes were therefore assigned to and co-occurred at the applicable quote.

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	Frequency of Co-Occurances	
R&A on P: Extremely Important:	PIL: Impact on Employee Behaviour	PIL: Impact on Group or Org Performance
A common goal or set of responsibilities helps understand the group's fit	0	1
Accountability clarify roles and outcomes	1	0
Accountability is a necessary condition in organisations	1	0
Accountability makes people behave differently	1	0
All actions have consequences and is accounted for, even if not clear	0	1
Assigning responsibilities allow an organisation to break down the work to individuals	0	2
Clear responsibilities enable people to work toward a common goal	0	1
Clear responsibilities enhance focus in the organisation	0	1
Evaluating one's performance helps personal growth	1	0
Everyone in the organisation needs to feel the pressure to perform	0	1
External influences on someone's responsibilities creates friction	1	0
For every task issued, someone to be res and acc for	0	1
For some people you HAVE to spell out what they are res for	1	0
Guides people to be empowered for what they are accountable for	1	0
High levels of self-accountability (for good quality work) motivates performance	1	0
If people are held accountable for tasks, it encourage them to do it	2	0
If people are not held accountable, it will lead to failure	0	1
If people understand what they need to do, it motivates them to go for it	1	0
If people are allocated a task as a group, they will perform better	0	1
If you feel empowered, your performance is enhanced	2	0
It is assumed that people will take responsibility to fulfil their roles	1	0
People feel trusted if they are given high levels of accountability	1	0
Team members will become accountable to each other	0	1
Without accountability, how do you know weather goals are reached?	1	1
Without responsibilities or accountability, why do one need to perform?	2	0
Without responsibilities, what are you doing at work?	1	0
You need somebody independent to review your work	1	0
	20	12

Table 8: Codes Categorised with the prefix "R&A on P: Extremely Important" and Co-Occurrences with either "PIL: Impact on Employee Behaviour" or "PIL: Impact on Group or Org Performance"

It is clear from the results that no definite consensus exists on what level (employee behaviour or group/organisational performance) is impacted by changes in responsibility or accountability. It seems that employee behaviour is considered to be effected more by changes in responsibility or accountability, given that it was identified almost twice as many times as group/organisational level impact, but the fact that both are identified substantially leaves one with no clear conclusion.

5.5 Research Results for Research Question 3

Research Question 3 was presented in Chapter 3 as follows:

- *Research Question 3*: To what extent is organisation-wide responsibility and accountability interventions (at organisational level, group level and individual level), *versus* individual level interventions only, effective in influencing the way employees within the organisation experience responsibility and accountability.

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One of aims of this research is to explore which organisational design components, at the different levels of the organisation, should be changed to most effectively influence how people in the organisation experience responsibility and accountability. To this end, the researcher extensively categorised units of data into applicable design components as mentioned by the participants.

This categorisation was done where the participants referred to how changes in the links of responsibility or accountability (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994; Schlenker, Schlenker, & Schlenker, 2013; Britt, 1999; Schlenker, 1997; Rudolph, 2006; Bovens, 2010; Frink & Klimoski, 2004) are brought about. How participants therefore perceived to address or change (thus intervene) in affecting responsibility or accountability was highlighted.

Although interviews were conducted at different levels of the organisation with different questions (as per the three different interview schedules used), the categorisation or coding of the data was not restricted to a particular level of the organisation. Codes were created or assigned in line with the related theme. Following the coding process, codes were grouped in code families according to the different organisational design components. This implies that if individual level interview data mentioned factors associated with organisational level design components, the quotations were coded accordingly and later grouped in the applicable organisation level design component code family. In the same way, if organisation level interview data made notice of individual level design components, the quotations were coded and grouped accordingly.

The outcome of this is a categorised dataset showing the instances where participants referenced individual level design components, group level design components or organisational level design components when talking about changes to responsibility or accountability. The frequencies of total unique quotes for each design component can be seen in Table 9 below.

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Design Components	Applicable Code Family	Mentioned By	Mentions														Total Mentions	Total Mentions per Level
			P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14		
Organisational Level	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems	14 Participants	2	6	4	4	2	7	3	6	5	3	3	1	2	2	50	153
	DE: Org - Management Processes	11 Participants	11	5	0	3	1	0	5	0	2	5	4	7	4	7	54	
	DE: Org - Org Structure	12 Participants	5	4	5	4	3	5	0	2	2	3	4	5	0	6	48	
	DE: Org - Technology	1 Participants	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Group Level	DE: Group - Goal Clarity	8 Participants	3	0	1	3	0	0	3	5	5	1	0	0	0	1	22	68
	DE: Group - Group Composition	0 Participants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	DE: Group - Group Norms	0 Participants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	DE: Group - Task Structure	7 Participants	1	0	0	1	0	0	8	4	7	3	0	0	0	1	25	
	DE: Group - Team Functioning	8 Participants	1	0	2	0	1	0	2	5	5	0	0	1	0	4	21	
Individual Level	DE: Ind - Autonomy	4 Participants	8	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	71
	DE: Ind - Feedback	7 Participants	4	2	1	1	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	
	DE: Ind - Skill Variety	10 Participants	1	0	1	1	1	1	4	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	13	
	DE: Ind - Task Identity	10 Participants	6	4	4	4	6	3	2	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	33	
	DE: Ind - Task Significance	0 Participants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
																	292	

Table 9: Frequency of Mentions per Design Component

In total, factors associated with the different design components in the organisation were cited 292 times throughout the study. The results show that organisational level design components were mentioned 153 (52% of the total) times out of the total of 292 mentions, with group level design components mentioned 68 (23% of the total) times and individual level components 71 (25% of the total) times. The table also shows that the design components mentioned, were mentioned across the interview spectrum. This is true for all but one design component – the organisation level design component *Technology*.

This exploratory results are interpreted as follows:

- Organisational level design components are cited (52% of the total design component citations) as being mostly applicable to effect changes to the links of responsibility or accountability. From these citations, organisational level interventions are considered key to influence changes to responsibility or accountability.
- Group level design components were also extensively cited (23% of the total design component citations) as applicable to effect changes to the links of responsibility or accountability. From these citations, group level interventions are also considered very important to influence changes to responsibility or accountability.
- Individual level design components were cited more than group level design components, but less than organisational level design components (25% of the total design component citations) as being applicable to effect changes to the links of responsibility or accountability. From these citations, individual level interventions are considered just as important to influence changes to responsibility or accountability as organisational and group level interventions.

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The results show that design components on all the levels are relevant to effect changes to responsibility or accountability. The themes that were cited by most participants per design level (organisation, group and individual level) are showed in Table 10.

Design Components		Applicable Code	Mentioned By	Mentions														Total Mentions	Total Mentions per Level
				P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14		
Organisational Level	Management Processes	DE: Org - Management Processes: management strongly and clearly communicate roles, responsibilities and goals	8 Participants	6	5	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	2	0	3	0	2	22	47
	Human Resource System	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: coaching or mentoring as a means to improve employee performance	7 Participants	1	0	0	1	0	2	3	1	5	1	0	0	0	0	14	
	Org Structure	DE: Org - Org Structure: clear and well understood structure with roles in org	7 Participants	0	0	3	1	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	2	11	
Group Level	Team Functioning	DE: Group - Team Functioning: clear communication and agreement about members' tasks, roles and outcomes	4 Participants	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	1	0	3	9	21
	Task Structure	DE: Group - Task Structure: tasks to be distributed to team members with associated skills	4 Participants	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	5	
	Team Functioning	DE: Group - Team Functioning: open communication between team members and team leader	3 Participants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	1	7	
Individual Level	Task Identity	DE: Ind - Task Identity: clear understanding of what one's role or outcomes are	6 Participants	0	0	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	7	22
	Skill Variety	DE: Ind - Skill Variety: experience bring trust in people's skillset to perform tasks	5 Participants	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	8	
	Task Identity	DE: Ind - Task Identity: knows where he/she fit in org	5 Participants	2	2	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	
																		90	

Table 10: Themes Cited by Most Participants per Design Level (Organisation, Group and Individual level)

Quotes from these results present evidence of themes across the different design levels (organisational, group and individual level) considered important for influencing responsibility or accountability.

5.5.1 Organisational Level Design Components

Throughout the study it is clear that communication is a key component to change how people feel and are responsible. On an organisational level, communication is considered key to manage people and thus influences how people understand their responsibilities.

> *"I think communication is important but what you are communicating is even more important so you need to have a plan and a strategy and figure out who needs to do what and then communicate that. Now if you don't communicate that, then that plan or strategy is worthless because nobody knows what they are supposed to be doing, whereas if you continuously talk to people, but you don't communicate the plan or strategy, then it is also worthless." (IND1, P1, 157:157)*

Another organisational level design aspect that is often mentioned in the results is the importance of mentorship as part of the organisation's human resource system. Apart from

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being accountable to mentors, mentors enable young employees to develop in terms of their skills and understanding of the quality of work that is acceptable to the organisation.

> *"Through mentorship. Mentorship number one, through their leaders. They set the bar. And until an individual has crossed that bar, they will not be allowed to get any of the work out of the office without oversight from a manager or a leader or a mentor. So the mentors put the bar up there. They raise the bar, and you have to overcome it. And that's how you know you've met the standards." (GRP1, P7, 32:32)*

The organisational structure brings clarity and gives focus to the different roles and responsibilities of groups within the organisation. As per Chapter 4, Company X has a history of unclear roles and responsibilities due to an ineffective organisational structure. This experience is cited by some of the participants.

> *"I think in our organisation we understand the importance of it and as I just said, we've had that negative effect of not having very clear responsibilities about business performance metrics. How is it achieved, well to some extent I think we look at the organisational structure that has prime responsibilities and objectives, so the business is broken down and one portion looking at marketing, one portion looking at engineering skills components that is required for projects and other guys operational stuff so you tend to try and demarcate that responsibility in organisational units." (ORG2, P12, 47:47)*

5.5.2 Group Level Design Components

On group level, the clarity and effectiveness with which activities are coordinated and how the underlying matters in the group are handled effect the extent to which group members take responsibility for tasks.

> *"Yes. Sometimes we do make mistakes. That taken into account, and you think somebody is competent in a certain field because of past experience, but as I say, projects are unique, there could be a slight difference which might catch them out. I think the mechanism we use is all just personal engagement. It is about knowing your staff. It is about communicating and asking them if they feel up to the task. There might be personal reasons where they might not feel capable, you know; upcoming baby or whatever the case is; an operation or something that might affect them." (GRP2, P8, 88:88)*

How people in the organisation are deployed in groups, who does what and how this effort is coordinated so that the best person for a task is deployed to be responsible for that task, are

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cited as noteworthy when understanding the extent to which group members take responsibility for their work.

> *"If I've structured right, if I've chosen right if I've deployed right, the right people in the right places, there is lots of good people in the organisation but some of them might or might not be deployed to the right spot. When you deploy people whose talent should be rather be used elsewhere in a spot that they shouldn't be, you get problems because their hearts is not in it and the reason for being at work is not there for them." (ORG4, P14, 55:55)*

Group members are held accountable through various mechanisms, from project schedules to formal project reporting meetings. However, communication within groups, up and down the hierarchy within a safe and constructive functioning team, was cited as key to effective accountability within the group.

> *"But the whole idea is that it is all just about various means of communication and it must be up and down the line. It is not one way, all group members must communicate. And everybody must be empowered to do so and everybody must be able to do so, and everybody must feel free to do so without any prejudice." (GRP2, P8, 153:153)*

5.5.3 Individual Level Design Components

In terms of individual level components, a theme cited by most participants refers to task identity and how an individual's role and outcomes should be clear. An example of this is how accountability through the appraisal process cannot be done effectively if a person's role and outcomes are not defined, clear and achievable.

> *"Because if you do it properly and measure it properly, it can actually be a good tool, but its – for my last three – I think I got good scores because I worked on a particular project, although some of your KPI's relate to new work and exploring new things, but because you are so busy with a particular project you don't have time for that, so they can't judge you properly on that. Also, some of the things they evaluate on are very generic." (IND4, P4, 81:81)*

When jobs are designed, one of the considerations is what level of experience is expected from the person who will fill the position. The results showed that more experienced employees have inherent knowledge and clarity of what their responsibilities entail.

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> *"I think it is responsible for a company to monitor and check unknowns more frequently than knowns. The moment you have comfort that, and it is a personal thing if I would to trust you and I've known you for 20 years, I know I can throw anything to you of this nature and you will come back when you need to engage me further and I don't need to worry about that. But if I employ a new guy from outside that I don't know and I expect the same? Well, in some cases I might be bitterly disappointed because of the lack of a common understanding to what needs to be achieved and how things are done within the organization." (ORG2, P12, 82:82)*

Again related to task identity, it was cited that if the definition of a task or outcome is not understood in context, in other words if its fit within the rest of the group or company is not understood, it brings uncertainty to what the role is really responsible for.

> *"For me, in the division is really important. It comes down to your roles and responsibilities. If you don't know how you are positioned in your division, you don't know what you are responsible for. Coming back to me, my new role hasn't really been properly defined, so I'm in a bit of a catch 22, grey area, what am I supposed to be doing, what I am not supposed to be doing. That is why at this stage I am involved in everything, it feels like." (IND6, P6, 61:61)*

The results clearly indicated that there is room for intervention at all levels of the organisation when the way employees experience responsibility or accountability needs to be changed.

5.6 Research Results for Research Propositions 1, 2, 3 and 4

In Chapter 2 a *conceptual framework* was presented. The framework aimed to identify which organisational design components an organisation should focus on when issues around employee responsibility and accountability in the organisation are under scrutiny or should be influenced. The framework was a logical deduction based on the literature review around responsibility, accountability and organisational design.

Research Propositions 1, 2, 3 and 4 were presented in Chapter 3, breaking down and proposing the logical deductions made in the framework for qualitative exploration and evaluation.

In order to explore the validity or possible alternatives to the propositions presented, the topics for the in depth interviews were chosen so that conversations (guided by the interview schedules) were related to the different links of responsibility and accountability and how they could be influenced. Based on the comments made by participants, the researcher categorised the applicable citations into the different design components within the organisation. These

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same codes were analysed and used in the results for Research Question 3 above. At the same time, the applicable links of responsibility and accountability relevant to the specific conversation were also coded accordingly.

The result is a dataset with quotes that are coded for the applicable links for responsibility and accountability as well as the related design components within the organisation. By analysing the dataset, all co-occurrences of specific links and design components will highlight which design components are considered important to influence which links of responsibility or accountability.

By evaluating the total co-occurrences of organisational, group and individual level design elements (which were grouped in similarly named code families) with each of the links of responsibility and accountability (each represented by similarly named codes), the top design element effecting the applicable link was identified. This methodology is similar for all four research propositions. The results of each are discussed below.

5.6.1 Research Proposition 1

Research Proposition 1 was presented in Chapter 3 as follows:

- *Research Proposition 1*: To influence the Prescription Clarity link of responsibility, changes to the organisational design components Management Processes (organisational level), Group Norms (group level) and Autonomy (individual level) will be most effective.

By following the method discussed above, the results for the prescription clarity link of responsibility are shown in Table 11 below.

		Frequency of Co-Occurrences		
	Design Components - Code Families	LfR: Diminish - Clear Prescriptions Applicable to an Event addressed by...	LfR: Enhance - Clear Prescriptions Applicable to an Event addressed by...	**Total Frequency of Co-Occurrences**
Organisational Level	**DE: Org - Human Resource Systems**	**0**	**24**	**24**
	DE: Org - Management Processes	1	13	14
	DE: Org - Org Structure	2	4	6
Group Level	**DE: Group - Goal Clarity**	**0**	**7**	**7**
	DE: Group - Team Functioning	**0**	**7**	**7**
	DE: Group - Task Structure	0	3	3
Individual Level	**DE: Ind - Task Identity**	**6**	**6**	**12**
	DE: Ind - Feedback	0	5	5
	DE: Ind - Skill Variety	0	5	5
	DE: Ind - Autonomy	2	1	3

Table 11: Design Components per Level Effecting the Prescription Clarity Link of Responsibility

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From the results above, interventions related to the following design components were most cited as being effective to influence the prescription clarity link of responsibility:

- Human Resource Systems (Organisational Level)
- Goal Clarity and Team functioning (equally cited at the Group Level)
- Task Identity (Individual Level)

How these different design components relate to the prescription clarity link of responsibility is evident from the quotes below.

5.6.1.1 Organisational Level

On an organisational level, mentorship is consciously mentioned as a human resource systems intervention that will enhance employees' understanding of what is expected from them, thus strengthening the prescription clarity link of responsibility.

> *"I think they should look at guidance and support – that is one thing that I have been saying for years, they should have some sort of mentorship program – currently there is no mentorship… It is just, you get told one day sitting in the office casually, this is what you're gonna be doing and that is it. No formal paperwork to say "this is your new role," "this is what is expected of you". So I think the mentorship for me is quite important, especially for my career growth." (IND6, P6, 51:51)*

Another continuously cited aspect that influences how clear employees in the organisation understand what is expected of them, is the recruitment and employment of the right people. Firstly, appointing a person with the correct qualifications for a specific role will result in an inherent understanding of what the work entails. In the same way, employing or retaining people with experience enhances the general clarity of what is expected from the different roles in the organisation.

> *"So I think there is a couple of mechanisms, there is an informal cultural expectation that you do your best and to some extent I think the nature within the skills set of the organisation, leads one to say, it is a professional person, it's an engineer, a person with a technical professional qualification. Therefore you would expect them to understand what they do and perhaps you see where I am going with this, it is not always the case." (ORG2, P12, 62:62)*

> *"Some are better than others, but that is more an experience thing. There is a level of experience that sending a rude email or a badly written report or ignoring your client, all*

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of these are examples of bad quality and I would not excuse that as an excuse from any of my project managers that they didn't know." (GRP2, P8, 68:68)

An effective appraisal system, where clear expectations are discussed and agreed to is also considered an important aspect to enhance prescription clarity.

"It would be far more constructive if the leader could sit with a person and say – we agreed two months ago that your particular contributions for the next few months will be the following. So let us take a look at what we agreed between us. What went well, what didn't go well… What can I do to help you to do this better, what have you learnt, what were your assumptions about your responsible and how well did you execute them, what should you be doing better." (ORG3, P13, 29:29)

5.6.1.2 Group Level

In terms of the group level, both goal clarity and team functioning were cited as important. The results show that clear goals are fundamental to group members' understanding of what is expected of them, more so than dictating exactly what a person should do every hour of the day.

"How they perform their tasks is less of an issue for me, how they achieve their goals is all I care about or that they achieve their goals within the legal realm. I do not need everyone to be here for 'roll call' and a rar rar at 8 o' clock - that is not a requirement of mine. I don't need everyone to be here at 5 o'clock to wave goodbye to everyone - that is not a requirement of mine. They have things that they need to do, in a day, in a week, in a month, in a year that they must achieve. If they achieve it all in three hours then clearly I haven't set them with enough of a challenge." (GRP3, P9, 94:94)

These goals must be understood within the context of the business strategies, with clear targets enhancing a group's understanding of what is expected of them in order to meet the business strategies.

"I think it is critically important because you would have, in any organisation, you would have a strategy of what to achieve and certain markets that you would want to penetrate so the strategy would include certain revenue that you would want to generate out to certain markets and so that is basically the plan on the table and then you would have to get the buy-in of the other departments and then once there is an agreement, there is responsibility and accountability to achieve those targets. If you can't rely or hold departments accountable for their revenue and profit that they

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generate, you can't succeed in the plan that you have put down in the strategy to go forward." (IND1, P1, 51:51)

When communication is prioritised in the way a team functions, thus enabling free and clearly stated expectations and feedback, it will affect the extent to which team members understand their goals.

"I think it is very important. My mantra is communication, communication, communication. So I think that a person can quite easily misconstrue, even when communicated to what is supposed to be done and then you end up with a different agenda or going off course. So with all the best intentions you can be told what the expected outcomes is, and there can be 100 different ways of getting to that outcome, as long as it meets the outcome, it should be okay. But if people misunderstand what that outcome is and they move the goal post, then you have a serious problem. So it is absolutely critical that people know and understand what is expected of them in terms of the task and that is why feedback is so important." (GRP2, P8, 72:72)

5.6.1.3 Individual Level

At the individual level, task identity was cited as a design component to focus on when the prescription clarity link of responsibility is considered. More than one participant cited that prescriptions and the definitions of tasks should be clear and concise.

"What you generally find in my experience is that people feel responsible and they understand what their requirements are and usually it is very simple sentences that activate that understanding, for example, 'go to Joburg.' It is a simple sentence and immediately there is an understanding of what should be done, as opposed to 'go to Joburg, but don't stop at the first three stop streets and and and…' and this control mechanism comes in." (IND3, P3, 43:43)

Another factor that will enhance prescription clarity is if task identities are not changed regularly, thus eliminating the uncertainties brought about by continuously changing task definitions.

"Not a lot because I find that if people know where they stand with you and you are firm in your beliefs and you don't change them all the time, the outcomes are the same." (IND5, P5, 64:64)

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The different roles and tasks assigned to different people in the organisation are not always clearly identified which lead to uncertainties about what is expected from whom. Ensuring that tasks are clearly identified will contribute to clearer prescriptions associated with the different roles in the organisation.

> *"You must ask a lot of questions. If you are working as a project administrator on a specific project, you need to communicate with your project manager to know what he expects of you, then you will know. I don't always think the project managers know what the capabilities and responsibilities of the project administrators are. Sometimes it is just assumed. They must do all the admin on your project but the project managers doesn't always ask or they don't always know, and I think there might be a communication thing as well as to say but listen, this is what this person is supposed to do for you." (IND2, P2, 141:141)*

These results contradicted the assumptions made when the *conceptual framework* was constructed and will be discussed in Chapter 6.

5.6.2 Research Proposition 2

Research Proposition 2 was presented in Chapter 3 as follows:

- *Research Proposition 2*: To influence the Personal Control link of responsibility, changes to the organisational design components Structure (organisational level), Task Structure (group level) and Task Identity (individual level) will be most effective.

By following the method discussed earlier in section 5.6, the results for the personal control link of responsibility are shown in Table 12 below.

		Frequency of Co-Occurrences		
	Design Components - Code Families	LfR: Diminish - Identity has control over Event addressed by...	LfR: Enhance - Identity has control over Event addressed by...	**Total Frequency of Co-Occurrences**
Organisational Level	**DE: Org - Org Structure**	**7**	**9**	**16**
	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems	2	4	6
	DE: Org - Management Processes	0	3	3
	DE: Org - Technology	0	1	1
Group Level	**DE: Group - Task Structure**	**4**	**8**	**12**
	DE: Group - Team Functioning	1	3	4
	DE: Group - Goal Clarity	0	1	1
Individual Level	**DE: Ind - Skill Variety**	**1**	**6**	**7**
	DE: Ind - Task Identity	**3**	**4**	**7**
	DE: Ind - Autonomy	1	0	1
	DE: Ind - Feedback	0	0	0

Table 12: Design Components per Level Effecting the Personal Control Link of Responsibility

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From the results above, interventions related to the following design components were most cited as being effective to influence the personal control link of responsibility:

- Organisational Structure (Organisational Level)
- Task Structure (Group Level)
- Skill Variety and Task Identity (equally cited at the Individual Level)

How these different design components relate to the personal control link of responsibility is evident from the quotes below.

5.6.2.1 Organisational Level

How the business is structured, at an organisational level, is cited as key to enable control over certain outcomes by certain parts of the business. Reference was again made to the changes in Company X over the last three years.

> "It depends on what those groups are. I think the very essence of the restructuring we did in the beginning of last year was exactly about this. It was about grouping lines of business and continuing to group a project management house to do what they do excellently. And group power infrastructure projects to do what they do." (ORG4, P14, 61:61)

The detrimental effect of continuous changes to the organisational structure was cited when asked if changes to the structure of Company X would enhance different divisions' ability to take full control over certain parts of the business.

> *"I would doubt that it would be desirable. You see, theoretically I think it is a good concept to have that organisation, but practically I wonder if it is desirable. We just now gained momentum in the way – we get rhythm in the way we manage and what our capacities are. Even with weak P&L's, it's kind of working." (ORG1, P11, 52:52)*

5.6.2.2 Group Level

On a group level, it is cited that the way tasks is coordinated within groups must be sensitive to different peoples' abilities. This will influence the extent to which members can assume control over outcomes.

> *"Say it's a new appointment for a specific job function and you allocate him his work that he needs to do. And then you'll have to measure it much more closely in the beginning to understand where strengths is and weaknesses are. And then once again over time, and depends on what tasks or pressures they've got, you've got to make calls on whether*

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it's the right or wrong individual or whether you've allocated the right or wrong responsibilities, too high level or too low level for them." (GRP1, P7, 52:52)

Another consideration when tasks are coordinated refers to overworked employees and how people are not be able to take control for outcomes if they are over capacity.

"I've seen it with one of my XX guys, if you throw everything at YY, YY will do everything and then he will do nothing because he just can't complete them all." (GRP3, P9, 102:102)

5.6.2.3 Individual Level

The skills required to perform a job, on an individual level, influence the extent to which a person in that job have control over the outcomes of the job. Experience as part of a job's requirement can substantially influence to what extent a person in that position has control over the outcomes or not. Even if a job had the same outcomes but without the requirement of experience, some decisions would likely have to be checked or made by others.

"I think I'm trusted with the decisions I make because of the experience I have." (IND5, P5, 72:72)

Different roles and functions within the organisation are fulfilled by different people. When work or tasks are therefore identified, these roles and functions impact the extent to which autonomy or control for the task can be given. Tasks should therefore be identified so that control is enabled without contradicting the roles of different people in the organisation.

"There are parts of the business where you wouldn't want to give people full autonomy, because there are certain standards that you as the leader or the manager are accountable for and without that full control or a measure of control on your part you couldn't execute your responsibility properly." (ORG3, P13, 48:48)

5.6.3 Research Proposition 3

Research Proposition 3 was presented in Chapter 3 as follows:

- *Research Proposition 3*: To influence the Personal Obligation link of responsibility, changes to the organisational design components Structure (organisational level), Task Structure (group level) and Autonomy (individual level) will be most effective.

By again following the method discussed earlier in section 5.6, the results for the personal obligation link of responsibility are shown in Table 13 below.

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		Frequency of Co-Occurrences		
	Design Components - Code Families	LfR: Diminish - By virtue of Identity, the actor is bound by Prescriptions addressed by...	LfR: Enhance - By virtue of Identity, the actor is bound by Prescriptions addressed by...	**Total Frequency of Co-Occurrences**
Organisational Level	**DE: Org - Org Structure**	**4**	**10**	**14**
	DE: Org - Management Processes	0	11	11
	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems	0	3	3
Group Level	**DE: Group - Task Structure**	**1**	**4**	**5**
	DE: Group - Team Functioning	2	2	4
	DE: Group - Goal Clarity	0	2	2
Individual Level	**DE: Ind - Task Identity**	**1**	**5**	**6**
	DE: Ind - Autonomy	4	1	5
	DE: Ind - Skill Variety	0	2	2
	DE: Ind - Feedback	0	1	1

Table 13: Design Components per Level Effecting the Personal Obligation Link of Responsibility

From the results above, interventions related to the following design components were most cited as being effective to influence the personal obligation link of responsibility:

- Organisational Structure (Organisational Level)
- Task Structure (Group Level)
- Task Identity (Individual Level)

How these different design components relate to the personal obligation link of responsibility is evident from the quotes below.

5.6.3.1 Organisational Level

At an organisational level, the organisational structure influences how people identify with what their different roles are and how their work is performed. Continuous changes to this structure is cited as a factor that diminishes people's understanding of where they fit in and how they must perform their work.

> *"I think with especially the retrenchments, a lot of people are uncertain and I think, not within finance, but within other divisions, roles change all the time. Managers change all the time. Lines of business change all the time. So I would have assumed, even as a person, that would be unsettling because how are you responsible for something today and not tomorrow. How do you account for something today and not tomorrow and are you actually sure that tomorrow you will be in charge of whatever you are doing today and I think that, within the bigger group, it can be a serious problem." (IND5, P5, 200:200)*

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Without a clear understanding of the structure and how the structure is envisaged to function, it is possible for people to not clearly identify how to interact with others in the organisation and how they are expected to perform their work.

> *"I don't think it is a problem. I just think that the current structure sometimes hinders the cohesive actions of the different divisions, because now they seen as different divisions, now they don't want to do certain things. For example, OPS report to XX, engineers report to YY, SHERQ reports to ZZ, but we are all working on the same project. We all are required to act closely together to get the project delivered." (IND6, P6, 18:18)*

5.6.3.2 Group Level

In terms of coordinating effort at the group level, if team members make assumptions about who is responsible for what, these team members might not clearly understand the different functions involved in the group and how these functions are performing, or should perform, their work.

> *"The funny thing is with the more experienced guys, the grey-heads, they assume a lot. Because they've been through them all, but they don't realise that the business have evolved and changed a lot. The way business is been done has changed, and they just make assumptions sometimes that, because that guy has that certain title that he must be doing that.... But in the mean while they don't realise that there is another title that that person actually handles that sort of queries." (GRP1, P7, 72:72)*

Another aspect of how the group's effort is managed refers to sub-group managers, where appointing a leader for smaller groups (sub groups) within the group can bring clarification to group members about the different functions in the group and what is expected of each.

> *"On a certain level I think it is very important, especially when you go down to project level then you have very specific tasks and outcomes that are expected and you don't want six guys thinking the other guy is responsible for this task so I think what we try to do is get for example a lead engineer that knows what is the technical setup of the overall project and then a team beneath him that everybody knows that he is in this team because of the specific skill that he has and that is the output that he…." (GRP4, P10, 75:75)*

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5.6.3.3 Individual Level

The way tasks are identified on the individual level should be such that clear and concise pockets of work be allocated and communicated, as employees might not understand what is expected of them purely by virtue of their function in the organisation.

> *"I think, if I compare myself to other guys in the LOB, lower level position guys, if you don't give them enough work, they will sit and make jokes and make a racket on that side of the building. In a lower person's case you have to force them to work and be busy all the time. Otherwise they will just sit and loaf." (IND4, P4, 33:33)*

Lastly, how clearly an employee's tasks are identified to fit into the bigger picture of the group or organisation is also considered important for clearly understanding how a job is expected to be done.

> *"Again, if you don't know where you lie in the organisation and you don't know what you are supposed to be doing then you will make up your own mind about what you are supposed to be doing and carry on doing it until someone complains or you will just do nothing, depending on what type of person you are. So definitely you need to be told where you are in this whole organisation and what you are supposed to be doing." (IND1, P1, 137:137)*

5.6.4 Research Proposition 4

Research Proposition 4 was presented in Chapter 3 as follows:

- *Research Proposition 4*: To influence the Evaluative Audience link of accountability, changes to the organisational design components Management Processes (organisational level), Goal Clarity (group level) and Feedback (individual level) will be most effective.

Finally, by again following the method discussed earlier in section 5.6, the results for the evaluative audience link for accountability are shown in Table 14 below.

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		Frequency of Co-Occurrences				
	Design Components - Code Families	LfA: Diminish - Evaluative Audience addressed by...	LfA: Diminish - Self-Evaluation addressed by...	LfA: Enhance - Evaluative Audience addressed by...	LfA: Enhance - Self-Evaluation addressed by...	**Total Frequency of Co-Occurrences**
Organisational Level	**DE: Org - Human Resource Systems**	**0**	**4**	**3**	**9**	**16**
	DE: Org - Management Processes	**0**	**1**	**13**	**2**	**16**
	DE: Org - Org Structure	3	0	5	1	9
Group Level	**DE: Group - Goal Clarity**	**0**	**0**	**10**	**1**	**11**
	DE: Group - Task Structure	0	0	5	0	5
	DE: Group - Team Functioning	0	0	4	1	5
Individual Level	**DE: Ind - Feedback**	**0**	**4**	**1**	**2**	**7**
	DE: Ind - Task Identity	0	0	3	2	5
	DE: Ind - Autonomy	0	1	0	0	1

Table 14: Design Components per Level Effecting the Evaluative Audience Link for Accountability

From the results above, interventions related to the following design components were most cited as being effective to influence the evaluative audience link for accountability:

- Human Resource Systems and Management Processes (equally cited at the Organisational Level)
- Goal Clarity (Group Level)
- Feedback (Individual Level)

How these different design components relate to the evaluative audience link for accountability is evident from the quotes below.

5.6.4.1 Organisational Level

At organisational level, one of the human resource systems related processes that influence how employees' work are evaluated by others is the performance appraisal process. Amongst other things, the appraisal system is used to evaluate and identify one's deficiencies.

> *"At this stage there is not many of these mechanisms. There is your performance appraisal, which identifies your key deficiencies, if you have any, and there is supposedly an individual development plan which started a couple of years ago which also went dead, eventually." (IND6, P6, 93:93)*

Another human resource systems related aspect that is cited as important for enhancing the evaluation of employees is a mentorship program. Mentors can form an integral part of evaluating end assessing junior employees' outputs.

> *"Ja, it must be important. It will help, an example I can think of is, let's say you sit with an employee that is struggling to cope with the tasks he have, if you had a mentor or*

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somebody to say 'Ok, this is what the answer must look like,' and the guy can then see I'm here, I'm lacking X, Y and Z, and he can work towards that." (IND4, P4, 87:87)

In terms of management processes, scheduled and formal opportunities to report and discuss outcomes or assess the status quo are considered key to enhancing how progress is monitored.

"We hold project meetings, at which the PM is expected to give account of what had happened since the last meeting, and to demonstrate to the people in the project meeting that he is in command, he is in control, and he has his finger on the pulse. And he understand and does what is necessary to do to bring the project back in line and has taken the following measures to do that. So that is a formal structure we have put in place to make sure that we are in control and that we get people to behave responsibly." (ORG3, P13, 36:36)

5.6.4.2 Group Level

One facet of the group level design component, goal clarity, is how goals are monitored and measured. Measuring is cited as an important mechanism to enable the evaluation of outcomes.

"Otherwise it is a case of reinforcing it often. If you go and ask my guys what their income statements must look like in Feb, they'll tell you. They will also tell you where they are at right now, what the gap is. Because I measure it." (GRP3, P9, 226:226)

The results also show that clear and defined goals and targets are required to effectively evaluate progress.

"…you can't, management can't make decisions if you don't know where you are. So you first establish where you are and then you say 'I'm here, this is where I want to be and these are the things I must get in place to reach the end state' and then you must measure your progress against it." (IND4, P4, 21:21)

5.6.4.3 Individual Level

In terms of the individual level, feedback through informal discussions helps employees to assess their own work quality and thus enhance the self-evaluation process.

"I think we chat a lot amongst ourselves because the kind of work I do, I need to interact with a lot of other people on the similar position and because they've got people reporting to them as well. We go through similar frustrations, so I think that interaction is there all the time. And sometimes it is not what you want to hear but it is a good

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platform for you to learn what you can improve with yourself and your team." (IND5, P5, 148:148)

As final evidence, the lack of communicating available feedback is cited as a factor that diminishes employees' self-evaluation.

"Not at all no, our customers do get contacted and there is an index that gets communicated of how good our customer satisfaction are, but it doesn't get communicated to me personally afterwards, so that is lacking." (IND1, P1, 237:237)

The evidence presented above represents a larger set of cited interventions, which are further discussed in the results for Research Proposition 6 below.

5.7 Research Results for Research Proposition 5

Research Proposition 5 was presented in Chapter 3 as follow:

- *Research Proposition 5*: The final *conceptual framework* as derived from the study can be issued as a well-defined *speculative model* to be used for further research.

Based on the qualitative results discussed in section 5.6 (Research Results for Research Propositions 1, 2, 3 and 4), it is clear that conclusions can be drawn about which organisational design components are considered important to influence the different links of responsibility and accountability at the different levels of the organisation. The results were obtained inductively and an analysis was done on the data obtained to assess if associations between the design components and the links of responsibility and accountability could be made.

The quotes presented in section 5.6 are therefore equally relevant to Research Proposition 5. Consequently, the most cited design components, per organisational design level, relevant to influencing the respective links of responsibility and accountability are presented (in context to Research Proposition 5) in Table 15 below.

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		Total Frequency of Co-Occurrences			
	Design Components - Code Families	Prescription Clarity Link	Personal Control Link	Personal Obligation Link	Evaluative Audience or Self-Evaluation Link
Organisational Level	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems	24			16
	DE: Org - Org Structure		16	14	
	DE: Org - Management Processes				16
Group Level	DE: Group - Goal Clarity	7			11
	DE: Group - Team Functioning	7			
	DE: Group - Task Structure		12	5	
Individual Level	DE: Ind - Task Identity	12	7	6	
	DE: Ind - Skill Variety		7		
	DE: Ind - Feedback				7

Table 15: Design Components Most Relevant to Influencing the Links of Responsibility and Accountability

The design components as highlighted in this table are considered the core results used to develop the *conceptual framework* as presented in Chapter 2 into a *speculative model*, which is discussed in Chapter 6 below.

5.8 Research Results for Research Proposition 6

Research Proposition 6 was presented in Chapter 3 as follows:

- *Research Proposition 6*: Guiding principles, based on the results of the study, can be conceptualised to assist managers in designing organisations that achieve greater responsibility and accountability to the benefit of the organisation.

In order to present guiding principles based on the results, the researcher again analysed the themes cited as influencing the links of responsibility and accountability. In Table 15 above the most cited design components, per organisational design level, relevant to influencing the respective links of responsibility and accountability were presented. By analysing one level deeper, the researcher identified the top themes associated with these design components, thus identifying the most cited practical themes associated with the top design components (as per Table 15 above) effecting the links of responsibility and accountability.

Results highlighting these practical themes as obtained from the co-occurrence tables are presented and discussed below.

5.8.1 Prescription Clarity

Table 16 below lists the most cited practical themes to influence the prescription clarify link of responsibility.

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	Design Component	Organisational Level - Top Themes within Top Design Components	Frequency of Co-Occurrences: LfR: Diminish - Clear Prescriptions Applicable to an Event addressed by...	Frequency of Co-Occurrences: LfR: Enhance - Clear Prescriptions Applicable to an Event addressed by...	Total Frequency of Co-Occurrences
Organisational Level	Human Resource Systems	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: coaching or mentoring as a means to improve employee performance	0	8	8
		DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: employ people that can find information themselves	0	6	6
		DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: employ people that is professional and experienced	0	6	6
Group Level	Team Functioning & Goal Clarity	DE: Group - Team Functioning: clear communication and agreement about members' tasks, roles and outcomes	0	6	6
		DE: Group - Goal Clarity: clear outcomes are important, not dictating how to get to the outcomes	0	4	4
		DE: Group - Goal Clarity: clear goals, budget and target	0	2	2
Individual Level	Task Identity	DE: Ind - Task Identity: responsibilities not clearly communicated	3	0	3
		DE: Ind - Task Identity: clear and concise tasks allocated and communicated	0	2	2
		DE: Ind - Task Identity: clear understanding of what one's role or outcomes are	0	2	2

Table 16: Most cited Practical Themes associated with the Top Design Elements effecting the Prescription Clarity Link of Responsibility

This results are discussed by level in the sections below.

5.8.1.1 Organisational Level

The results highlight that in order to enhance prescription clarity, coaching or mentorship is considered key to clarify how tasks in the organisation should be performed. It is also cited that the employment of the correct people is cardinal. The extent to which employees are capable to find information for themselves effect their understanding of how tasks should be executed. Experienced and professional people are also expected to have an enhanced understanding of how to perform their duties.

> *"Nothing beats experience. Nothing beats experience. That's where the mentorship comes in. A mentor is somebody who has all the experience in the world. And you can ask him anything. He should be able to give you guidance in all aspects of the job. Technical, relationship-wise, cost, timing. Whatever that is required." (GRP1, P7, 40:40)*

> *"In my expectation, if anybody is unclear, they should come and ask for clarity. You should not have to define this every single day, you just do that, do the next thing. There is an assumption that we will give you a project that we think is within your capabilities, now go out and do what you are trained to do. You have got qualifications for this, you*

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have got experience for this, you have got the capability in terms of the company when we do the interview, and your probation period, and we assess you." (GRP2, P8, 65:65)

"For sure. In this organisation we expect people to take ownership of their project and behave in a manner that is in keeping with how responsible people deal with what has been given to them as an accountability. We don't expect to be able or we don't expect to have to tell people that if you are a PM, you make sure your paperwork is in order man. We don't expect to have to tell people that, we expect the PM to know that he has to pay attention to the detail, and if he doesn't then he will find out that he lost control of the costs or the customer has quality concerns, the project overruns its deadlines and overruns its budgets, and he will then discover that there is a sanction on the part of the organisation in the event that that happens." (ORG3, P13, 35:35)

5.8.1.2 Group Level

On group level, proper communication and agreement about the expected outcomes are cited as fundamental to the clear understanding of prescriptions. It is also stated that the focus should be on the outcomes and less on the exact, step by step details of how to get to the outcomes. Defined outcomes, such as measureable targets, is cited as a contributing factor to team members' understanding of where their focus should be.

"You are mentioning that one of the factors is how important is it that I have to do it or in the context, when I should have it completed. There is a lot of lack of communication that leads to people not knowing what the deadlines are and what has to be done. And people are responsible for meeting deadlines so if you can clearly communicate that as its full role, I think it is essential that you… you know, my next level of report expects something of me and we've got a deadline to do something. I cannot sit back and a day before say, well, you didn't tell me when it should be done. You need a clear deadline, therefore you need to do it." (ORG2, P12, 31:31)

"It is important to a big extent but not to the extent that you kill the guy's individuality. So there will be certain methods of how we normally do it, in our eyes the right way of doing it and you will get the result we require by doing it, and that is probably the method that will be taught when you start to do that specific task, but you get the guys that will experiment and get new ways of doing it and you should not shoot them down before you gave them the chance to do it or to proof how they are doing it is working. So I think it is important but I think you can lose good people if you are too rigid in forcing it down." (GRP4, P10, 35:35)

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"Exactly, you know, young guy, old guy, they have exactly the same requirement. I don't give you any less operationally, any less responsibility, than an old project manager. You promised me a million bucks at the end of this project, I want my million bucks. Same as I want it from XX." (GRP3, P9, 39:39)

5.8.1.3 Individual Level

To understand how to perform one's job, clear communication was again cited as important, together with concise instructions if required. Apart from being communicated, ensuring that employees understand the details of their expected outcomes is also considered a necessary condition to enhance prescription clarity.

"No, I don't. The only feedback I have or the only way I know what I am doing is right is if my management tells me they don't like what I'm doing. So they don't tell me up front, listen this is what you are supposed to be doing, it is an afterthought." (IND1, P1, 98:98)

"Immediately. Instructions should be clear and concise." (IND5, P5, 60:60)

I think it is important. You know what your deliverables is, what is your KPI's basically, what are your performance areas. Otherwise you don't know what you are working towards. (IND6, P6, 42:42)

5.8.2 Personal Control

Table 17 below list the most cited practical themes to influence the personal control link of responsibility.

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	Design Component	Organisational Level - Top Themes within Top Design Components	Frequency of Co-Occurrences		Total Frequency of Co-Occurrences
			LfR: Diminish - Identity has control over Event addressed by...	LfR: Enhance - Identity has control over Event addressed by...	
Organisational Level	Organisational Structure	DE: Org - Org Structure: project team members not reporting to project manager	4	0	4
		DE: Org - Org Structure: reporting structure should match people's responsibilities	0	2	2
		DE: Org - Org Structure: the structure should allow for flexibility to share resources and make decisions	0	2	2
Group Level	Task Structure	DE: Group - Task Structure: overloaded team members will result in some issues	4	0	4
		DE: Group - Task Structure: tasks to be distributed to team members with associated skills	0	4	4
		DE: Group - Task Structure: sub-groups enable management of workloads	0	2	2
Individual Level	Skill Variety & Task Identity	DE: Ind - Skill Variety: experience bring trust in people's skillset to perform tasks	0	3	3
		DE: Ind - Task Identity: others should not be able to influence a person's task outcomes	2	1	3
		DE: Ind - Skill Variety: a person's skills determine the workload that the person can handle	0	1	1

Table 17: Most cited Practical Themes associated with the Top Design Elements effecting the Personal Control Link of Responsibility

These results are discussed by level in the sections below.

5.8.2.1 Organisational Level

The organisational structure should be such that people with specific outcomes have the appropriate reporting structure to enable control of their outcomes. This structure should either be dedicated or temporary, but must be in line with a person's organisational goals. Finally, employees or groups in the organisation having access to a variety of different resources is cited as a mechanism to enhance the extent to which people have full control over their outcomes.

> *"Basically, a big problem that I have, is that I'm held responsible and accountable for the success of the project but my resources do not report to me. So without them reporting to me, it is difficult to delegate responsibility and accountability for tasks. You basically have to rely on your personality to get people to do certain things the way you want them to be done but you don't have any means to discipline if they don't. You have to speak to their management and that creates problems. We're not empowered in a sense to delegate our responsibilities." (IND1, P1, 101:101)*

> *"I don't have people reporting to me, so if I can't do it on my own, by myself, I have to ask a XX – listen, I need a YY or a ZZ for two days and I'll need a AA for a day or whatever. The fact that I don't have a dedicated resource has been hampering some of the work I've been working on." (IND4, P4, 53:53)*

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"It refers back to the previous question. It is around the same vein – let me just give another spin to it. Again, is it desirable to have full P&L's? We will have to think about it. So let us assume the weak P&L that we have now is a given, then we should not work independently. In fact, we should be a cohesive unit. So would XX be able to tap into YY's resources for a particular initiative and YY should do the vice versa with his resources. It should be far more fluent – because it is a weak P&L. You're not going to get zero bonus if your margin is below a certain value, because it is Company X's performance that dictates what the bonus structure is – not P&L performance. Very important. So take that as a given that there's weak P&Ls." (ORG1, P11, 57:57)

5.8.2.2 Group Level

Overloaded group members have a diminished extent to which they have control and are able to deliver on their outcomes. It is also cited that tasks allocated to people with the associated skills leads to team members having better control over their outcomes. The last practical theme highlighted from the results on a group level is the creation of sub-groups within the bigger group when structuring the activities. This is cited as enabling better management and distribution of work which lead to team members having more control over their tasks and outcomes.

"In my line of business I also look at the other group, engineering and technology, and see what their work load is and determine whether I can use our internal resources or should I go outside to get a subcontractor. So there is those dynamics as well which is critical for project management that you must take these into consideration. Project management is one of the easiest examples to use to answer that question as to say, taking groups of people and then taking subgroups of those, is exactly what we do." (GRP2, P8, 149:149)

"But when you are under pressure, you obviously have to grab the best ones for the job. When there is time constraints and you have to have it perfect and you have to this, then you do fall back. I'm okay with that but you just have to watch out that you don't fall in the trap thinking that everything is that important that you have to do that because that is unhealthy." (GRP3, P9, 106:106)

"I think if you look at the tele control group, I see them a lot heathier this year than last year. There is less stress, they are not leaning on the three most experienced individuals only to meet your immediate deadlines. That is been pushed around, people are all being made accountable. I mean XX is probably one of the best engineers we ever had. He is

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60 and did his first ever quote or tender the other day, where we made him go and read the document, make his mind up about what he wanted to sell to the customer. That guy is like a kid with a new toy. When YY used to sit here late at night, doing all those things, his team are now doing it, where before it was just YY doing it because that was his job." (GRP3, P9, 145:145)

5.8.2.3 Individual Level

The extent to which an individual have experience effects how much control the person have over his or her tasks. This control is also effected by the extent to which other people influence or have the ability to influence a person's work or outcomes. Again the matter of a person's skills set is cited, where the skills requirement set as part of a job's design influences the extent to which a person in that role has control over the outcome.

"But sometimes it is very important to ensure that it goes to somebody that is already competent and experienced in a task and that is to ensure that you meet the requirements of that project. You don't have any leeway to make mistakes to learn, it is dependent on what task or activity you are talking about." (GRP2, P8, 80:80)

"What does become a grey area, is from a company point of view, how they perceive, and you talk about roles of accountabilities and responsibilities, often you are responsible on a project, you are responsible for budgets but where it becomes grey when somebody wants to hold you accountable for that, but they are making changes to it." (IND3, P3, 39:39)

"Depending on the skills or the number of skills that an individual possesses, that is probably one of the important limiting factors. So in many cases you might get to a point where you've got a few guys that is overworked because of their skills and a few guys that is underworked because of their skills." (GRP4, P10, 51:51)

5.8.3 Personal Obligation

Table 18 below lists the most cited practical themes to influence the personal obligation link of responsibility.

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	Design Component	Organisational Level - Top Themes within Top Design Components	Frequency of Co-Occurrences: LfR: Diminish - By virtue of Identity, the actor is bound by Prescriptions addressed by...	Frequency of Co-Occurrences: LfR: Enhance - By virtue of Identity, the actor is bound by Prescriptions addressed by...	Total Frequency of Co-Occurrences
Organisational Level	Organisational Structure	DE: Org - Org Structure: clear and well understood structure with roles in org	0	5	5
		DE: Org - Org Structure: unclear and not well understood levels and functions in the org	2	3	5
		DE: Org - Org Structure: Things change frequently and quickly	1	1	2
Group Level	Task Structure	DE: Group - Task Structure: sub-groups enables clarity about roles and responsibilities	0	2	2
		DE: Group - Task Structure: assumptions made about roles and responsibilities	1	0	1
		DE: Group - Task Structure: small deviations of members' roles clarify responsibilities	0	1	1
Individual Level	Task Identity	DE: Ind - Task Identity: knows where he/she fit in org	0	5	5
		DE: Ind - Task Identity: clear and concise tasks allocated and communicated	1	0	1

Table 18: Mostly cited Practical Themes associated with the Top Design Elements effecting the Personal Obligation Link of Responsibility

These results are discussed by level in the sections below.

5.8.3.1 Organisational Level

Confusion and uncertainty about the organisational structure and the different roles within the structure is repeatedly cited as a constraint to people understanding their specific and various functions. Another aspect that diminishes people's understanding of their function and brings uncertainty about who must do what, is when continuous changes within the structure of the organisation are implemented.

> *"I think there should be no confusion. If you are not clear, and this is why I mentioned a matrix organization, if you have a function that is called marketing and business development that is almost a future state of what it is actually going to do because it is not doing what is supposed to do. It is not his fault, it is not being allowed what it is supposed to do. He is also responsible for the way sales processes run in the organisation, even or although he is not responsible for sales. I can't hold him responsible for the bottom line of XX unless I hold him accountable for sales. I can't, because he can point to anybody else and say (and that is what happened two years ago) those guys didn't bring in the orders, we are perfect but they didn't bring in the orders. Or we got the orders but those guys messed it up. You can't afford to have that. But the center of excellence issue with the guy that understands how sales structure is supposed to work and a unified way of approaching these sorts of things and getting the data in,*

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particularly so that you cross sell and up sell between the divisions, much easier to sell to an existing customer, than to a new customer. So it's much easier for YY to sell to an XX customer than to a completely new customer and vice versa. So there is plenty of space for confusion because it needs to be very concisely communicated that sales are ZZ responsibility and the way he documents it, does it and reports on it, is AA responsibility but it doesn't mean that AA can walk in to his sales team and say, you go visit that guy, you go on visit that guy. No, that is not his role. And this creates some confusion sometimes." (ORG4, P14, 81:81)

"At this stage I think I have quite a bit of flexibility. With the new structural organisation we are still finding the correct, optimised structure in our LOB, so at this stage I'm actually working on all areas – which is not really defining my role, but someone has to do it." (IND6, P6, 33:33)

5.8.3.2 Group Level

For groups it is cited that sub-groups enhance the group members' understanding of who is fulfilling each function and what each member's role is. Also referenced in section 5.6.3, when employees need to, or are making assumptions about who is supposed to perform the different functions in the group, a weak personal obligation link exist. It was also cited that by giving context to a group member's role, by allocating different tasks from time to time to that person, their role in the group will be clarified.

"I think because they work as a group they get to know that themselves a lot better. When before you had the boss going and giving you your task, giving him his task, that one his task and so on, and they are not interlinked. That is no longer the case. They are given a collective task and amongst themselves sort it out. Again communication in those teams. I can't tell you that anyone has been trained to know who what bests. Everyone in the team just knows and everyone on the periphery of the team probably knows and the periphery being, the senior management outside of each of those teams, will know what the other teams are. At least a third of the skills base and who it might be. When you call into my team, getting it to the right person is a single step." (GRP3, P9, 153:153)

"Yes, and you need to make sure that you don't create the impression that comfort zones are okay. You constantly need to just shift the guy half a meter out of his comfort zone so that he remembers what he is doing and comfortable in doing, is not all there is. So even it is a guy that normally works on a system, give him a, while you are busy on a tender, get him to draw the design for you, he knows how it works, he is always working

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on it, but don't let him work on it, let him design it for you. So comfort zones, it's necessary but it is also a dangerous thing and you need to manage it." (GRP 4, P10, 79:79)

5.8.3.3 Individual Level

Clear definitions and creation of an understanding about where and how a job fits into the organisation and what it entails enhance the personal obligation of employees. Again as cited in section 5.6.3, clear and concise tasks influence the extent to which people know what their functions and roles are.

"…it's communication; sit down, figure out what everybody is supposed to be doing and tell them. It is as easy as that. And not sit around and wait for people to take their own initiative and then if the results are not "lekker," you beat them for doing something wrong they didn't know how to do in the first place." (IND1, P1, 153:153)

5.8.4 Evaluative Audience

Table 19 below lists the most cited practical themes to influence the evaluative audience link for accountability.

			Frequency of Co-Occurrences				
	Design Component	Organisational Level - Top Themes within Top Design Components	LfA: Diminish - Evaluative Audience addressed by...	LfA: Diminish - Self-Evaluation addressed by...	LfA: Enhance - Evaluative Audience addressed by...	LfA: Enhance - Self-Evaluation addressed by...	Total Frequency of Co-Occurrences
Organisational Level	Management Processes & Human Resource Systems	DE: Org - Management Processes: systems should assists to measure progress	0	0	7	0	7
		DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: employ people that are proud of their own work	0	0	0	4	4
		DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: coaching or mentoring as a means to improve employee performance	0	1	0	2	3
Group Level	Goal Clarity	DE: Group - Goal Clarity: clear goals, budget and target	0	0	4	1	5
		DE: Group - Goal Clarity: measurement of deliverables shows progress or needs	0	0	5	0	5
		DE: Group - Goal Clarity: clear understanding how goals are influenced by outside factors	0	0	1	0	1
Individual Level	Feedback	DE: Ind - Feedback: informal and random understanding of what others do from social interaction	0	1	0	1	2
		DE: Ind - Feedback: getting feedback only when doing something wrong	0	1	0	0	1
		DE: Ind - Feedback: getting feedback via an honest appraisal process	0	0	1	0	1

Table 19: Most cited Practical Themes associated with the Top Design Elements effecting the Evaluative Audience Link for Accountability

These results are discussed by level in the sections below.

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5.8.4.1 Organisational Level

Results show that measurement and the extent to which progress is monitored through this measurement is a fundamental mechanism to enhance evaluation by others in the organisation. Self-evaluation is present in people who are proud of their own work; employing such people will therefore enhance the evaluative audience link in the organisation. Coaching is also considered an important factor to facilitate the evaluation of employees' work in the organisation.

> *"When you start looking at the other items, from an executive perspective, you've got specific KPA's which are non-financial. It is certain goals that we have set that in the interest of the business, we need to put the following into place by certain dates and this is measured so part of our monthly feedback is, how you are progressing on those KPA's. And that is again a principle that gets rolled down, so it typically came back to the A3 reporting. We use the A3 report, type report, report back on your progress on your KPA's. And what I've tried to do is to link these KPA's onto my business area and say; to what extent is what the guys are doing on the ground, can I link it back to these KPA's that I've got to achieve because I have to support them in executing and achieving that. And you will find most of the activities that the guys are doing, are linked back to high level KPA's. But some of them don't. So we have to set ourselves certain objectives within a business at lower levels that we can have a long debate about whether to have them or not and in theory you shouldn't have them because you should not be doing something on a lower level that is not supporting high level objectives." (ORG2, P12, 102:102)*

> *"I'm, my nature is I am very perfectionistic in how, and I like to do things right and I'll hold myself accountable, due to that nature, for everything I do. Also it is my professional nature to say that I am accountable. So I don't want to do a half-hearted job just to get it done. That is my mindset. Not everybody has that same mindset within the organisation." (IND6, P6, 99:99)*

> *"Yes. We will have an idea what our customer satisfaction is but if there was a problem with the way I dealt with the customer, I don't get the feedback, telling me you shouldn't be doing this or you should be doing that; coaching me in giving better service." (ORG1, P1, 241:241)*

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5.8.4.2 Group Level

Having clear goals or targets is considered by the participants as an enabler for evaluating progress in the business. Even on group level, measurement of goals is cited as critical to monitoring and evaluating progress. As stated in paragraph 5.3.2 as well, the understanding of how goals and targets are influenced by outside factors influences the extent to which progress is evaluated effectively.

> *"No, the people is the lowest level of accountability. It's like the smallest little building block that you get. Eventually all the building blocks together make up a line of business responsibility – it's the sum of the parts of the thing…. A good example here is where we are, as a LOB, we have an income statement. We have both a turnover target and a contribution target that we are responsible for. And you can't make somebody else responsible for it because we are the only ones that know how our solutions work and how our products work, so we are in the best position to be responsible for those targets." (IND4, P4, 16:16)*

> *"In our groups we've got very easy measurements in place for projects. A project is managed on time, money, budget and expectations of quality. So that's very easily monitored throughout the life cycle of the project. On each individual project you've got all those measurements in place already. The project manager manages that. So the goals there can be achieved very easily within the groups. The measurements are in place. Whether you want to know whether the company or organization as a whole are meeting their targets that's a managerial function – purely managerial function." (GRP1, P7, 100:100)*

5.8.4.3 Individual Level

Informal discussion is considered a means to understand what others are doing and how they are doing it. This enhances self-evaluation and can contribute to evaluating one's own performance. Cited as a diminishing factor is that feedback is sometimes given only when mistakes have been made, therefore not promoting self-evaluation through continuous and constructive criticism. Feedback via an honest and effective appraisal process is also cited as a contributor to one's level of self-evaluation.

> *"There is none like that, no formal setup that organizes this. The only way how I know what people are doing, is if I talk to them, around the coffee table, the coffee stand or*

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whatever, informally chat to people. It is not something that is organized by management so that other people know what you are doing." (IND1, P1, 201:201)

"I must be honest, I think that is non-existent. You will get called in when you are doing wrong. It is very seldom that you get praised for what you are doing right. It is very seldom that you will be steered and molded in a certain way." (IND5, P5, 156:156)

"Performance appraisal, as far as I am concerned, should be done in comparing a person to how they performed last year, on their own level. A baseline should be drawn up with that specific person which that specific person agrees on as opposed to a generic baseline, and it should be based on what that person's tasks are within the company structure." (IND3, P3, 127:127)

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6. Discussion of Results

The purpose of this chapter is analyse and dissect the qualitative research results as presented in Chapter 5 against the aims of the research discussed in Chapter 1 and the literature review conducted in Chapter 2. The analysis in Chapter 6 is also presented in accordance with the research questions and propositions presented in Chapter 3, similar than Chapter 5.

This chapter will explore the understanding of responsibility and accountability as derived from literature and either supported or contradicted by the results obtained from the study. This understanding is applied and discussed in the context of the *conceptual framework* presented in Chapter 2.

Insights into the role and nature of responsibility and accountability in organisations, together with guiding principles on how to enhance these principles in organisations, are presented in this chapter.

6.1 Research Question 1

Research Question 1 was presented in Chapter 3 as follows:

- *Research Question 1*: How are responsibility and accountability and the function thereof understood in organisations?

This research question was derived to address a specific research aim discussed in Chapter 1, which was to evaluate the nature and state of responsibility and accountability in a South African organisation.

6.1.1 Responsibility

As discussed in Chapter 2, responsibility and accountability are clearly defined in theory. Responsibility was shown to be brought about through a function of the strength between three specific links (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994): the (1) *Prescription Clarity Link*, (2) *Personal Control Link* and the (3) *Personal Obligation Link* of the Triangle Model of Responsibility.

It is evident from the results that no direct mention of a combination of interactions or different links between factors associated with responsibility was made during the research. Unconsciously, the personal obligation link (as a theme) was touched on through some quotes, specifically referring to a person's responsibilities being the tasks that that person needs to execute. As a whole, however, the **understanding of responsibility as discovered through this**

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study refers more to the function or role of responsibility as a concept rather than how responsibility is brought about, what it consists of or how is it achieved. Only one of the top five mentions around the understanding of responsibility referred to a factor of which responsibility is considered a property of (and not the role thereof), which is that the extent to which a person is responsible is considered a personal attribute.

This current focus on the function or role of responsibility rather than what it consists of and how it is established, **highlights the lack of conscious thinking about the subject matter in organisations and the need of this thesis to explore how responsibility and accountability can be enhanced in the organisation** – where the focus is primarily on what responsibility consists of and how it is achieved.

The function of responsibility, how people sanction, evaluate and control each other's conduct (Mero, Guidice, & Werner, 2014; Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994), is however made clear in existing literature. These functions were effectively echoed and supported by the results, **where responsibility was cited as being the tasks a person needs to execute, which could be assigned to the person by others and could also be delegated to others**, forming a fundamental mechanism of controlling activities within the organisation.

Schlenker (1997) referred to psychological engagement also being a function of the strength of the links discussed above, which is supported by the finding through this study that **the extent to which a person is responsible have an influence on that person's motivation to perform**.

Not evident from nor discussed during the literature review were matters related to the finding that **the extent to which one accepts and embraces responsibility is considered a personal attribute** by many. How this finding fits in with the Triangle Model of Responsibility is not clear from the theory studied, and this could possibly point to a need for further exploration in future.

6.1.2 Accountability

Evidence from the qualitative study strongly supports the **existence of a link between responsibility and accountability**. The existence of this link is also clear from the literature review and it forms the basis of the *conceptual framework*, where responsibility is considered a prerequisite and necessary condition for effective accountability – therefore the aim in the framework to influence both the links of responsibility as well as the evaluative audience factor of accountability (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994).

This relationship between responsibility and accountability is also emphasised by Frink and Klimoski (2004) with the *context* of accountability given through the defined responsibility

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associated with that accountability, whereas a theme of *judgement* constitutes the accountability itself.

Another key finding from the results in paragraph 5.3.2 emphasises the measuring or evaluating nature of accountability, in that **accountability necessitates the process of evaluation or judgement of an actor by a second party** (which can also be himself when referring to self-evaluation). This finding is supported by Bovens (2007) who clearly described this as the *narrow* use of accountability as a concept, also applicable as a fundamental understanding within this thesis to enhance self-regulation and consequent performance (Converse, et al., 2014).

Although this study and the *conceptual* framework consider accountability as a *mechanism*, where people are held accountable by others, the results surprisingly also **emphasise the understanding of accountability as a *virtue*, a personal attribute of employees in an organisation**. Accountability as a *virtue* is in most instances recognised when dealing with government or social matters (Bovens, 2010), noting that leaders or government officials are (or are not) accountable in nature and as an inherent quality. From the literature review the researcher didn't realise the importance of accountability as a *virtue* to be considered for the *conceptual framework*, but the inductive research showed clearly that it is indeed an important factor.

In paragraph 6.1.1 above, the characteristic of responsibility being delegated was discussed. It has also already been concluded that people are held accountable for their responsibilities (the link between responsibility and accountability). With these two findings in mind, it is interesting that the results strongly show that **a single person, or leader, should be accountable for a team's outcomes or performance**. It is therefore concluded that the leader will delegate responsibilities, but that he or she as an individual will be held accountable for the full extent of the responsibility (although the outcome is determined by the joint effort of a team).

The last attribute or understanding of accountability that was highlighted through the qualitative research is the contextual nature of accountability, where **the degree to which a person can or are being held accountable is contextual** and depends on various factors, including the person's authority level, the type of work and many other factors. This context is described by Frink and Klimoski (2004) as the three elements in the Triangle Model of Responsibility – who, what and how (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994). Literature therefore acknowledges that *who* is responsible, for *what* he or she is responsible and *how* this responsibility be fulfilled constitute the context of being accountable and influence the extent to which strong links between these elements can be achieved and therefore how

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accountable the person ultimately can be. An example could be that of an artist – if the *what* is a painting and the *how* is totally undefined (being an artistic act), the context is such that a very weak prescription clarity link exits and therefore very limited accountability can apply.

6.2 Research Question 2

Research Question 2 was presented in Chapter 3 as follows:

- *Research Question 2*: How important is responsibility or accountability as contributors to organisational performance in South African organisations?

This research question was also derived to address a research aim discussed in Chapter 1, which was to assess the extent to which responsibility and accountability are considered important factors that influence organisational performance.

When discussing performance, the researcher considered both comments related to the positive or negative effect of responsibility or accountability related factors on performance and not only a positive effect on performance. This was done as the researcher recognised that citations where negative effects of responsibility and accountability were cited, it is still considered important as factors influencing performance, even though negatively.

From the results presented in paragraph 5.4, it is clear that participants believed that **responsibility and accountability as concepts and how they are applied within the organisation are extremely important as factors influencing performance within the organisation**. The results show two instances where participants indicated otherwise, but these instances were discussed and the conclusion drawn that the qualitative evidence overwhelmingly supports, without exception, this importance.

This result was expected, given that a broad range of literature related to performance highlighted characteristics of responsibility and accountability. The variety of literature which support this finding, and some specific evidence from the results in turn supporting the literature, are briefly discussed below.

6.2.1 The Environment and the Basic Functioning of the Organisation

From the onset, only considering the effect that the environment and external factors effecting the environment in which employees function have on them (Robbins & Judge, 2013; Behson, 2012; Yang & Konrad, 2011; Newman & Sheikh, 2012), suggests that responsibility and accountability (being part of this environment) will have an effect on human behaviour. Responsibility and accountability are also considered by literature to be important for even the

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basic functioning of organisations, which directly relate to employees' ability to function and perform together (Hall, Zinko, Perryman, & Ferris, 2009).

Details of the results discussed in Chapter 5 show a variety of different themes related to why responsibility and accountability are considered important for performance. Those categorised as "extremely important" were presented in Table 8. This table shows that the results are clearly in support of the literature mentioned above, in that accountability was cited as making people behave differently, implying that **as an external factor peoples' behaviour are influenced by the extent to which accountability is affected** in the organisation. Accountability was also said to be a necessary condition in organisations. Furthermore, it was cited that without responsibilities, there is no reason to be at work, indicating **the fundamental role played by employees' responsibilities in organisations**.

6.2.2 Work Tasks and consequent Work Engagement

Another reference in literature supporting the effect of responsibility and accountability on performance is around work engagement. It is known that there is a direct relationship between employee work engagement and employee performance (Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011). Given this relationship, and the understanding that work engagement refers specifically to a measurement of employees' experiences during *work task* completion, the significance of responsibility and accountability – per definition also focusing on work tasks (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994) – is clear from the literature review.

Again in reference to Table 8, the connection between responsibility, accountability and *work tasks* was cited, where **every task in the organisation should be allocated to a person who is responsible and accountable for that task**.

6.2.3 Self-Regulation

The effect of accountability on *self-regulation* was discussed very specifically and explicitly in chapter 2, with a clear influence on performance, also supporting the findings (Converse, et al., 2014).

The results supported this theory with citations that **if people are held accountable for tasks, it encourages them to perform and execute the tasks**.

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6.2.4 Group Performance

Lastly, even group performance related theory discussed in Chapter 2 suggests factors related to responsibility and accountability are important to the performance of the group (Campion, Papper, & Medsker, 1996; Cohen & Bailey, 1997).

Again supported by the results, citations mentioned during the interviews referred to the suggestion that **a common set of responsibilities supports a group within the organisation to understand its fit within the organisation**.

Complementary to the results presented for this research question, the researcher also analysed the citations to assess if the impact of responsibility and accountability is predominantly influencing performance of individuals or of groups as a whole. The results however show that no clear conclusion can be drawn. Even the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 and again discussed above, did not highlight the enhancement or focus on either individual performance or group performance only being influenced by motivational concepts. This is considered an area of possible future research, where the *impact level* of responsibility and accountability interventions (on individuals or on groups as a whole) independent of the level at which they are implemented, is further explored.

6.3 Research Question 3

Research Question 3 was presented in Chapter 3 as follows:

- *Research Question 3*: To what extent is organisation wide-responsibility and accountability interventions (at organisational level, group level and individual level), *versus* individual level interventions only, effective in influencing the way employees within the organisation experience responsibility and accountability.

This research question intents to address a research aim discussed in Chapter 1, which referred to the appropriateness of an organisation-wide and multilevel approach to responsibility and accountability interventions.

In Chapter 5, the results related to this research question was presented in Table 9. It was shown that themes at all three the levels within the organisation were cited and that **organisation-wide responsibility and accountability initiatives, at individual level, group level and organisational level, are considered relevant** to participants.

This finding is supported by recent literature discussed in Chapter 2, specifically stating that a multilevel view of organisational performance and practices should be taken (Denisi & Smith,

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2014). The literature continue to state that a "bundled" approach should be followed, which confirms the holistic approach followed by the *conceptual framework* proposed in this study.

In terms of the extent to which these organisation-wide interventions are considered effective, results from the study show that although organisational level components were mostly cited as applicable to effect changes to responsibility and accountability (52% of citations), group level components and individual level components were also extensively cited (23% and 25% respectively). Consequently, **a holistic approach to responsibility and accountability interventions is considered very important and key to effectively influence behaviour within the organisation**.

6.4 Research Propositions 1, 2, 3 and 4

The purpose of these four research propositions were to test and evaluate the assumptions made by the researcher when compiling the baseline *conceptual framework* in Chapter 2. The results related to these propositions will form the basis of a final *conceptual framework*, also referred to as a well-defined *speculative model*, in answer to Research Proposition 5.

Research Propositions 1, 2, 3 and 4 address the essence of this research, which is to explore in which organisational design components the various links for responsibility and accountability can most effectively be addressed to enhance how these concepts are implemented within the organisation.

6.4.1 Research Proposition 1

Research Proposition 1 was presented in Chapter 3 as follow:

- *Research Proposition 1*: To influence the Prescription Clarity link of responsibility, changes to the organisational design components Management Processes (organisational level), Group Norms (group level) and Autonomy (individual level) will be most effective.

As per the results presented in paragraph 5.6.1, **evidence from the exploratory study did not support Research Proposition 1**. Table 20 below shows the proposed design components that were stated in the proposition as most applicable to effect the prescription clarity link as well as the components that were identified from the study as being most applicable.

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	Design Components per Level, Effecting the Prescription Clarity link of Responsibility	
	As proposed in Research Proposition 1	As per Results from Study
Organisational Level	DE: Org - Management Processes	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems
Group Level	DE: Group - Group Norms	DE: Group - Goal Clarity DE: Group - Team Functioning
Individual Level	DE: Ind - Autonomy	DE: Ind - Task Identity

Table 20: Design Components Comparison – Research Proposition 1 versus Results from Study

It is clear that none of the originally identified design components has been confirmed by the study.

The prescription clarity link of responsibility was identified in the Triangle Model of Responsibility as one of the three key components that determine how effective responsibility is present in a specific context (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994; Rudolph, 2006). The link highlights that clear prescriptions should be applicable to an event if people are to be responsible for the event (Schlenker, Schlenker, & Schlenker, 2013).

The findings are discussed in more detail below.

6.4.1.1 Organisational Level

At organisational level, *management processes* were considered to be a key focus area to influence how clear the prescriptions are related to specific outcomes within the organisation.

With *management processes* related to mechanisms and methods for controlling the organisation's operation (Cummings & Worley, 2009), the researcher argued at the time of constructing the conceptual framework in paragraph 2.4.2 that these mechanisms and methods should be highly descriptive to enhance prescription clarity related to events.

Although the results supported this argument to a limited extent, *human resource systems* as a design component was by far cited as the most important design component related to this link.

Aspects around mentorship and training, as well as the recruitment and employment of people with the correct qualifications for the tasks at hand were cited as the biggest contributors to ensure that a clear understanding, as prescribed, of how an event needs to be approached is achieved.

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6.4.1.2 Group Level

The researcher argued that *group norms*, relating to how group members view an acceptable level of group performance and how this performance should be achieved (Cummings & Worley, 2009), should be seen as a key design component when considering the prescription clarity link.

However, the results showed that *group norms* as a design component was not at all supported by the participants, but rather a combination of *goal clarity* and *team functioning*. It is concluded that *group norms* focus more on the performance aspect of the group and less on the task execution aspect – therefore the mismatch in the original conceptual framework.

Goal clarity was emphasised by well-defined goals cited as being key to enhance a groups' understanding of how outcomes should be achieved. Mature communication and the importance thereof to enhance a group's understanding of how to achieve their goals motivated the emphasis on *team functioning* as a key design component for prescription clarity.

6.4.1.3 Individual Level

The researcher argued initially that *autonomy* is considered important for prescription clarity. However, the results did not support this argument. Although it was supported by a single citation, the researcher concluded after the analysis of the results that this design component relates more to the managing of the work and the freedom around this management than bringing about an understanding of how the job should be approached.

On the other hand, clearly defined and concise definitions of tasks which don't change often, were cited as supporting how clearly understood the execution of the tasks were, thus supporting *task identity* as an important factor to define prescriptions related to different events within the organisation.

6.4.2 Research Proposition 2

Research Proposition 2 was presented in Chapter 3 as follows:

- *Research Proposition 2*: To influence the Personal Control link of responsibility, changes to the organisational design components Structure (organisational level), Task Structure (group level) and Task Identity (individual level) will be most effective.

As can be seen from the results presented in paragraph 5.6.2, **evidence from the exploratory study supported Research Proposition 2, except for the addition of the design component *skill variety* cited as also important at individual level**. Table 21 below shows the proposed design

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components that were stated in the proposition as most applicable to effect the personal control link as well as the components that were identified from the study as being most applicable.

	Design Components per Level, Effecting the Personal Control link of Responsibility	
	As proposed in Research Proposition 2	As per Results from Study
Organisational Level	DE: Org - Org Structure	DE: Org - Org Structure
Group Level	DE: Group - Task Structure	DE: Group - Task Structure
Individual Level	DE: Ind - Task Identity	DE: Ind - Task Identity DE: Ind - Skill Variety

Table 21: Design Components Comparison – Research Proposition 2 versus Results from Study

The personal control link of responsibility was identified in the Triangle Model of Responsibility as one of the three key components that determine how effective responsibility is present in a specific context (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994; Rudolph, 2006). The link identifies that the identity associated with the responsibility, must have control over the event in order to be responsible for the event (Schlenker, Schlenker, & Schlenker, 2013).

The findings are discussed below in more detail.

6.4.2.1 Organisational Level

At all three levels of the organisation, the structure was identified by the researcher as the dominant design component effecting the extent to which people have control over events. At organisational level, the *organisational structure* is the basis for dividing tasks to achieve organisational goals (Cummings & Worley, 2009), thus allocating and enabling a specific section to achieve a predefined outcome.

The research results supported this understanding, with evidence highlighting that the grouping of divisions within the organisation, achieved through the *organisational structure*, is considered key to enable people to do what they are good at.

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6.4.2.2 Group Level

Task Structure at the group level of the organisation refers to the coordination of effort and regulation of behaviour (Cummings & Worley, 2009). It was clear to the researcher that these characteristics are relevant to the extent to which people have control over specific activities.

This was confirmed by the results, where tasks allocated according to team members' abilities and did not overload them, effect the extent to which people have personal control. This highlighted the importance of *task structure* as a design component effecting personal control.

6.4.2.3 Individual Level

During construction of the baseline conceptual framework, the researcher considered *task identity* as an obvious consideration when designing a job and considering the extent to which a person will have personal control in that job.

Although the proposition of *task identity* being important was supported, the results also highlighted an additional design component as important, namely *skill variety* – the skills required or assumed to perform a job. The importance of clarifying and understanding the skill requirement influences the extent to which a person appointed to a job has full control.

6.4.3 Research Proposition 3

Research Proposition 3 was presented in Chapter 3 as follows:

- *Research Proposition 3*: To influence the Personal Obligation link of responsibility, changes to the organisational design components Structure (organisational level), Task Structure (group level) and Autonomy (individual level) will be most effective.

As can be seen from the results presented in paragraph 5.6.3, **evidence from the exploratory study partially supported Research Proposition 3, with *task identity* as a design component identified at the individual level of the organisation to be more relevant than *autonomy* (as proposed in the proposition) to influence the personal obligation link**. Table 22 below shows the proposed design components that were stated in the proposition as most applicable to effect the personal obligation link as well as the components that were identified from the study as being most applicable.

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	Design Components per Level, Effecting the Personal Obligation link of Responsibility	
	As proposed in Research Proposition 3	As per Results from Study
Organisational Level	DE: Org - Org Structure	DE: Org - Org Structure
Group Level	DE: Group - Task Structure	DE: Group - Task Structure
Individual Level	DE: Ind - Autonomy	DE: Ind - Task Identity

Table 22: Design Components Comparison – Research Proposition 3 versus Results from Study

The last link identified in the Triangle Model of Responsibility as one of the three key components that determines how effective responsibility is present in a specific context is the personal obligation link (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994; Rudolph, 2006). This link represents the importance of the responsible identity being clearly associated and bound by how tasks within the organisation should be executed (Schlenker, Schlenker, & Schlenker, 2013).

The findings are discussed below in more detail.

6.4.3.1 Organisational Level

The results supported the proposition that *organisational structure* clarifies and identifies the different groups in the organisation (Cummings & Worley, 2009) and as such influences personal obligation within the organisation.

Themes cited to support the proposition include the diminishing effect of continuous changes in the structure to people's understanding of where they fit in and how they should conduct their work. Uncertainties in the structure were also cited as reducing employees' understanding of how to interact with others within the organisation and who is fulfilling which role in the organisation.

6.4.3.2 Group Level

Again, the results supported the proposition that *task structure* as a design component is highly relevant to effecting personal obligation. The coordination of effort within groups (Cummings & Worley, 2009) clearly influences how team members understand their different roles and how they are expected to perform different tasks.

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It was cited that assumptions made by team members about who is responsible for what, due to unclear coordination of effort, has a diminishing effect on personal obligation. Another *task structure* related theme that was cited indicates that leaders appointed to sub-groups within the group enhance team members' understanding of what they are responsible for and how they should conduct their work.

6.4.3.3 Individual Level

The researcher initially considered *autonomy* as the dominant design component that influences personal obligation, with the argument that employee's freedom to identify their own work methods (Cummings & Worley, 2009) will enhance personal obligation. The results, however, did not support this view.

Task identity was cited as the dominant design component to consider for personal obligation. Citations that supported this emphasised the importance of clear and concise communication of tasks to enhance employees' understanding of their function. The extent of how clearly defined the fit of tasks in the bigger picture of the organisation is, was also cited as having an impact on employees' understanding of their personal obligation.

6.4.4 Research Proposition 4

Research Proposition 4 was presented in Chapter 3 as follows:

- *Research Proposition 4*: To influence the Evaluative Audience link of accountability, changes to the organisational design components Management Processes (organisational level), Goal Clarity (group level) and Feedback (individual level) will be most effective.

As can be seen from the results presented in paragraph 5.6.4, **evidence from the exploratory study supported Research Proposition 4, except for the addition of the design component *human resource systems* cited as also important at organisational level**. Table 23 below shows the proposed design components that were stated in the proposition as most applicable to effect the evaluative audience link as well as the components that were identified from the study as being most applicable.

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	Design Components per Level, Effecting the Evaluative Audience link for Accountability	
	As proposed in Research Proposition 4	As per Results from Study
Organisational Level	DE: Org - Management Processes	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems DE: Org - Management Processes
Group Level	DE: Group - Goal Clarity	DE: Group - Goal Clarity
Individual Level	DE: Ind - Feedback	DE: Ind - Feedback

Table 23: Design Components Comparison – Research Proposition 4 versus Results from Study

Accountability is described by Schlenker et al. (1994) through the accountability pyramid, showing the connection between accountability and the three links of responsibility. This connection refers to an evaluative audience "looking down" and appraising the elements of responsibility. Without the presence of this evaluative audience connection or link to the elements of responsibility, no accountability is considered to be present and therefore the strength of this link directly influences the extent to which accountability exist in a specific context (Bovens, 2007).

The findings are discussed below in more detail.

6.4.4.1 Organisational Level

Per definition, m*anagement processes* were considered to be the most prominent design element influencing the evaluative audience link at organisational level (Cummings & Worley, 2009). This understanding was supported by the results, but with citations also indicating that *human resource systems* as a design component is considered key.

The performance appraisal process, as a characteristic of the organisation's *human resource systems*, was cited as an important process to evaluate employees' work. Another *human resource systems* related aspect is the role of mentorships in organisations, where junior employees' work are monitored and evaluated by experienced colleagues.

6.4.4.2 Group Level

Goal clarity was argued from the onset as the group level design component applicable to the evaluative audience link, concluded from the understanding that a group's *goal clarity* also involves how goals are being monitored and measured (Cummings & Worley, 2009).

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The argument was supported by the results, where measurement as well as clear and well defined goals were cited as key to enable effective evaluation of team members' performance.

6.4.4.3 Individual Level

Feedback, as an individual level design component, relates to the measure to which clear and direct feedback is given on task performance (Cummings & Worley, 2009). The researcher therefore argued that feedback is the most effective design component to address when the evaluative audience link for accountability is considered.

This argument was again supported by the results, where feedback through informal discussions as well as the lack of communicating available feedback effectively, were cited as *feedback* related aspects to be considered when the evaluative audience link must be influenced.

6.5 Research Proposition 5

Research Proposition 5 was presented in Chapter 3 as follows:

- *Research Proposition 5*: The final *conceptual framework* as derived from the study can be issued as a well-defined *speculative model* to be used for further research.

The purpose of this proposition as presented in Chapter 3 was to produce a final *conceptual* framework, also referred to as a well-defined *speculative model*, from the data and conclusions drawn from the research. This final *conceptual framework* will address one of the aims of the research which was stated in Chapter 1, namely to propose a conceptual framework linking responsibility and accountability theory with design elements of the different levels in an organisation (organisational level, group level and individual level).

This framework is seen as the basis of a *de facto* model, which could be created following further qualitative research to confirm the associations proposed in the final framework. **Given the clear conclusions from Research Propositions 1 to 4 as discussed above in section 6.4, it is concluded that Research Proposition 5 is supported by the results achieved from this study and that a well-defined *speculative model* can be issued for future research as an output of this study**.

Even though a *de facto* model for use by managers is not an output from this study, guiding principles from the results achieved and in line with the well-defined *speculative model* are addressed by Research Proposition 6 and discussed in paragraph 6.6 below.

The research results discussed in section 6.4 above were presented as a summary in the results chapter, Table 15. This data can be visually presented as an updated version of Figure 7. Please see Figure 13 below.

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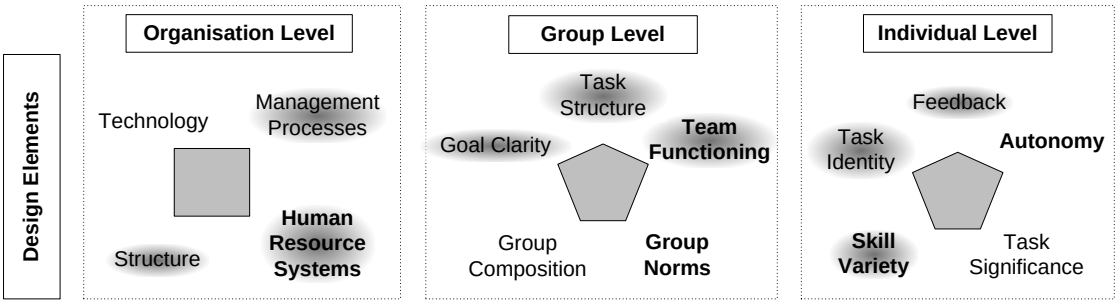

Figure 13: Organisational Design Components effecting Responsibility and Accountability – Updated Version

The greyed design components were identified through the study as the important components when responsibility or accountability related changes in the organisation are considered. The bold components show the design components that were previously not identified by the researcher OR that were previously identified, but not supported by the results – these represent the changes since the original *conceptual framework*. For example, Group Norms was originally identified as an important component effecting responsibility and accountability, but was proven through the exploratory study not to be that important.

Consequently, the well-defined *speculative model* can therefore be presented and is shown in Figure 14 below.

		Criteria to promote **Responsibility**			Criteria to promote **Accountability**
		Prescription Clarity	Personal Control	Personal Obligation	Evaluative Audience
Design Level in Organisation	Organisational Level	*Human Resource Systems*	*Structure*	*Structure*	*Management Processes & Human Resource Systems*
	Group Level	*Goal Clarity & Team Functioning*	*Task Structure*	*Task Structure*	*Goal Clarity*
	Individual Level	*Task Identity*	*Task Identity & Skill Variety*	*Task Identity*	*Feedback*

Figure 14: The Well-defined *Speculative Model* (or Final *Conceptual Framework*) of Organisational Design Components effecting Responsibility and Accountability within the organisation

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All the components of this model were discussed separately and in depth in section 6.4, but the summarised *speculative model* as presented in this figure constitutes the basis for possible future research. The aim is to ultimately develop a tool that managers and organisation designers can use to assess the status quo of responsibility and accountability within an organisation. Managers can also use the tool to plan different initiatives or interventions to better the extent to which these concepts are used to enhance performance at individual, group or organisational level within the organisation (Denisi & Smith, 2014).

6.6 Research Proposition 6

Research Proposition 6 was presented in Chapter 3 as follows:

- *Research Proposition 6*: Guiding principles, based on the results of the study, can be conceptualised to assist managers in designing organisations that achieve greater responsibility and accountability to the benefit of the organisation.

With the *speculative model* presented as Figure 14 above, the next challenge for managers will be to find practical applications and implement changes to the organisational design to enhance responsibility and accountability, in line with the *speculative model*.

Many such practical themes were cited during the interviews and those mostly mentioned were presented, per link, in section 5.8. These results were specifically presented to enable the conceptualisation of guiding principles, in line with the *speculative model*, which managers can use as examples of typical practical interventions that can be implemented in the organisation.

Research Proposition 6 is therefore supported, and guiding principles to enhance responsibility and accountability within the organisation are presented below.

6.6.1 Organisational Level

At organisational level, and in line with the design components presented in the *speculative model*, characteristics of an organisation that are considered to enhance the links of responsibility and accountability are listed in Table 24 below.

These characteristics and the establishment thereof can be viewed as guiding principles, at organisational level, to include when an organisation that considers responsibility and accountability as essential is designed.

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Organisational Level	Link of Responsibility: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Prescription Clarity criteria in: Human Resource Systems**
	- Effective and intentional couching or mentorship programs which guide employees and transfer knowledge in the organisation. - From recruitment phase, employees that are pro-active and independent are appointed. A culture and management style where employees are encouraged to ask questions. - Employees employed are experienced and professionals in their various fields. Younger employees are guided by more experienced colleagues.	
	Link of Responsibility: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Personal Control criteria in: Structure**
	- The reporting structure enables an employee to have control over his or her outcomes, avoiding delayed responses or approvals from higher levels. - The reporting structure is in line with groups' or employees' organisational goals, enabling people to manage the necessary resources such that goals can be achieved. - The structure is sufficiently flexible to allow movement of resources such that they are applied where needed to enable full control.	
	Link of Responsibility: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Personal Obligation criteria in: Structure**
	- No uncertainty about the organisational structure and the roles within the structure enhance employees' understanding of their own function. - Continuous or high frequency changes in the organisational structure is avoided to minimise uncertainty brought about by such changes.	
	Link for Accountability: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Evaluative Audience criteria in: Management Processes and Human Resource Systems**
	- Systems are used to measure progress, results are frequently and actively reviewed and acted upon. - From recruitment phase, employees that that are proud of their own work are appointed, with high levels of self-evaluation. Existing employees are encouraged to assess their own work. - Effective and intentional couching or mentorship programs where colleagues monitor each other's work.	

Table 24: Characteristics at Organisational Level, present in an organisation where Responsibility and Accountability is considered essential

6.6.2 Group Level

At group level, and in line with the design components presented in the *speculative model*, characteristics of an organisation that are considered to enhance the links of responsibility and accountability are listed in Table 25 below.

These characteristics and the establishment thereof can be viewed as guiding principles, at group level, to include when an organisation that considers responsibility and accountability as essential is designed.

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Group Level	Link of Responsibility: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Prescription Clarity criteria in:** **Goal Clarity and Team Functioning**
	- Expected group outcomes are clearly and regularly communicated to all team members. - An outcome based management style drives behaviour towards achieving group targets, instead of micro-managing tasks or activities. - Group and sub-group targets are clearly defined, measureable and understood by all team members - enhancing members' understanding of how to perform their work.	
	Link of Responsibility: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Personal Control criteria in:** **Task Structure**
	- Team members' capacity is monitored and managed, avoiding overloaded or over-worked members. - Roles in the group are allocated in line with team members' skills, enhancing the extent of members' ability to have full control. - Larger groups are divided into sub-groups with specific roles or outcomes, improving focus and capacity management within the group.	
	Link of Responsibility: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Personal Obligation criteria in:** **Task Structure**
	- Larger groups are divided into sub-groups, creating focus and enhancing group members' understanding of their specific role in the group. - Uncertainty that leads to group members making assumptions about who is responsible for what function is avoided. - Group members are given opportunities to be involved in different functions, which gives context and a better understanding of the group member's own function.	
	Link for Accountability: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Evaluative Audience criteria in:** **Goal Clarity**
	- Clear goals and targets for and within the group, used as the basis for evaluating progress. - Goals are measureable and progress monitored to determine status or needs. - The impact of outside influence on groups' performance is well understood, assessed and acted upon.	

Table 25: Characteristics at Group Level, present in organisation where Responsibility and Accountability are considered essential

6.6.3 Individual Level

At individual level, and in line with the design components presented in the *speculative model*, characteristics of an organisation that are considered to enhance the links of responsibility and accountability are listed in Table 26 below.

These characteristics and the establishment thereof can be viewed as guiding principles, at individual level, to include when an organisation that considers responsibility and accountability as essential is designed.

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Individual Level	Link of Responsibility: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Prescription Clarity criteria in: Task Identity**
	- Clearly communicated roles and tasks associated with a specific position within the organisation. - Expectation from a specific position is well defined and concise, avoiding drawn out or vague descriptions. - Specific focus on ensuring that employees understand the detail of what is expected of them and have an understanding of how it can be achieved.	
	Link of Responsibility: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Personal Control criteria in: Task Identity and Skill Variety**
	- When jobs are advertised or filled, the appropriate experience and skills level are demanded, enhancing the extent of personal control the appointed person is capable of. - Interaction between different positions in the organisation is well defined, avoiding or minimising a position's capability to influence another position's outcomes.	
	Link of Responsibility: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Personal Obligation criteria in: Task Identity**
	- Where and how different positions fit into the larger organisation is clear and well understood, enhancing employees' understanding of their own position's function. - Clear and concise tasks or outcomes are associated with different positions in the organisation, with employees understanding what their respective roles are.	
	Link for Accountability: Design Component:	**Characteristics present to enhance Evaluative Audience criteria in: Feedback**
	- Opportunities for informal interaction between colleagues and sharing of challenges or achievements, enhancing self-evaluation by comparison. - Continuous and constructive criticism is communicated to employees, avoiding feedback only when negative outcomes must be addressed. - Honest and effective feedback via an appraisal system, informing employees of their performance as perceived by the organisation and enhancing self-evaluation.	

Table 26: Characteristics at Individual Level, present in organisation where Responsibility and Accountability are considered essential

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7. Conclusion

This research was born out of a continuous need to improve effectiveness and performance in organisations, understanding that the environment in which people function influence their behaviour (Singh, Darwish, Costa, & Anderson, 2012). Specifically, this research aimed to better understand the role of two fundamental concepts, responsibility and accountability (Mero, Guidice, & Werner, 2014), and how it can be enhanced in the organisation to contribute in creating an environment conducive to employee and organisational performance.

The aims of the study were stated in Chapter 1 in five specific statements:

- Evaluate the nature and state of responsibility and accountability in a South African organisation.
- Explore the extent to which responsibility and accountability are considered to be important for organisational performance.
- Asses the appropriateness of an organisation-wide or multilevel (individual, group and organisation level) approach to responsibility and accountability interventions through organisational design.
- Develop a well-defined *speculative model*, linking responsibility and accountability theory with design elements of the different levels in an organisation (organisational level, group level and individual level).
- Conceptualise guiding principles for organisational design to achieve greater responsibility and accountability which could lead to improved task and organisational performance.

From these aims, a literature review followed in Chapter 2 which discussed existing literature within three domains: (1) Organisational Performance, (2) Responsibility and Accountability and lastly (3) Organisational Design. During the literature review, a baseline *conceptual framework* was introduced in answer to the question of how responsibility and accountability can be enhanced in organisations.

From this literature review, Chapter 3 presented refined research questions and propositions which addressed the aims as stated in Chapter 1. Chapter 4 followed with the research methodology, highlighting the exploratory and inductive nature of this study – where inputs from qualitative data would be used to verify and refine the *conceptual framework* as presented in Chapter 2.

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Fourteen Interviews were transcribed and analysed, with the results presented in Chapter 5. The results specifically focused on and addressed the research questions and propositions listed in Chapter 3. The results were discussed in Chapter 6. Chapter 6 specifically addressed the research questions or propositions in answer to the aims listed in Chapter 1, also presenting the well-defined *Speculative Model* (or final *conceptual framework).*

This chapter highlights the principle findings and allude to the implications this study envisages to have on management. Finally, the limitations of the research are discussed followed by some suggestions for future research.

7.1 Principal Findings

The principle findings from the research are listed below in bullet form.

7.1.1 Responsibility and Accountability

Amongst others, the research revealed the following principle findings about the state and understanding of responsibility and accountability within a South African organisation:

- Accountability cannot be viewed or considered independent of responsibility (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994). Responsibility can exist without accountability (for example the responsibility to brush one's teeth), but without having a clear and well defined responsibility, a person cannot be held accountable.
- Responsibility and accountability were confirmed to be crucial within an organisations to manage and distribute work within the organisation, from an organisational and strategic level down to a task level (Mero, Guidice, & Werner, 2014).
- There is a lack of conscious thinking about how responsibility is achieved, the components that constitute responsibility and how it can be enhanced within the organisation. This leads to ineffective or lack of interventions aimed at improving responsibility and accountability.
- The study also found that, independent of the environment, the extent to which a person is ultimately responsible or accountable is also a function of the person's makeup – his or her personal attributes. Although the links of responsibility and accountability can be manipulated external to the person, both these concepts are also seen as *virtues*, present to a different extent in different people (Bovens, 2007). This emphasised the need to, as part of the organisational design, have human resource systems that focus on recruiting employees with the appropriate attributes.

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- Accountability is contextual and will be effective to a different extent in different situations or environments. The links of responsibility, (1) *prescription clarity link*, (2) *personal control link* and (3) *personal obligation link* (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994), constitute this context referred to when considering accountability (Frink & Klimoski, 2004) and should therefore be considered when accountability in organisations is evaluated.
- Although responsibility can be delegated to others, a single person (or leader) should be held accountable for the outcomes associated with the responsibility.

7.1.2 Importance of Responsibility and Accountability for Performance

The principle findings related to the importance of responsibility and accountability for performance are discussed below:

- The way and the extent to which responsibility and accountability are present within an organisation are considered extremely important factors having an influence on individual and organisational performance.
- Characteristics of responsibility and accountability were found in most of the performance related theory reviewed (Kahn, 1990; Converse, et al., 2014; Robbins & Judge, 2013; Campion, Papper, & Medsker, 1996; Cohen & Bailey, 1997), highlighting the reach and importance of responsibility and accountability within organisations.

7.1.3 Organisation-Wide or Multilevel Approach

In terms of a multilevel approach to responsibility and accountability interventions, the following finding was concluded:

- Interventions within the organisation where the environment in which people function should be altered, for example responsibility and accountability interventions, should be implemented on multiple levels of the organisation to be most effective (Denisi & Smith, 2014).

7.1.4 Speculative Model

The following was concluded in terms of a *speculative model*:

- It was possible from the exploratory study to generate a well-defined *speculative model*. The *speculative model* was presented as Figure 14 in section 6.5.
- The results could be integrated such that components of the *speculative model* can assist the development of an organisation in which responsibility and accountability are

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considered essential. The *speculative model* provides guidance in terms of which organisational design components (at the different levels of the organisation) (Cummings & Worley, 2009) should be focused on to address the different links of responsibility and accountability.

- The *speculative model* can form the basis of further research that will ultimately produce a de facto model, tested through hypothesis in a quantitative study.

7.1.5 Guiding Principles

Finally, the key finding related to guiding principles is described below:

- Although only a *speculative model* could be presented as an output of this study, it was possible to conclude high level guiding principles from the data recorded. These guiding principles were presented in section 6.6.

7.2 Implications for Management

From the beginning, this study was envisaged to be practical and contribute to managers and business creating better organisations.

The *speculative model* is a combination of theory and practice, integrating responsibility and accountability theory (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994; Schlenker, Schlenker, & Schlenker, 2013; Britt, 1999; Schlenker, 1997; Rudolph, 2006; Bovens, 2010; Frink & Klimoski, 2004) with organisational design theory (Popova & Sharpanskykh, 2009; Coghlan, 1994; Cummings & Worley, 2009; Galbraith, 2002; McCaskey, 1997; Greenwood & Miller, 2010), by testing and amending the connections within a *conceptual framework* to develop the model through this study.

The *speculative model* is therefore considered robust to the extent that it will assist managers to look differently at responsibility and accountability interventions in the following ways:

- The model demands a multilevel approach. When considering how responsibility and accountability can be enhanced, managers will be guided to review the implications at all levels of the organisation.
- The model defines and presents the different links that are important to establish responsibility and accountability. From the results of this study it was clear that managers think of responsibility and accountability in a broad sense and do not consider the essence of how to change or enhance it. The model will guide managers to consider these fundamental components when thinking about responsibility and accountability.

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- The connection between responsibility and accountability is clear, given that the *speculative model* addresses both the links of responsibility and accountability.
- The model will assist managers to target interventions at organisational design components that are likely to have the greatest influence on a specific link of responsibility or accountability. By presenting the design components applicable to a specific link, the model advises managers to focus on specific interventions at specific design components of the organisation.

Apart from managers' own use of the model, the study also proposes guiding principles in section 6.6 which can be used by managers to gauge their current organisations and consider if some of the principles could effect change in their specific organisation.

7.3 Limitations of the Research

This intent of this research was to explore aspects related to responsibility and accountability within the organisation. From the literature review, a *conceptual framework* could be developed which was consequently refined by the qualitative data to present a *speculative model* (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

One of the most important limitations of this research is that the *speculative model* is not a *de facto* model which was tested through hypothesis testing and large volumes of qualitative data. The *speculative model* is therefore considered only the starting point of a refined model that can be used when considering responsibility and accountability in organisations.

Although care was taken to interview participants at different levels and from different spheres within Company X, it should be noted that all participants were recruited from a single organisation with a specific culture and history. As discussed in Chapter 4, the researcher believe that this organisation's history contributed positively to the results of this research, but nonetheless it should be noted and taken into account when the results of the study are reviewed.

According to Marshall and Rossman (2006), there are many limitations related to in-depth interviews. There are two limitations mentioned by these authors that might be applicable to this study, one being that participants might have felt uncomfortable sharing their real feelings or beliefs, given that some comments might have been critical of the organisation. Secondly, with the interviewer having limited experience, answers from the participants may not have been probed to such an extent that long narrative responses of data could be captured.

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Although the researcher has taken great care to be objective in this qualitative study that was conducted through in-depth interviews, his understanding of the concepts prior and during the study could have influenced the interviews, coding or analysis during the study (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

7.4 Suggestions for Future Research

What follows are suggestions for future research as concluded from this study.

7.4.1 Refining the *Speculative Model* to produce a *de facto* Model

As stated in section 7.3 above, it is expected that future research will qualitatively test the *speculative model*. During such research, the results and *speculative model* produced by this study can be used as the basis for developing and testing hypotheses to ultimately issue a *de facto* model which can be widely used by organisations when responsibility and accountability are considered.

7.4.2 Responsibility and Accountability within the Organisation

One of the aims of this research was to explore the understanding of responsibility and accountability within organisations. Although this aim was addressed through the results and discussion in sections 6.1.1 and 6.1.2 respectively, it is the researcher's belief that a study solely focused on this question can be justified.

This study had numerous aims, with the focus being on the development of a *speculative model*. Even though good results regarding the understanding of responsibility and accountability were presented through Research Question 2, the researcher believes that the role of responsibility and accountability within the organisation proved to be understood so diversely, that a detailed analysis are warranted so that the true value of these concepts, either high or low, be more clearly understood.

This call for further research of the subject is an echo of recent literature calling for the same (Mero, Guidice, & Werner, 2014; Hall, Zinko, Perryman, & Ferris, 2009; Converse, et al., 2014).

7.4.3 Responsibility as a Personal Attribute

In section 6.1.1 the finding that responsibility is also considered a personal attribute or virtue, was discussed. This finding warrants further research, as a clear connection between responsibility as a virtue and the literature around the Triangle Model of Responsibility (Schlenker, Britt, Pennington, Murphy, & Doherty, 1994) was not visible in the literature reviewed.

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7.4.4 Performance Impact of Responsibility and Accountability Interventions

The discussion in section 6.2 referred to the inconclusive results presented in section 5.4, where the impact level of responsibility and accountability interventions are considered a continuous uncertainty. Consequently, a suggestion for future research is to study at what level performance is influenced following these interventions. This study could answer, for example, the following questions:

- Does employees' (thus individual level) performance change due to interventions?
- Are limited changes seen in employees' performance due to interventions, but radical changes to the group or organisation performance as a whole experienced when interventions are implemented?
- Are individuals' and the organisation's performance influenced equally due to interventions?

The importance of responsibility and accountability is clear from the literature review and study, as discussed in section 6.2, and it is clear that performance is influenced by responsibility and accountability interventions, but the extent to which the different levels of the organisation are influenced is not clear from the results.

7.5 Conclusion

The *speculative model* presented as Figure 14 in section 6.5 is considered the heart of this research. With managers continuously under pressure to improve organisational performance, it is necessary to revisit and better understand historic concepts or principles used on a daily basis.

This study produced a basis of integrated theory that can be used by academia or business alike to re-assess how responsibility and accountability are understood and implemented within the organisation and ultimately how organisational performance can be improved through the most effective integration of these historic concepts within the organisation.

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Annexure A – Draft Informed Consent Letter

JT Griesel

GIBS Student: 441425

Date: _____

Dear Participant,

RE: MBA THESIS RESEARCH – INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

I am conducting research with the aim to explore aspects around responsibility and accountability at the various levels (company level, group level and individual level) of organisational design. Our interview is expected to last about an hour, and will help us understand how responsibility and accountability within organisations are liked to organisational design. **Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without penalty**.

Of course, all data will be kept confidential and no reference to your name or any other personal details will be made in the subsequent MBA thesis for which the interview is conducted.

If you have any concerns, please contact my supervisor or I. Our details are provided below.

Researcher: Kobus Griesel	**Research Supervisor:** Dr. Caren Scheepers
Email: grieselkobus@gmail.com	Email: scheepersc@gibs.co.za
Phone: 083 7899 118	Phone: 011 771 4000

By signing this letter, you as the participant acknowledge the intent of the research interview and provide informed consent that the voluntary interview can be conducted.

Participant

Name: _____

Signature of participant: _____

Date: _____

Researcher

Name: _____

Signature of researcher: _____

Date: _____

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Annexure B – Individual Level Interview Schedule

Individual Level Interviews

Organisational Design Considerations for Performance through Responsibility and Accountability

Interview Schedule:

Introduction (5 minutes prior to interview)

- Confirm informed consent letter completion.
- Confirm basic data completeness *(form below)*.
- Understand participants' high level role within the specific interview type classification (why is the participant interviewed for the specific type, for example why group level interviewee).

Setting the Scene (15 minutes)

- In your understanding, what is the difference between responsibility and accountability?
- To what extend are responsibility and accountability within organisations important for organisational performance?
- How important is it that groups of people within the organisation be held responsible or accountable (as a collective) for specific outcomes important for organisational performance (thus not referring to personal responsibility or accountability) and why?

Prescribed Clarity (10 minutes)

- What work behaviour (how you should conduct your work) do you think is expected from you or someone in your current work position? How do you deal with uncertainty regarding what is acceptable behaviour and what is not?
- To what extend do you have the ability to adjust your role or behaviour in your current position?

Personal Control (10 Minutes)

- How are you empowered and to what extend do you have the ability (resources and decision making authority) to perform the tasks that is expected of you?
- If you work together on tasks with colleagues, how clear is your role and interaction with your colleagues?

Personal Obligation (10 minutes)

- How important is it for you to know where and how you fit into your division or the bigger organisation? How clear is the picture regarding this?

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- To what extend do you consider other employees in the organisation (at a position similar to yours) to have behaviour similar than yoursr?

Evaluative Audience (10 minutes)

- What opportunities do you have in the organisation to get an understanding of what others in the organisation with the same position as yourself are doing? To what extend are these opportunities sufficient?
- How sufficient are the information or activities in the organisation to assist you in fully understanding how you can improve in your current position?

Closeout (5 minutes)

- To what extend do you hold yourself accountable for specific tasks and does the company promote this notion of self-accountability?
- What would you consider as the 2 most important aspects for improving responsibility and accountability within the organisation and how can this be achieved?

Basic Data Sheet:

Interview Details

Place of Interview:		Date:	
		Time:	

Interview Type:	(mark one)		
Organisational Level	Group Level	Individual Level	Expert

Interviewee Details

Name:	
Job Title:	
Years in current position:	
Specific Expertise:	
Email:	
Phone:	

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Annexure C – Group Level Interview Schedule

Group Level Interviews

Organisational Design Considerations for Performance through Responsibility and Accountability

Interview Schedule:

Introduction (5 minutes prior to interview)

- Confirm informed consent letter completion.
- Confirm basic data completeness *(form below)*.
- Understand participants' high level role within the specific interview type classification (why is the participant interviewed for the specific type, for example why group level interviewee).

Setting the Scene (15 minutes)

- In your understanding, what is the difference between responsibility and accountability?
- To what extend are responsibility and accountability within organisations important for organisational performance?
- How important is it that groups of people within the organisation be held responsible or accountable (as a collective) for specific outcomes important for organisational performance (thus not referring to personal responsibility or accountability) and why?

Prescribed Clarity (10 minutes)

- How does members of the group know what standard of work is acceptable or expected?
- To what extend is it important that members of the group have a clear understanding of how to approach specific tasks (as expected by others in the group or by managers)? *Alternatively, it might be acceptable if every member follow creative, self-determined means of dealing with specific tasks.*

Personal Control (10 Minutes)

- To what extend should tasks within the group be allocated to members based on their skills and strengths? How is this achieved?
- How are group members' workload allocated and managed?

Personal Obligation (10 minutes)

- How does group members ensure that queries or input from outside the group is directed to the correct person in the group?

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- How important is it to have teams (or sub-groups) within the group to enable the achievement of group outcomes?

Evaluative Audience (10 minutes)

- To what extend is it important to be aware of what group member are doing at any given time and if so and how is this achieved?
- How is progress within the group monitored and evaluated?

Closeout (5 minutes)

- What would you consider as the 2 most important aspects for improving responsibility and accountability within the organisation and how can this be achieved?

Basic Data Sheet:

Interview Details

Place of Interview:		Date:	
		Time:	
Interview Type:	(mark one)		
Organisational Level	Group Level	Individual Level	Expert

Interviewee Details

Name:	
Job Title:	
Years in current position:	
Specific Expertise:	
Email:	
Phone:	

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Annexure D – Organisation Level Interview Schedule

Organisational Level Interviews

Organisational Design Considerations for Performance through Responsibility and Accountability

Interview Schedule:

Introduction (5 minutes prior to interview)

- Confirm informed consent letter completion.
- Confirm basic data completeness *(form below)*.
- Understand participants' high level role within the specific interview type classification (why is the participant interviewed for the specific type, for example why group level interviewee).

Setting the Scene (15 minutes)

- In your understanding, what is the difference between responsibility and accountability?
- To what extend are responsibility and accountability within organisations important for organisational performance?
- How important is it that groups of people within the organisation be held responsible or accountable (as a collective) for specific outcomes important for organisational performance (thus not referring to personal responsibility or accountability) and why?

Prescribed Clarity (10 minutes)

- To what extend does management believe that a clear, common understanding of "how we do things" (how is targets assigned to groups, different roles and responsibilities between divisions etc.) in the organisation is important and how is this achieved?
- Given that the organisation is complex and big, what mechanisms are used to ensure different groups or people knows what standard of work is expected from them by management?

Personal Control (10 Minutes)

- To what extend do you believe are groups in the organisation empowered to make decisions and act independently in achieving their management goals? Is this important?
- How important is full-control of specific activities by specific groups in the company?

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Personal Obligation (10 minutes)

- How important is it that there should be no confusion in the organisation about what group or people in the organisation should attend to a specific activity and how it should be approached?
- Is it important that the organisational culture is such that specific groups or people in the organisation feel obliged to perform specific functions? How can this be achieved?

Evaluative Audience (10 minutes)

- What mechanisms is used to understand if groups within the organisation's non-financial performance is as per management's expectation? Are these important?
- To what extend should senior management monitor progress within groups or divisions in the organisation?

Closeout (5 minutes)

- What would you consider as the 2 most important aspects for improving responsibility and accountability within the organisation and how can this be achieved?

Basic Data Sheet:

Interview Details

Place of Interview:		Date:	
		Time:	

Interview Type:	(mark one)		
Organisational Level	Group Level	Individual Level	Expert

Interviewee Details

Name:	
Job Title:	
Years in current position:	
Specific Expertise:	
Email:	
Phone:	

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Annexure E – Full Code List

	Codes
1	Acc: Accountability and punishment goes together
2	Acc: Accountability cannot be forced on someone
3	Acc: Being accountable doesn't mean one should be incentivised if outcome is positive
4	Acc: Contextual, external environment influence the extent to which people are accountable
5	Acc: Contextual, not all people have equally rigid accountabilities
6	Acc: Contextual, not all people must account for outcomes equally
7	Acc: Held accountable for responsibilities
8	Acc: If your actions have consequences, you are accountable
9	Acc: It can be a positive or negative thing, depending on how it is implemented
10	Acc: Leader accountable for teams' outcomes
11	Acc: Measured or evaluated by Others
12	Acc: Must be there, but can be de-motivating
13	Acc: Negative Concept
14	Acc: Not all people want to be accountable for responsibilities
15	Acc: Not always sure/confused with difference between res and acc
16	Acc: One is accountable for the decisions one make
17	Acc: Others can be responsible, but you remain accountable
18	Acc: People are held accountable for outcomes
19	Acc: Personal Attribute, how accountable people are and the extent to which they hold themselves acc
20	Acc: Positive Concept
21	Acc: Self-Accountability is enhanced by the drive to perform/be proud of work
22	Acc: Without accountability, the responsibility means nothing
23	Cul: A culture of being proud of your work
24	Cul: A culture of helping each other
25	Cul: A culture where 'ownership' is not important
26	Cul: A culture where everything is open to scrutiny
27	Cul: A culture where mediocre work is accepted
28	Cul: A good culture of winning
29	Cul: Building a culture where a specific standard of work is evident
30	DE: Group - Goal Clarity: clear goals, budget and target
31	DE: Group - Goal Clarity: clear outcomes are important, not dictating how to get to the outcomes
32	DE: Group - Goal Clarity: clear understanding how goals are influenced by outside factors
33	DE: Group - Goal Clarity: clear understanding of where group fits into org strategy
34	DE: Group - Goal Clarity: measurement of deliverables shows progress or needs
35	DE: Group - Goal Clarity: measurements ensure that people are not overloaded with tasks
36	DE: Group - Group Composition
37	DE: Group - Group Norms
38	DE: Group - Task Structure: a plan should exist against which activities is managed
39	DE: Group - Task Structure: assumptions made about roles and responsibilities
40	DE: Group - Task Structure: clear structure with roles should exist between members of teams
41	DE: Group - Task Structure: members responsible from design through to commissioning
42	DE: Group - Task Structure: overloaded team members will result in some issues
43	DE: Group - Task Structure: small deviations of members' roles clarify responsibilities
44	DE: Group - Task Structure: sub-group leaders could clarify member roles
45	DE: Group - Task Structure: sub-groups enable management of workloads
46	DE: Group - Task Structure: sub-groups enables clarity about roles and responsibilities
47	DE: Group - Task Structure: tasks to be distributed to team members with associated skills
48	DE: Group - Task Structure: the person allocated the task influence the ability to control the task
49	DE: Group - Task Structure: well managed interfaces between sub-groups
50	DE: Group - Team Functioning: an open door policy by the leader enables members
51	DE: Group - Team Functioning: clear communication and agreement about members' tasks, roles and outcomes
52	DE: Group - Team Functioning: emotions get in the way of people assisting each other
53	DE: Group - Team Functioning: feeling part of a team is vital
54	DE: Group - Team Functioning: managers do not understand the skills or role of team members and vice versa
55	DE: Group - Team Functioning: open communication between team members and team leader
56	DE: Ind - Autonomy: guidelines indicating expected behaviour should exist
57	DE: Ind - Autonomy: high flexibility
58	DE: Ind - Autonomy: people required to choose and take responsibility without being told
59	DE: Ind - Autonomy: peoples' motivation drive the extent to which they are responsible
60	DE: Ind - Autonomy: some tasks have very little room for own intervention

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61	DE: Ind - Autonomy: work overload limit one's ability to perform sufficiently
62	DE: Ind - Feedback: getting feedback on how to improve
63	DE: Ind - Feedback: getting feedback only when doing something wrong
64	DE: Ind - Feedback: getting feedback via an honest appraisal process
65	DE: Ind - Feedback: getting input on what others in similar position are doing
66	DE: Ind - Feedback: high levels of communication with direct managers
67	DE: Ind - Feedback: informal and random understanding of what others do from social interaction
68	DE: Ind - Feedback: poor feedback on customer satisfaction
69	DE: Ind - Feedback: poor feedback on performance of others
70	DE: Ind - Skill Variety: a person's skills determine the workload that the person can handle
71	DE: Ind - Skill Variety: clear understanding of the impact a job has on others
72	DE: Ind - Skill Variety: experience bring trust in people's skillset to perform tasks
73	DE: Ind - Skill Variety: people have skills to do specific tasks
74	DE: Ind - Skill Variety: the skill of persuasion enable a PM to get people working on project
75	DE: Ind - Task Identity: clear and concise tasks allocated and communicated
76	DE: Ind - Task Identity: clear understanding of what one's role or outcomes are
77	DE: Ind - Task Identity: highly detailed and agreed KPIs will clarify expectations
78	DE: Ind - Task Identity: knows where he/she fit in org
79	DE: Ind - Task Identity: less changes bring about consistency
80	DE: Ind - Task Identity: must be empowered to influence tasks
81	DE: Ind - Task Identity: others should not be able to influence a person's task outcomes
82	DE: Ind - Task Identity: people make decisions, not knowing if it is right, not sure if it is res
83	DE: Ind - Task Identity: responsibilities not clearly communicated
84	DE: Ind - Task Identity: responsibilities not clearly understood
85	DE: Ind - Task Significance
86	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: an appraisal process should identify key deficiencies
87	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: An appraisal system that is negotiated and agreed upon between stakeholders
88	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: coaching or mentoring as a means to improve employee performance
89	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: direct managers not involved in reward system
90	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: employ people that are motivated and eager to work
91	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: employ people that are proud of their own work
92	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: employ people that can find information themselves
93	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: employ people that is professional and experienced
94	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: if people don't transfer skills it could become a serious risk
95	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: it is not always possible to do the training requested
96	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: people don't see growth and development opportunities
97	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: people should be incentivised for the correct things
98	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: people should be recognised for good work
99	DE: Org - Human Resource Systems: people should be rewarded for taking ownership
100	DE: Org - Management Processes: Employees to be involved when business plans and strategies are developed
101	DE: Org - Management Processes: enforced consequences to undesired behaviour in the organisation
102	DE: Org - Management Processes: informal but continuous communication around member status and progress
103	DE: Org - Management Processes: infrequent but deep involvement by senior management into challenged areas
104	DE: Org - Management Processes: management strongly and clearly communicate roles, responsibilities and goals
105	DE: Org - Management Processes: no formal opportunities to learn from each others' mistakes
106	DE: Org - Management Processes: organisational expectations should be communicated effectively
107	DE: Org - Management Processes: Pre-determined progress discussions and meetings gives control
108	DE: Org - Management Processes: processes and procedures should clarify how things should be done
109	DE: Org - Management Processes: processes and procedures should clarify roles of employees
110	DE: Org - Management Processes: processes and procedures should empower people
111	DE: Org - Management Processes: systems should assists to measure progress
112	DE: Org - Org Structure: A structure designed without having responsibility or accountability in mind
113	DE: Org - Org Structure: Authority levels in the organisation should be aligned with accountabilities
114	DE: Org - Org Structure: clear and well understood structure with roles in org
115	DE: Org - Org Structure: Corporate structure not clearly defining roles of different positions
116	DE: Org - Org Structure: How organisation fits into and status of bigger group well understood
117	DE: Org - Org Structure: project team members not reporting to project manager
118	DE: Org - Org Structure: reporting structure should match people's responsibilities
119	DE: Org - Org Structure: Structure such that common functions are grouped and performed excellent throughout the org
120	DE: Org - Org Structure: Structure such that effective granularity of leaders vs employees are achieved

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121	DE: Org - Org Structure: structure such that org goals are broken down and monitored accordingly
122	DE: Org - Org Structure: the structure should allow for flexibility to share resources and make decisions
123	DE: Org - Org Structure: the structure should allow for freedom within roles and functions
124	DE: Org - Org Structure: Things change frequently and quickly
125	DE: Org - Org Structure: unclear and not well understood levels and functions in the org
126	DE: Org - Org Structure: Weak P&L's means that evaluation is critical only to a certain extent
127	DE: Org - Technology: Computers are crappy
128	Leadership: Leaders that motivate employees
129	Leadership: People should look up to their leaders
130	LfA: Accountability Theory Confirmed, Evaluative Audience
131	LfA: Diminish - Evaluative Audience addressed by...
132	LfA: Diminish - Self-Evaluation addressed by...
133	LfA: Enhance - Evaluative Audience addressed by...
134	LfA: Enhance - Self-Evaluation addressed by...
135	LfR: Diminish - By virtue of Identity, the actor is bound by Prescriptions addressed by...
136	LfR: Diminish - Clear Prescriptions Applicable to an Event addressed by...
137	LfR: Diminish - Identity has control over Event addressed by...
138	LfR: Enhance - By virtue of Identity, the actor is bound by Prescriptions addressed by...
139	LfR: Enhance - Clear Prescriptions Applicable to an Event addressed by...
140	LfR: Enhance - Identity has control over Event addressed by...
141	LfR: Responsibility Theory Confirmed: Personal Control
142	LfR: Responsibility Theory Confirmed: Personal Obligation
143	LfR: Responsibility Theory Confirmed: Prescription Clarity
144	PIL: Confirmed Theory, Environment drive behaviour
145	PIL: Impact on Employee Behaviour
146	PIL: Impact on Group or Org Performance
147	R&A on P: Extremely Important: A common goal or set of responsibilities helps understand the group's fit
148	R&A on P: Extremely Important: Accountability clarify roles and outcomes
149	R&A on P: Extremely Important: Accountability is a necessary condition in organisations
150	R&A on P: Extremely Important: Accountability makes people behave differently
151	R&A on P: Extremely Important: All actions have consequences and is accounted for, even if not clear
152	R&A on P: Extremely Important: Assigning responsibilities allow an organisation to break down the work to individuals
153	R&A on P: Extremely Important: Clear responsibilities enable people to work toward a common goal
154	R&A on P: Extremely Important: Clear responsibilities enhance focus in the organisation
155	R&A on P: Extremely Important: Evaluating one's performance helps personal growth
156	R&A on P: Extremely Important: Everyone in the organisation needs to feel the pressure to perform
157	R&A on P: Extremely Important: External influences on someone's responsibilities creates friction
158	R&A on P: Extremely Important: For every task issued, someone to be res and acc for
159	R&A on P: Extremely Important: For some people you HAVE to spell out what they are res for
160	R&A on P: Extremely Important: Guides people to be empowered for what they are accountable for
161	R&A on P: Extremely Important: High levels of self-accountability (for good quality work) motivates performance
162	R&A on P: Extremely Important: If people are held accountable for tasks, it encourage them to do it
163	R&A on P: Extremely Important: If people are not held accountable, it will lead to failure
164	R&A on P: Extremely Important: If people understand what they need to do, it motivates them to go for it
165	R&A on P: Extremely Important: If people are allocated a task as a group, they will perform better
166	R&A on P: Extremely Important: If you feel empowered, your performance is enhanced
167	R&A on P: Extremely Important: It is assumed that people will take responsibility to fulfil their roles
168	R&A on P: Extremely Important: People feel trusted if they are given high levels of accountability
169	R&A on P: Extremely Important: Team members will become accountable to each other
170	R&A on P: Extremely Important: Without accountability, how do you know whether goals are reached?
171	R&A on P: Extremely Important: Without responsibilities or accountability, why do one need to perform?
172	R&A on P: Extremely Important: Without responsibilities, what are you doing at work?
173	R&A on P: Extremely Important: You need somebody independent to review your work
174	R&A on P: Important, but... : Accountability for a list of tasks could constrain employees
175	R&A on P: Important, but... : Accountability plays a smaller role than responsibility
176	R&A on P: Important, but... : It can create politics in the group - some people perform better than others
177	R&A on P: Important, but... : It forms part of other things, part of the values that drive performance
178	R&A on P: Important, but... : It is easier to influence people to not perform (negatively) than to perform
179	R&A on P: Important, but... : Processes can convey a message which is a mismatch to what the intentions of the processes are
180	R&A on P: Important, but... : There must be very clear KPIs for people in group to ensure individual performance

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181	R&A on P: Important, but... : Too many emphasis on group performing well and too little on individuals
182	R&A on P: Not so Important: Accountability applied wrong, the stick, has never been a good motivational tool
183	R&A on P: Not so Important: Management should never try to influence directly a person's performance
184	R&A on P: Not so Important: Negative reinforcement should never be necessary
185	R&A on P: Not so Important: People's performance are determined by their education and skills, not accountability
186	Res: Can delegate responsibilities to others
187	Res: Cannot delegate responsibilities
188	Res: Contextual
189	Res: Contextual - people handle responsibility differently
190	Res: If your actions don't have consequences, you are res but not acc
191	Res: Leader responsible for teams' outcomes
192	Res: My responsibilities refer to the tasks I need to execute
193	Res: Negative Concept
194	Res: People feel trusted if they are given high levels of responsibility
195	Res: People are trusted when they are made responsible for outcomes
196	Res: Personal Attribute
197	Res: Positive Concept
198	Res: Report on responsibility back to manager
199	Res: Responsibilities motivates people to perform
200	Res: Responsibilities must be clearly communicated
201	Res: Responsibility is assigned by Others
202	Res: The more responsibility one has, the less you are micro-managed
203	Res: You only get assigned responsibilities if you show that you can be held accountable
204	Strategy: A focussed and clear strategy, aligned with the parent company
205	Strategy: Involved organisational members during strategy formulation - buy-in
206	To improve Res and Acc...
207	WSC: Appraisals very ineffective
208	WSC: CEO needs to approve travel requests - not effective and not empowering
209	WSC: Communication is the problem
210	WSC: Complexity and number of different solutions offered to the market create confusion as to who is busy with what
211	WSC: Groups are not always empowered to fully deliver expectation
212	WSC: Management only cares about the figures, not what is going on in projects
213	WSC: Not everybody has a job description
214	WSC: People at lower levels are held accountable, but not managers on higher levels
215	WSC: People at the same level does not have same res and acc
216	WSC: There is not a lack of processes and procedures
217	WSC: Uncertainty of what is expected
218	WSC: Where people fit in org not very clear

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Annexure F – Turnitin Report

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