



**The Management Competency of Senior Local Government Managers in the
Western Cape, South Africa**

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Public Administration**

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Business and Management Sciences at the Cape Peninsula University of
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DECLARATION

I, Althea Nadia Whitaker, declare that the contents of this thesis represent my own unaided work, and that the thesis has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification. Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

December 10, 2024



Signed

ABSTRACT

The local government sphere in South Africa has opted to professionalise senior positions by adopting a core set of competencies for staff. The minimum standard was decided on regulated and introduced as a process of mandatory training contained in National Treasury Regulation number 493, (RSA, Government Gazette 29967, 2007) promulgated in terms of Sections 83, 107 and 119 of the Local Government Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) 56 of 2003 and the Municipal Regulations on Minimum Competency Levels (2013). The system introduced was to set compulsory competency requirements called the Municipal Minimum Competency Framework for the occupation of senior management positions. The implementation of the regulation took effect in 2007 with the intention of being applicable to municipal accounting officers, chief financial officers, senior managers, other financial officials, heads of supply chain management and supply chain management officials. This study explored the relevance and impact of the competency framework on specific categories of employees in the local government sphere and whether these competencies facilitated delivery of fair and equitable services to communities. A mixed methods approach was adopted, which included the following methods: integrating qualitative and quantitative research techniques, documents review, focus groups discussion, semi-structured interviews, and an open-ended questionnaire survey. The research found that despite the training intervention called Municipal Minimum Competency Training, which had been linked to professionalisation, it cannot be regarded as having achieved its objective in practice. No clear link could be established between senior managers receiving this training and improved audit performance. Training and development should assume an individualistic approach to bring about superior performance in local government. It is recommended that the MMC training should be linked to the occupational category of chief financial managers and supply chain officers to strengthen municipal accounting and finance to with a view to implementing financial reforms prescribed in the Municipal Financial Management Act. It is further recommended that a new system of updating and ensuring that all senior managers stay abreast with professional standards be introduced having them belong to an appropriate professional body leading the practice on all new developments and providing training as required specifically to local government. While occupational fields will always form part of the professional requirement, a point system for training needs to be implemented to meet practice developments. This would emphasise training to support occupational categories to improve individuals' needs for superior performance in the respective categories of appointment with the necessary qualifications, years of experience and correct attitude.

Keywords: Local government, competency framework, competence, audit performance, qualification, professionalisation

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to:

The memory of my father, Graham Symonds,
Grandparents Wilfred and Sarah Symonds *for the love of education*,
Frederick, and Emmeline (Evelyn) Williams, *for the legacy of property rights*, and
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"In simple minds we thrived, your education and wisdom live for generations to come".

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

Abbreviations/ Acronyms	Meaning
AF	Annual Financials
AO	Accounting Officer
AG	Auditor-General
CCR	Core Competency Requirement
CDFLG	Competency Development Framework for Local Government
CDP	Continues Development Points
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
CTICC	Cape Town International Convention Centre
DCOG/ COGTA	Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
DMA	Disaster Management Act
DPLG	Department of Local Government
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
HR	Human Resource
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
GNR	Gazette Number
KPA	Key Performance Areas
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LED	Local Economic Development
LGSETA	Local Government Education Authority
L/LM	Local Municipality
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
MFMA	Municipal Financial Management Act
MPRA	Municipal Property Rates Act
MRC	Member of the Regional Council
MSA	Municipal Structures Act
MSA	Municipal Systems Act.
MMC	Municipal Minimum competency
MTEF	Medium-Term Economic Framework
NCBF	National Capacity Building Framework
NCOP	National Council of Provinces
NDP	National Development Plan
NQF	National Qualification Framework

PDP	Personal Development Plan
PMS	Performance Management System
POE	Portfolio of Evidence
RPL	Recognition of Prior learning
SABPP	South African Board for Personnel practice
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SAQA	South African Qualification Authority
SCM	Supply Chain Management
SETA	Sectoral Education Training Authority
SDBIP	Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan
WPSP	Workplace Skills Plan

Definition of Key Terms

Term	Definition
Audit	A measure of actual performance of public sector organisations.
Competence	Knowledge, experience, skills and attitudes.
Competency	Ability of individuals to perform specific tasks.
Occupation	Specific job or profession within the local government sector.
Professionalisation	Relates to values, ethics, commitment, and principal conduct
Professionalism	Competency, knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes expected of public service employees
Public sector reform	Ideas of a host of systems to enhance service delivery or customer satisfaction

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

Strategic Management plays an ever-important role in the life cycle of an organisation and involves the making of decisions about the organisations overall mission, objectives of the organisation, the application of resources and execution of the strategy to produce results. Strategic human resources management activities address the people issues relevant to an organisation's strategy across the functional areas of operations, marketing, finance requiring top management to lead the process (Warnich et. al., 2015:8). According to Lorriaux (cited in Thornhill, Van Dijk and Ile, 2014:38), South Africa adopted a constitution for a developmental state. Thornhill, Van Dijk and Ile (2014:38), citing Lorriaux (1999:235), characterise a developmental state "as a capitalistic political economy characterised by certain actors pursuing a certain kind of ambition, using certain powers". The local government sphere is widely acknowledged as "the level of government that is closest to the people" and entrusted with the crucial responsibility of delivering essential services to communities. In its pursuit of efficiency, effectiveness, and the highest ethical standards, a series of regulations has been enacted to govern the competencies and conduct of senior officials operating within this sphere. These regulations are grounded in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, with Chapter Seven delineating the role and functions of local government and its mandate to provide services to communities. The Constitution serves as the foundational cornerstone for all organs of state, and to breathe life into its provisions, various legislations and regulations promulgated shapes the actions of public officials and senior managers within the local government sphere.

The organisational strategy of local government is called the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), which sets institutional vision, mission, and goals to achieve the developmental state. Consequently, the capacity required to manage the institutional goals is vested in a top layer of management called the Senior Management in local municipal organisations. The human resource practices of any organisation invariably revolve around necessary skills or the identifying the requirements to accomplish organisational objectives. Typically, at the onset of a recruitment cycle, organisations ascertain whether formal qualifications are required, depending on the level of the position. Occupational fields are sought depending on the

operations of the organisation. Work experience becomes a necessary requirement, depending on the level the organisation requires in its acquisition and talent management strategy.

Government fulfils its mandate in terms of organisation by assigning various ministries to the operation of the state. The actors assigned to local government to meet the three spheres of the state namely: the National Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) and the Local Municipality (LM). Within the set of arrangement, the National Treasury has oversight responsibility for financial management and compliance standards. The developmental state selected accountability measures to monitor the role of municipalities in accounting and managing public programmes, hence the function of the Chapter 9 institution. The Office of the Auditor-General (A-G) has the duty to oversee and report on how compliance and financial management is managed by the various organs of state. The performance of the organisation would result in performance reporting to indicate the wellbeing, actions, and activities of the Department through audit reports annually. This is a key event as it reports to the public and ministries responsible for “governance, performance, and financial management” in the utilisation of taxpayers’ money. (RSA: Constitution: 1998:107).

1.2 Background

¹“*Apartheid*” as a political system, which was fraught with racial discrimination and service delivery inequalities, has influenced spatial, economic, and social systems and affected the way people live, interact and work. The Constitution in Chapter Seven, Section 151(3) states the purpose of local government for South Africa. Local government has autonomy and the “right to govern over its own affairs” and that of its community subject to the national and provincial legislatures. Section (2) stipulates that the Municipal Council has the executive and legislative authority to govern its own affairs, making it possible for the local government to

¹ ‘Apartheid’ is an Afrikaans word for segregation South Africa’s white government applied to its policy of discrimination – racial, political, and economic – against the country’s non-white majority in the second half of the 20th century. It was enforced after World War II by the National Party government from 1948 to 1994.

collaborate with national and provincial governments in terms of co-operative governance. The specific object of local government is set out in the next section.

1.2.1 Object of local government

Local government is a highly regulated environment; it has a suite of legislation, which frames its operations to deliver services to the community. The “object of local government”, as detailed in Section 152 (1(a)-(e)), is to “deliver democratic accountable government to local communities, provide services, social, economic development and a healthy environment” involving the communities as far as possible (South Africa, 1996). The local government system, inclusive of policy and legislation, has a fundamental role in the process of rebuilding the South African society in an integrated developmental way to alter the apartheid history. Fundamental in the provision of the Constitution is the need to develop appropriate legislation that would ensure the developmental state that is more responsive to community consultation and needs.

COGTA serves as the national department responsible for overseeing the local government sphere and provides strategic policy direction and legislation to ensure the efficacy of local government operations. Consequently, it can be deduced that training and development initiatives within the local government predominantly emanate from this ministry. COGTA is responsible for the implementation of the Local Government Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998, setting the tone for the structure of a municipality. The Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, outlines the systems such as human resource provision in municipal administration. To further specify, COGTA undertakes the development of regulations and guidelines for local government practice based on the powers that these overarching legislation dictates. As part of its role and function, it promulgated the Municipal Performance Regulation and the Appointments (2006) conditions for senior managers.

The National Treasury has the mandate to introduce financial reforms in local government as stated in the Municipal Financial Management Act 56 of 2003. Emphasis is placed on the importance of training and developing financial and supply chain management officials to implement the requisite management practices for effective financial administration within an organisation. The Municipal Minimum Competency (MMC) framework was introduced in 2007 as a legislative measure for competency in local government. This regulatory measure

has a profound implication for the local government sphere. The enforcement of these regulations has brought about significant transformation within the local government sphere for financial management. One of the noteworthy changes mandates the participation of “accounting officers, chief financial officers, supply chain officials and senior managers” in an 18-month programme aimed at achieving the prescribed municipal minimum financial competencies MMC (2007).

1.2.2 Human resource development in South Africa

The South Africa’s democracy requires a transformative agenda to skills development as there is a skills deficit to govern in the new era because of the exclusion of racial groups in key managerial positions in government and private sector. The state must pay specific attention to skills development as various policy reforms need to specifically address skill deficits. Systems such recognition of prior learning (RPL) need to be used to validate candidates with work experience against criteria within formal learning programmes to establish a level of competence to occupy positions in South Africa. The notion of learning and experience in other settings would be key to create a new workforce that occupies positions in government.

The Integrated Development Plan (IDP) is the organisation strategy selected for local government, which set clear development priorities bringing about a need to resource organisations with senior managers who could lead organisations for accountable democratic and efficient governance. The Capacity Development Framework for local government (CDFLG) was developed in 2004 (CDFLG, 2008:4) to meet the needs of the new democratic state based on the autonomous nature of local government, the responsibility for human resource capacity building should rest with municipalities, to enable the performance of functions and “exercise of power in an economical, efficient, and acceptable way”. Capacity gaps in an individual can, and must be addressed through education, training, mentoring, learning networks and shared practices within the sphere. The Skills Development Act, 97 of 1998 and Skills Development Levies Act, 9 of 1999 were developed for municipalities to comply with to ensure capacity development in this sphere (Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 S:68).

1.2.3 The Skills Development Act 1998

An organisation's success is highly dependent on the connection of human capability and the organisation's strategic purpose and function. The focus of local government is to develop the change needed to have a fully integrated society in terms of basic service delivery. The Skills Development Act, 1998, introduced planned approaches to developing skills, which integrates national needs with planned sector training. Introduction of the Skills Development Act 1988 increases the investment in skills development by introducing new structures, funding policies and programmes. It, furthermore, provided for institutional and financial framework for skills development, including the establishment of a Local Government Sector Education Training Authority (SETA). The National Skills Development Strategy 2005 to 2010 and the Sector Skills Plan for Local Government clearly outline what support systems are needed to deliver the necessary skills that the country needs. The mandate and obligations of LGSETA finds a basis in the Skill Development Act, the standard-setting body, the South African Qualifications Authority Act (SAQA) of 1995, and the Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999. In accordance with Chapter Seven of the Local Government Municipal System Act 32 of 2000 Section 72, prescribes the obligations on municipalities in terms of human resource development and capacity building through training and development (SA, MSA:2000:79).

1.2.4 The concept of competence

The Municipal Minimum Competency Framework (MMCF) emphasises the importance of having public administration as a core requirement for a professional in local government delivering services to the community. The MMC training requirement redefined and regulated the concept of competence in local government, emphasizing the functional competence of financial management. This approach prioritized the acquisition of a specific certificate qualification, linking it directly to job retention and elevating its value as a mandatory standard for municipal officials responsible for financial governance. The framework stressed the critical need for regulated competence to ensure accountability, transparency, and efficiency in managing public funds, aligning professional qualifications with the requirements of effective local government administration. In most sectors, it stipulates with job advertisements that one requires a minimum qualification such as a degree, in a set occupation category to occupy such a position. In general, the private sector requires a degree in commerce, while in the public sector requires a degree in Public Administration or

in an occupational specific field like the disciplines of law, engineering, and environmental health, to mention but a few, as a prerequisite to secure a managerial position as the competent talent.

David McClelland (1973) and Richard Boyatzis (1982) and are well-known for their work on competencies, and their definitions have significantly influenced how competencies are understood in organisational and psychological contexts. McClelland is credited with pioneering the competency movement. His work focuses on identifying competencies as predictors of job performance and success. McClelland (1973:4) defines competencies as a combination of skills, knowledge, and behaviours that are causally related to job performance and emphasises that competencies are more predictive of performance than traditional measures such as IQ or academic qualifications. Competencies are linked to effective and superior job performance. They include specific behaviours, skills, and attributes that can be observed and measured. McClelland's approach focuses on identifying competencies through empirical research and validating them as predictors of success.

Boyatzis (2008) expanded on McClelland's work and developed a comprehensive model of competencies in his book 'The competent manager'. (2008) defines a competency as an underlying characteristic of an individual that "is causally related to effective or superior performance in a job or situation" Boyatzis (1982:23). Competencies can be motives, traits, skills, aspects of one's self-image or social role, or a body of knowledge that an individual uses. Competencies are underlying characteristics, meaning they are not just skills but include motives, traits, and self-concept. Boyatzis emphasises that competencies must be causally related to job performance and not just associated with it. Competencies can be developed and are not fixed traits (Boyatzis, 1982:385). Both McClelland and Boyatzis focus on competencies as predictors of job performance, but Boyatzis provides a broader framework that includes not just skills and behaviours, but also personal characteristics such as motives and traits. The work of these authors has laid the foundation for competency-based approaches in human resource management and development. They are well-known for their work on competencies, and their definitions have significantly influenced how competencies are understood in organisational and psychological contexts. Boyatzis (2009:754) refers to aspects of self-awareness cluster which is knowing one's internal states, preferences, resources, and intuitions. The self-awareness cluster contains one competency:

which is emotional intelligence, being aware of how others see things and awareness in terms of relationships.

The term 'competency' is a new concept for the public sector in South Africa for the appointment of senior managers. Jarbandhan (2011:21) cites authors such as Horton (2000:308); and Charih, Bourgalt, Maltas and Rouillard (2007:25), who first conceived the concept of competency in relation to management of the private and public sectors. Boyatzis (1980) from the McBer Associates group, was commissioned by the American Management movement to research management competence requirements. He established himself as an authority in competency management. Included in his definition of competency is the term 'effective' or superior performance. Boyatzis (1982), furthermore, went on to develop a job performance model for managers. Within this model he discusses three aspects, namely: functions and demand of the management job, organisational environment where the job will be performed, and the individuals' competencies. The value in the Boyatzis model is its behavioural indicators, which influence job performance and the different competencies that are required at different levels in the organisation such as leadership and efficiency specific for senior management. Lower levels management may require a differential set of competencies. His models offer a human resource perspective that includes managing group processes as stated by Mitra et al. (2008:15). Thereafter, Charlton (1993:35) defined the term competence as "... the exhibition of specific behaviours and attitudes and performance..."

The model proposed by Mitra et.al. (2008:198-204) has a different level of proficiency attached to competencies. Within this model, 18 competencies are applicable at all the levels in an organisation, such as communication and planning and problem solving. The authors, furthermore, developed an exclusive set of senior management competencies such as intellectual qualities, adaptable qualities, and achievement-orientated qualities specifically for building high impact and career development and understanding. The importance of linking competencies to proficiency levels allows for more focused training and development for senior managers.

Slocum et al. (2008) proposes six sets of competencies with sub-competencies as foundational to management competency. These are communication competency – including

informal, formal communication and negotiation, planning and administration competency, teamwork, strategic action, self-management, and multicultural competency. Their distinction for senior managers in terms of competency, emphasises interpretation and vision as more appropriate. The authors further state that it is the responsibility of senior managers to develop policy, goals and strategies to bring about strategic action for goal delivery. The common thread within the models of Mitra et al. (2008) and Slocum et al. (2008) were developed by management professionals for the benefit of academic knowledge to manifest in the actual performance learning and practice.

Jarbandhan (2011:21) supported by Charih et al. (2007:26) acknowledge that limited research articles, conference papers on competency frameworks for senior public sector leaders and managers exist. The practice was evident in the United States, according to Bhatta (2001:194). Countries such as the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Netherlands, Australia, Tanzania and South Africa followed suit. Charih et al. (2007:26) further developed a comparative framework for competencies.

Louw (2012:30) proposes six key managerial competencies at the centre managerial effectiveness: communication, planning and administration, teamwork, strategic action, global awareness, and emotional intelligence and self-management competency. An important addition to the framework development is emotional intelligence and self-management competency, which describes integrity and ethical conduct for senior managers. While four sets of competencies are the same in the two models, Slocum et al. (2008) add multicultural competencies to include cultural knowledge and cultural openness and sensitivity.

Municipalities are tasked with driving the development agenda to reconstruction of the deliberate spatial differences in communities left in the apartheid era, like the lack of infrastructure and poor service delivery in communities. This has an impact on the delivery demand on municipalities because of the underdevelopment created in the *apartheid* era in towns and communities. The requirements for competency reforms are shaped by particularities of institutional context, as is the case for local government to ensure the integration and development of communities previously neglected in development as part of the strategic plans in the IDP. The IDP is an instrument for local government to plan,

analyse, set strategies, projects, integrates planning for municipal service delivery (Ntlabezo, 2013:22). The strategic agenda for local government senior managers would include the negotiations of a different set of value to ensure inclusivity in service delivery Boyataz (2008) spoke of social roles in competency, Mitra (2008) spoke about communication and Slocum (2008) refers to communication negotiation, self-management, multiculturalism and Louw (2012) to communication, emotional intelligence, self-management, integrity and ethics. These all refer to a form of soft skills that a manager would need to display to be competent in the role of senior manager in local government.

The primary objective of this study was to scrutinise the effectiveness of this intervention training in improving efficiency, effectiveness, and performance in service delivery as a professionalisation component for local government.

1.3 Problem statement

The professionalisation of local government management in South Africa through mandatory MMC training aims to enhance service delivery, financial governance, and managerial competence. However, the implementation of this policy has generated criticism, particularly due to its compulsory nature, the disregard for existing academic qualifications, and the one-size-fits-all approach. While the intention is to close competency gaps and improve local governance, recent reports—including the Auditor-General's 2020/21 report showing that only 16% of municipalities are financially stable—suggest that the MMC training has not translated into improved outcomes. Despite the policy's prominence, there is limited empirical research on whether compulsory MMC training contributes meaningfully to job performance, organisational efficiency, or retention of senior municipal staff. Furthermore, the disconnect between the regulatory training framework and established human resource development practices raises concerns about its effectiveness and alignment with adult learning principles.

The implementation of authoritative approaches to training and development in municipalities poses significant challenges in effectively delivering services to communities. This approach, particularly exemplified by the MMC training requirement, has sparked controversy due to its compulsory nature and consequential impact on job performance and retention within local

government. The MMC regulation mandates that senior managers, including Municipal Managers (MMs), Chief Financial Officers (CFOs), Supply Chain Officers and Senior Managers in local government comply by participating in the training without a choice for their own career development. The framework specifies that even if one holds an occupational specific qualification at the national qualification framework (NQF) levels, of diploma (6), degree (7), honours (8), master's (9), and PhD (10) one is deemed as not sufficiently qualified for the position of senior manager. The MMC training requires completion of the unit standard-based qualification at NQF level 5, consisting of 16 units of learning (for senior managers) and 24 units (for Municipal Manager and the CFO) set in an 18-month completion period. The intended purpose of the training units would confirm the senior manager as professionally qualified for local government. Should a senior manager not have this qualification, it would be regarded as non-compliance resulting in employment termination.

Despite the intended purpose of professionalising the local government sphere and improving management, compliance, and financial performance, the overregulation according to Steytler (2008:519), of competency requirements may contradict established principles of human resource management and the effectiveness of training in addressing job performance or skills gaps. The implementation of this need for training did not follow a process of establishing an individual's needs. The introduction of the MFMA was followed by training on the regulation contained in it of officials practising in local government from 2003 to 2006.

Furthermore, the efficacy of the MMC training intervention in rectifying management issues within local government is called into question by the persistently poor audit outcomes of municipalities. Despite the emphasis on the significance of MMC training, audit reports consistently reveal widespread financial irregularities, maladministration, corruption, and mismanagement within South African municipalities. "According to the A-G's report (2020/21:18), "the financial health of the 248 municipalities shows that 16% are in good standing, 57% are of concern, and 27% require intervention." This discordance raises concerns about the impact and effectiveness of the MMC professionalisation practice in achieving its intended objectives and improving service delivery.

Consequently, this study investigates the implications and effectiveness of the MMC training as a professionalisation practice within South African municipalities, seeking to determine whether it achieves its stated objectives or inadvertently undermines the very managerial capacity it aims to strengthen.

1.4 Rationale for the study

The rationale for this study stemmed from the critical challenges facing local government in South Africa regarding the efficient and equitable delivery of services to communities, as mandated by the Constitution of the Republic of South African in Chapter Seven Section 151. (3) which states: “A municipality has the right to govern, on its own initiative, the local government affairs of its community, subject to national and provincial legislation, as provided for in the Constitution”. Despite the autonomy granted to municipalities in governing their local affairs, the implementation of compulsory training has raised concerns about its impact on this autonomy, particularly considering human resource capacity gaps and the need for supportive practices to enhance workplace performance and which department should lead the human resource practice.

Professionalisation within local government, as advocated by scholars like Cloete and Kroukamp (2018:61), underscores the importance of developing specific competencies to foster a culture of performance improvement, financial management, accountability, and responsiveness to community needs. The introduction of compulsory training called the MMC training has been met with resistance from senior managers, raising questions about its relevance and effectiveness in addressing human resource management and employee development challenges. Thus, the motivation for this study was to ascertain the efficacy and applicability of the training intervention within the context of human resource management practices and employee development in local government. By exploring these issues, the study aims to shed light on the potential impact of compulsory training on workforce dynamics, performance enhancement, and the overarching goal of service delivery improvement in South African municipalities.

1.5 The research question

The research study attempts to answer the following primary research question:

- How far has the compulsory professional competency training titled MMC requirement for local government resulted in effective, efficient performance and service delivery?

In answering the research question, the following purpose statement was formulated.

1.6 Purpose statement and objectives

The purpose of the study was to determine whether the National Treasury Municipal Regulation on Minimum Competency Levels, promulgated in terms of Section 83 of the MFMA implemented from 1 July 2007, has been effective in developing competent managers who can perform to improve service delivery. The study explored the relationship between implementation of the MMC, and effective service delivery and performance as viewed through audit reports.

The study attempted to explain the outcomes of the MMC training as a development intervention in terms of municipal employee performance for effective and efficient service delivery. To achieve the purpose outlined, the objectives were as follows:

- Objective 1:** To ascertain the qualifications and work-related experience of senior managers appointed to the position (S.56 and S.57 of the MSA).
- Objective 2:** To explore the Auditor-General's Reports on financial statements, municipal performance, financial management, integrated development programs and service delivery.
- Objective 3:** To explore the relevance of the MMC for the field of local government and its human resource development practice.
- Objective 4:** To explain content relevance, delivery mode, time spent and assessment of the MMC in relation to the senior managers' position and their performance in this role.
- Objective 5:** To propose a training framework for local government training management competency.

1.7 Research design

Quantitative research uses experiments and surveys, whilst qualitative research is appropriate to study behaviour and attitudes. The phenomenologist view of human behaviour in relation to their interpretation of the world as it presents. According to Mouton (2002:271),

the anthropological, insider or emic perspective allows the researcher to understand the behaviour, practices and decisions of participants observed. The qualitative researcher believes that there is no “truth” or “reality” and reality is socially constructed. Ashworth (2003:150) states that the quantitative researcher believes truth exists, the research is deductive, with an objective, while participants are blind to the experimental hypothesis, falls within positivism or modernism and assumes that there is a solid truth to be progressively exposed to the world or meta-science.

Bryman et al. (2022:521) explain mixed methods study, which uses quantitative and qualitative research approaches to provide a better understanding of the research problem. The qualitative research approach is exploratory in nature to reach findings and conclusion on the Municipal Minimum Competency Training and its impact and usage in the local government sphere. The study used focus groups discussion to generate data.

Bryman et.al. (2022:48) explains that quantitative design is used to generate numerical data that is analysed statistically to identify trends and patterns. This is useful as one of the research instruments utilised for the study was a questionnaire to gather data on research participants. This questionnaire was used at the start of the focus group discussion, which records basic information such as age, gender, ethnicity, qualification, position, years of working experience and recognition of prior learning (RPL). This did not take longer than ten minutes to complete before the focus group session commenced.

The study employed a mixed methods approach to mitigate biases inherent in single-method designs, ensuring that the different methods complement one another effectively. Following an exploratory sequential design, the study begins with the collection of qualitative data, which is then followed by quantitative data collection. This approach allows for the development of propositions from the qualitative data, which can subsequently be tested with quantitative data.

Data integration occurs during the interpretation and discussion phase, building upon the initial qualitative data collection and analysis. This approach enables the exploration of previously unknown relationships between variables, as well as the refinement and testing of emergent theories. Additionally, it supports the development of new measurement or

assessment instruments, facilitating the generalisation of qualitative findings to a specific population. The primary purpose of the quantitative stage is to assess the extent to which the qualitative findings can be generalised (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

In a concurrent triangulation design, quantitative and qualitative data are collected simultaneously, independently, and in "parallel" (Bryman, 2004). The aim is to compare these two datasets to gain a deeper understanding of the research problem and to cross-validate findings, thereby exploring multiple facets of the issue. This triangulation method includes documentary evidence, such as audit reports, municipal performance reports, interviews, and focus group discussions. By allowing qualitative results to be cross-checked against quantitative data, triangulation increases confidence in the findings and reinforces the results. Moreover, it enables quantitative data to corroborate qualitative insights (Bryman, 2018:62).

This study is exploratory in nature, providing a foundational understanding of a relatively new strategic approach in local government at the senior management level. Specifically, it examines the impact of compulsory certification in Municipal Finance Management, which is part of the MMC training programme, a standardised regulatory requirement by the National Treasury (Mouton, 2002:79). Exploratory studies are valuable for satisfying curiosity, understanding new phenomena, and clarifying central concepts and constructs. Such studies are essential for breaking new ground and gaining fresh insights into a topic. The study aimed to explore whether the MMC training programme has achieved its intended goal of improving municipal financial management.

1.8 Research methodology

The mixed methods approach enables the incorporation of documentary evidence found in reports such as audit performance reports, Section forty-seven reports, and the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) of municipalities, facilitating engagement in this exploratory study. The financial performance reports as published by the Auditor General will ensure a baseline for the assessment and analysis of performance in a municipality accounting for financial management, compliance with legislative deadlines and service delivery. This is presented as time series data, aiming to identify performance patterns based on audit outcomes, as discussed by Chatfield (2013:6).

The study employed focus group discussions to delve into the viewpoints and experiences of participants who had completed training on the prescribed sixteen to twenty-four competency modules. These focus groups comprised senior executive managers from a municipality. The aim was to assess the existing competencies prior to the training, thereby discerning the knowledge, skills, and attitudes present beforehand. This analysis sought to shed light on any new competencies acquired following participation in the MMC training. The roots of focus groups can be traced back as far as 1920 when Bogardus and Turnstone used them to develop survey instruments in a group setting. Scholars like Merton and Kendall further refined the concept in 1946, as documented by Wilkenson, Kritzing and Barbour (2003).

The use of focus groups as a qualitative method, can offer researchers valuable insights and research data in a relatively efficient manner. This method can be used across various settings to address diverse questions related to needs assessment, programme evaluation, and exploratory studies. It can be effectively combined with other qualitative and quantitative methods, including assessment measures, such as pre- and post-surveys.

It was essential to consider the skills possessed by appointed officials upon acquiring their positions as a baseline, in comparison to the competency requirements outlined in the framework for being deemed a qualified professional. This information can be gathered through a questionnaire at the outset of the focus group discussion process.

The quantitative approach, through the administration of a questionnaire, was used parallel to the focus group discussion to compare the two sets of data. The quantitative approach was mainly used to test the responses of the participants in the questionnaire and the focus groups against the documentary evidence contained in the Auditor-General (AG) reports on financial management, public participation, good governance, service delivery and institutional capacity in relation to compliance as depicted in audit findings published annually on municipal performance (MFMA 2016/17).

1.9 Research population

South Africa has a total of 294 municipalities spread across nine provinces. This study focused on a research population of 30 municipalities in the Western Cape, each led by a

Municipal Manager (MM). Within each municipality's organisational structure, the next level of leadership consisted of Senior Managers (SMs), commonly known as "section 56 posts", as per legislative terminology, within the municipal sphere (South Africa, MSA, 32: 2005:67).

The size of a municipality dictates the composition of its executive management team (MSA, 117:1998:42). In very small municipalities, the team may consist of only two executives, whereas a metropolitan municipality might have up to 13 executive managers. Most municipalities, however, typically have six senior managers. In the Western Cape municipal sphere, there are around 200 senior executive posts in total, of which 154 was occupied at the time of data collection. The study's sample represented 38% of the total number of municipalities in the Western Cape, comprising 59 managers from 15 municipalities.

1.10 Data analysis

The experiences of participants regarding the implementation of the MMC were gathered through focus group discussions and interviews, recorded in textual form for analysis. The data were subsequently analysed to assign meaning in themes. The literature review provided the theoretical framework, guiding the research topic, research questions, and overall design.

Qualitative analysis, specifically thematic analysis, was applied to identify and extract patterns from the data. ATLAS.ti was used as a qualitative research tool for theming, coding, analysing transcripts and field notes, as well as building literature reviews, creating network diagrams, and visualising data. Coding involved assigning categories, concepts, or labels to segments of information relevant to the study objectives.

For the quantitative component, SPSS was used to analyse questionnaire data covering aspects such as participants' age, gender, ethnicity, qualifications, job position, years of experience, completion of the MMC, and RPL. This data provided a quantitative basis for detailed comparisons, allowing the study to examine relationships between qualifications and audit performance, the MMC completion and audit performance, and the year of MMC training was completed to identify emerging patterns.

Once all data was collected it was triangulated to check and cross check data to ensure reliability and validity of data. Teddie and Tashakkori (2009:27) assert that triangulation in mixed-methods data analysis involves integrating thematic techniques with statistical methods, facilitating the conversion or transformation of data for comprehensive analysis.

1.11 Ethical considerations

Mouton (2001:52) defines ethics as “conforming to a standard of conduct of a given profession or group”. Research analysis and data reporting may harm participants and therefore it is important to understand what ethical considerations apply to a particular situation. Local governments publish performance contracts for community review, along with performance reports and biographical information in the Section 47 Municipal Reports and Consolidated Annual Municipal Performance Reports (LG 2008/9:21), therefore care will be taken in the study not to publish what is not in the public domain. Participation was voluntary and participants in the focus session and questionnaire could withdraw at any point. Participants also had the right to decline to answer any question or discussion if they felt uncomfortable. All responses were treated as confidential and did not specifically reveal the individual participants’ responses and location. All participants were informed they would receive feedback on the study if they so desired. At the start of the study, ethics clearance was obtained from CPUT to ensure the integrity of the research process.

1.12 Significance of the study

The study will be a source of information to scholars in the field of local government to expand their knowledge on reform processes. It could, possibly, make a recommendation on how to assess professionals in terms of RPL and related work experience for competency requirements as stated for local government professionals. The Department of Public Service and Administration and the Department of Cooperative governance and Traditional Affairs, Local Government Service Training Authority (LGSETA) and National Treasury, who are the custodians of accrediting working experience as per Municipal Minimum Competency Framework stipulations, could benefit from the research findings.

1.13 Structure of the study

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

Introduced, and orientation on the issues that were addressed. This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the Municipal Minimum Competency (MMC) standard implemented within South African local governments, highlighting its implications for effective and efficient service delivery. By examining the qualifications, work experience, and performance of senior managers, alongside an in-depth review of Auditor General reports and the relevance of MMC training, the research seeks to bridge the gap between policy and practice.

Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the study combines qualitative insights from senior managers with quantitative data from the questionnaire and documentary evidence, ensuring a robust and well-rounded analysis. The findings, further validated through provincial oversight, are poised to inform policy development, and enhance the professionalization of local government management. Ultimately, this research is not only vital for understanding current municipal human resource practices and competencies but also for advancing governance and service delivery in South Africa's municipalities.

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework overview of human resource

In this chapter the human resource practices development, competency, education, professionalisation and training were discussed. It provides a comprehensive overview of professionalism, human resource management theory, and competency development in the context of local government in South Africa. It emphasizes the importance of aligning individual competencies with organizational goals to enhance service delivery and good governance. The text focuses on the Municipal Minimum Competency Regulations (MMC) of 2007 and its impact on senior managers in municipalities. Professionalism in local government encompasses knowledge, competence, associations, expertise, and ethical conduct. Professional associations are crucial in maintaining standards and currency of practice. The international comparisons explore competency development practices in various countries across the globe which informs the practice in South Africa.

Chapter 3: Local Government Legislation, Regulation and Competency Frameworks

Legislative framework explores the constitutional provisions and legislation that govern local government in South Africa, highlighting the roles of COGTA and National Treasury in

regulating human resource and financial management practices. The National Capacity Building Framework (NCBF) discusses the framework developed by COGTA to guide capacity building efforts in municipalities, emphasizing individual, institutional, and environmental capacity. Competency Development Framework for Senior Managers outlines the success profile for senior managers, allocating weightings for experience, competencies, knowledge, and personal attributes. Minimum Competency Regulations (MMC) of 2007 explains the rationale for introducing the MMC regulations and its impact on senior managers, including the requirement to obtain specific unit standards and the deadline for compliance. Challenges in MMC implementation and discusses the challenges faced by municipalities in meeting the MMC requirements, including the need for extensions and the use of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). The constitutional role of SALGA is explained in representing local government interests and providing capacity building support to municipalities. The text concludes by acknowledging the complexity of the local government environment and the need for a comprehensive approach to human resource development that considers individual needs, organizational goals, legislative frameworks, and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4: The Research Design and Methodology

Chapter four discusses the various approaches used to conduct the study covering the research philosophy, methods used to collect and analyse the data, research population, sampling techniques, and instruments applied to test reliability and validity of the study. The various statistical instruments and techniques are discussed. The design of the study was mixed methodology using qualitative and quantitative methods to obtain data. The research population was senior managers employed at the executive level within 15 of the 30 municipalities in the Western Cape. The data collection instruments used were focus group discussion where various questions probed participants in providing a response to the enquiry. A questionnaire allowed for the collection of pertinent information relating to participants age, working experience, length of time employed, qualification recognition of prior learning. The data was analysed by extracting common themes for the focus groups discussion these were then generated using ATLAS.TI. The quantitative data were analysed using excel and Statistical Process Systems Software (SPSS).

Chapter 5: Data Presentation of Data and Analysis

Qualitative and quantitative data are presented, analysed, and interpreted in this chapter. The data were analysed in accordance with the stated objectives of the study outlined in Chapter One and the results are interpreted accordingly. The data presented highlight the relationship between the macro-environment and the expectations placed on the organisation, in alignment with the goals of developmental local government. The legislative framework, shaped by national entities like the National Treasury and the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, along with oversight from provincial governments, is designed to improve service delivery.

Chapter 6: Discussion of Results

In Chapter 6, the data was interpreted and analysed to arrive at the research findings in the previous chapter. It was largely achieved by analysing demographic information using SPSS to calculate percentages, frequency table, standard deviation, chi square test and focus groups discuss along with the key theme which emerged from the discussion by participants. In this chapter, the findings were discussed in relation to the key research objectives. The literature in Chapter two will be linked and interacted with the results to explain the research objectives and the outcomes. The relationship between variables and characteristics examined on competency, compulsory training and professionalisation in local government will be discussed against the performance standards set and evaluated in the audit outcomes.

Chapter 7: Recommendations and Conclusions

This chapter explores the impact of the Municipal Minimum Competency (MMC) training program on local government in South Africa. The study aimed to determine if the compulsory training enhanced the effectiveness, efficiency, and performance of service delivery. The key issues identified were the authoritative approach to training, the controversy surrounding job retention due to non-compliance, and senior managers' perception of the training as unnecessary. The chapter provides recommendations for future research and the implementation of alternative training which is not over burdened using heavy-handed legislation.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY

2.1 Introduction

Chapter one explained the research problem as it presents itself in local government amongst senior managers who are bound by law for the compliance requirement. This chapter describes the basic concept of professionalism and theories that define an employee's professionalism in local government. It equally looks at human resource management and practice in local government. Professionalism relates to "knowledge, competence, associations, expertise, closure, status, schooling, attitude, and skill" (Schinkel & Noordegraaf: 2011:89). In the position of senior manager competence is defined as "the necessary knowledge, experience, skills and attitude" applied to achieve outstanding performance (South Africa, Local Government Competency Framework: Annexure A, 2007). The professionalisation highlights that "qualifications; knowledge and expertise" in a "basic professional occupational certification" is required to enter and function within a particular disciplinary context of a management function within local government. The role of Professional Associations, as it relates to local government, is also discussed as these bodies should play important roles in an occupational field to ensure currency and standards of practice (South Africa, Department of Cooperative Governance, 2013 :7-8).

2.2 Human Resource Theory

Olive and Olugbenga (2021:2009) state that "theories are defined as a set of general principles or ideas that are put together to explain a phenomenon". Systems Theory was developed by John Dunlop in 1958, setting rules and norms for establishing guidelines and standards for industrial relations and examining how the outcomes of interactions contribute to achieving the organisation's objectives. Norms referred to conditions of service, pay rates and working hours. The Systems theory views local government as an interdependent system comprising people, processes and policies (Katz& Khan, 1978. It supports a holistic view of competency, stressing how different functional areas must align for effective service delivery. In the South African context, systems thinking is vital for Integrated Development Plans (IDP's), community participation, and transversal governance (CoGTA, 2016).

Universal Theory of Huselid (1995) and Pfeiffer (1998) as stated by Olive and Olugbenga (2021: 210) deals with how best management practices inform organisational management and how to apply in all contexts. The Contingency Theory emphasizes creating tailored solutions and strategies to support development in all areas of human resource management and asserts that the effectiveness of leadership and competency depends on the situation. In municipalities with different capacity and demographics, contingent approaches allow for flexibility, while universal standards (e.g., National Treasury's competency regulations) ensure a baseline of professionalism (National Treasury, 2007).

Institutional Theory concerns itself with internal environments or organisations to determine performance levels (Scott, 2008). Institutional theory explains how rules, norms, and values shape managerial behaviour (Scott, 2001). Professionalism in local government is affected by norms set by SALGA, the Auditor-General, and the PSC. The Professionalisation Framework for the Public Sector (2022) promotes the institutionalisation of ethical behaviour and ongoing learning. The AMO Theory (Ability, Motivation and Opportunity), as stated by Yahya, Tan and Tay (2017), asserts that ability includes training and development, which enhances an employee's knowledge and skill required to perform their duties; motivation refers to reward and opportunity and speaks to employee involvement in delegation. The Professionalisation Framework for the Public Sector (2022) promotes the institutionalisation of ethical behaviour and ongoing learning. The Resource-based Theory speaks to how organisations manage their human capital, which is a baseline differentiating factor for performance between organisations and in the market.

Human Capital Theory assumption sets formal education as a significant determinant of the production capacity of the population and relates to human capital development innovation (Olanyan & Okemakinde, 2008:480). It postulates that human capital theorists believe education has a positive and direct effect on proactiveness and efficiency of employees. This supports the government's training programmes (e.g., MMC), internships, and upskilling efforts via SETAs to boost efficiency and ethical professionalism.

The AMO theory Human Capital Theory (HCT) are both foundational concepts in understanding employee performance and organizational productivity — and they

complement each other in meaningful ways. AMO Theory ensures that these investments lead to real performance improvements through strategic HR interventions that enable, motivate, and empower public servants. Taylor's (1911) Scientific Management Theory is based on the concept of the 'economic man,' suggesting that employees, as components of the production process, are expected to be productive primarily because they receive financial compensation. The Human Relations Approach of Elton Mayo, 1933, through conducting of the Hawthorne Experiment, believes that the human factor or the social person must be considered in terms of needs and how it may impact on productivity. Van Dijk's (2014:317) Human Resource Approach of the 1970s emphasises the management of people as a resource and organisational policies, the importance of social factors, employee well-being, motivation, and group dynamics in the workplace. Scientific Management (Taylor, 1911) emphasizes efficiency and standardised procedures, while the Human Relations Approach (Mayo, 1933) highlights worker satisfaction and engagement. Both are evident in South Africa's performance management systems and wellness initiatives.

The Talent Management Approach emphasizes the mutual relationship of the employer and employee. Glen (2007:27) highlights talent emerging from a combination of "ability comprising competence, education, training, and experience—as well as motivation, engagement, satisfaction, challenge, and well-being". According to Cunningham (2007:4), talent management should be understood within the "context of strategic decision-making, where aligning individuals with roles and roles with individuals is key". This approach tends to prioritize recruitment, talent development, and learning by fostering enabling work environments. The emotional connection between employer and employee is further reinforced through organizational support and employee commitment. In this regard, Human Capital Management is often preferred, as it views employees as valuable intellectual assets and emphasizes continuous development opportunities. Along with Human Capital Development, it underpins succession planning and capacity-building in local government (DPSA, 2021).

Human capital development can be described as an integrated use of training for organisational purposes, and career development to improve individual, group, and

organisational effectiveness. Harrison (1993:300), cited in Van Dijk (2014:328), defines “human capital development as planned learning and development of employees as individuals and groups to the benefit of an organisation and employees”. The purpose of training and development must meet the needs of the position or job and develop an individual for “future career prospects”, through which the employer and the organisation will ensure appropriate retention of committed and capable employees. It is for these reasons that the Department of Public Service and Administration developed for senior managers a competency framework specifically for different levels of competencies. The MMCF was developed to accommodate the local government sphere management competencies to be developed as part of the on the job training plan.

The idea of on-the-job training (OJT) (Becker, 1996:23) is that “workers increase productivity while learning new skills or perfecting old ones”. The author equates training to cost and the value of time and effort of trainees, equally in terms of value of the teaching provided. Becker mentions that the cost and the duration or time of training could well have been spent on producing current outputs versus the raising of future outputs intended for capacitating senior managers through the MMC training. This view assumes an economic position to the cost and time to training, while still espousing the need for training. The cost and length of training vary based on the training type, with greater investment typically required for interns entering a profession compared to senior managers who may only need targeted upskilling or practice refinement. All these efforts invested are to ensure performance in the job with the intention of increasing productivity in an organisation. OJT extends HCT and AMO by enabling practical, context-based skills development. It strengthens tacit knowledge and helps bridge theory and practice, especially in local government internships and mentorships (LGSETA, 2020).

These theories demonstrate that competency development and professionalism in South African local government must be systemically integrated (Systems Theory), context-sensitive (Contingency Theory), normatively guided (Institutional Theory), rooted in both individual development and organisational systems (HCT, AMO), and supported by ongoing learning (OJT, Talent Development).

2.3. Performance management in the workplace

The Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations, 2001, issued in terms of the Municipal Systems Act (MSA), section 120, set out specific requirements for:

“Integrated development planning; Spatial Development; Performance management systems; and Monitoring, measurement, and review processes. The Performance Management System” objectives, goals, and indicators measure achievements towards institutional performance, which are geared towards the development of the state. The internal audit function of the organisation is meant to regulate performance for the development objectives of local government. The setting of individual performance targets navigates an organisation to a level of efficiency, measuring service delivery to communities, hence key performance areas are agreed upon to drive the strategic goals (S.A., 2001:5).

2.3.1 Key performance areas

The 2006 “Municipal Performance Regulations for Municipal Managers” and managers directly reporting to them outline the expected performance standards and responsibilities for senior municipal officials. As part of the conditions of service, the employee undertakes to achieve within Key Performance Areas (KPAs) aligned to the framework of local government” (South Africa: GNR: Section 4:11). There are two important components to performance measured in the performance agreement. The allocated weighting to the KPA, as agreed, accounts for 80:20 allocated to the Core Competency Requirements (CCRs) and personal attributes, respectively (South Africa: GNR: Section 5: 12). The 80% relates to the actual functional areas, including experience, knowledge and competence. It relates to “basic service delivery, municipal institutional development and transformation, local economic development, municipal financial viability and management, good governance and public participation, community, and social development” (MMC 2007). The 20% relates to personal attributes components of the job, people orientation, service delivery – Batho Pele and all soft skills.

A system of outputs/outcomes is set as performance indicators as part of “the performance plan and is linked to the KPA’s” (South Africa: GNR; Section 6: 2). The SDBIP becomes the annual performance indicator for services delivered to communities. The KPAs for Municipal Managers are measured in terms of “basic service delivery; municipal institutional development and transformation, local economic development (LED), municipal financial

viability and management, good governance and public participation". This is the complete requirement for a Municipal Manager for performance.

"Managers directly accountable to the Municipal Manager" are determined based on their performance areas, which align with the occupational functional responsibilities of their respective roles within the municipality, such as the Director of Technical Services. These managers' performance agreements are typically negotiated to reflect the regulations, adhering to an 80/20 principle, where 80% percent of the evaluation is based on job-specific performance and 20% on prescribed competency measures (South Africa: 2014: GNR21).

Analysis of this performance information for an organisation is measured according to the KPAs of "Governance, Corporate Governance, Planning and Development, Compliance Monitoring, Service Delivery Performance, Financial Management, and Local Economic Development". These KPAs are assigned weighting, which will account for 80% performance of an individual in the performance agreement, meaning that each of these functional areas will attract a weighting between 10% to 15%. In the financial functional area of a senior manager, finance will not occupy the largest part an individual's job function unless the senior manager is a CFO (South Africa, 2006:14).

The legislation clearly mandates that performance agreements must link managerial performance to organisational goals, allowing for measurement against individual targets. If performance reviews identify areas needing improvement, training may be provided to address any performance gaps. The legislation, South Africa (2006:17), establishes a standard performance scale for each manager, ranging from levels one to five. "Level 1 indicates unacceptable performance, Level 2 represents performance that is effective, Level 3 is fully effective, Level 4 reflects performance significantly above expectations, and Level 5 denotes outstanding, superior performance. Municipalities are categorised according to their capacity as urban or rural which may impact on the attainment of their scores".

The MMC training does not consider individual weaknesses, it assumes that the developmental gap within senior manager is financial management. It sets on a course of offering a standardised intervention for all senior managers in local government, regardless of their relevant occupational qualifications or years of experience. This training is legislated

as a mandatory requirement for the position of senior manager within municipalities (MMC, 2007) by the National Treasury which, in effect, did not have the mandate for human resource development practice in local government.

2.3.2 Performance measurement of individuals against the organisational goals

The focus of this section is on exploring the linkage between individual performance targets and organisational goals for the delivery of services to the community. The Constitution determines roles and functions of local government, stating the developmental agenda that it should follow (SA Constitution, 1994: Chapter 7:83).

The IDP is the municipal strategy and is the most important instrument used for any measure of development and performance in local government. The critical areas of service delivery are contained within the SDBIP used to monitor the actual delivery of services against the individual's performance (South Africa. MSA, 2000: 227). The MSA Act 32 of 2000, and subsequent regulation require that the "accounting officer and senior managers enter a performance agreement with the council". In turn, the managers (Section 56) directly reporting to the accounting officer must enter into an Annual Performance Agreement as per section 57:2 (MSA 32 of 2000:69). It further submits that an Individual Performance Plan concluded must stipulate the details of the performance requirement for each financial year for each senior manager.

2.3.3 The performance plan and performance agreement

The performance plan and the performance agreement serve as a standardized framework for all Section 56/57 managers. It outlines the specific performance expectations for a given financial year. The Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP) is translated into the individual performance plans of the respective Section 56/57 managers, structured according to their designated roles and responsibilities. These performance agreements are made publicly accessible within fourteen days of the municipality's approval of the SDBIP and are also submitted to the MEC for Local Government in accordance with the MFMA, Section 53(b) (South Africa, 2000:74).

Alignment of performance agreements and the SDBIP is critical because the SDBIP serves as the reference point against which the municipality assesses its service delivery performance throughout the year. The important check and balance is the feedback that focuses on two main areas only:

- Linkages between the performance agreements and the KPIs as set out in the IDP, SDBIP, and budget votes.
- Linkages between the above and the annual performance agreements and quality of indicators and targets.

At the phase of performance reviews, consideration is given to include the consequences of sub-standard performance. The employer informs the employee of a meeting as an opportunity to discuss the measures that the employee is taking to ensure that performance is improved. It is unclear if a structured development plan is followed for senior managers and, should performance be unsatisfactory, a systematic remedial/developmental support is provided and embarked on to support the employee to perform to the standard set in the performance plan. Should the performance be unsatisfactory there are steps to be taken for a potential termination of the contract of employment to be considered. The reason for such terminations may state the “grounds of unfitness or incapacity to carry out his or her duties” should any development intervention such as training not bring about improved performance in Section 57: 6b (MSA 2000:70).

2.4 Performance intervention, training, and development

Coetzee, M., Botha, J., Kiley, J., Truman, K. and Tshilongamulenzhe, M.C. (2015:13) argues that South Africa has a “unique history of skills development” and, therefore, various skills development strategies targeting a range of “high, intermediate, and low skills development simultaneously in a differentiated approach” should be the target

Commented [AW1]: Should I rather state Coetzee et al.(2015:13) argues. My understanding is that when you use for the first time all authors should be captured.

Workplace skills plans play a fundamentally significant role in local government; they allow a holistic perspective on training needs irrespective of the level of the organisation. To meet the training needs requirement, synergy must be found for municipalities to use this as organisational specific barometers of what the skills needs are or which should be addressed

(South Africa: Skills Development Act, 31 of 2003). The role the organisation plays in skills needs identification is specific to the organisation's requirements.

2.5 Motivation, training and development applied in the workplace

McClelland (1961) emphasises that motivation arises from three specific needs: Achievement, Affiliation, and Power. Typically, the need for achievement is about the desire for success, mastery, setting and accomplishing challenging goals. The "affiliation needs" is about the desire to maintain close interpersonal relationships, while the "need for power" is about the wish to influence or control others. Often, people decide on their own career goals and are motivated to pursue training for their own development or actualisation needs to advance their careers. There are various levels at which one pursues such intentions when one decides to improve knowledge and skills with the correct attitude. Training people in workplace or "On-the-job training" is an important part of becoming knowledgeable if new systems are introduced specific to an occupation as required (Kolb:1984). The identification of individual development needs will involve a discussion between supervisors and the individual to come to agreement on training needs linked to the performance on the job.

2.6 The personal development plan

By design a training and development plan is for the individual member or the manager to identify and address any gap in the competency profile and the actual competencies needed in the job. Warnich et al. (2015:348) point out that individual analysis is used to determine training and development needs specifically around knowledge, skills, ability or attitudes and that programmes and interventions designed should fill the gap between actual and desired performance. Coetzee et al. (2015:259-266) support this view and indicate that an "individual's learning needs may be personal, performance related, or career orientated". The development requirements identified during performance reviews and assessments may need training. In local government the assessment tests during the application process, should identify initial gaps before appointment to form part of any development plans for the individual. The data collected is a requirement and forms part of the reporting requirement during the appointment phase to DPLG and COGTA. Senior managers, should a gap be identified, should have equitable access to development for the individual or organisation.

Training should be specific to achieve the organisational strategic and operational plans in support of work performance and career development.

According to the SMS Handbook (2003:20), “training and development activities focus on equipping senior managers with competencies they require to perform effectively in their current jobs and prepare them for the future”. The training and development needs of senior managers are determined through continuous monitoring, quarterly reviews, and annual assessments.

2.7 Approaches to needs analysis

Goud et.al. (2004:471) state that training needs analysis forms part of the first steps in a cycle of training and education of staff in an organisation; it involves a systematic consultation with individuals to identify learning needs before the commencement of recommending appropriate training and development programmes. Needs analysis offers the opportunity to reflect on the organisations and individual's current situation and to assess it against the desired state of organisational performance and the future desired state. Blanchard and Thacker (2004) as stated by Botha and Coetzee (2007:80) explain “needs analysis as either proactive or reactive”. “Proactive needs analysis is based on future forecast” of what performance demands may be. Employees usually embrace this as its relevance to growing knowledge, skill, and competencies. Reactive needs analysis identifies current realities and performance needs in the present. Trainor (2001:14) emphasises a competency-based approach to training needs analysis, focusing on the alignment of training programmes with the specific competencies required for various roles. The characteristics focus on identifying competencies critical for job performance outcomes. Boydell and Leary (1996) proposed a three-level model of Training Needs Analysis, distinguishing between organisational, operational, and individual needs. The characteristic of organisational analysis focuses on the alignment of training with organisational goals and culture. Task/operational analysis identifies the knowledge and skills needed for specific tasks or roles, while the individual analysis focuses on the current capabilities and gaps in an individual employee's skills. Needs analysis should establish the gap in what staff have in terms of competencies or new demands in a job to perform the job function. Gaps are usually identified during performance review of an organisation in evaluating the performance of the

said function in its administration and implementation of legislation for the job requirement. Van Der Walt (2020:50) stressed the importance of gap identification to be the precursor to skills development programmes.

Training needs, as explained by SALGA (2010:10), refer to various shortcomings and responses for individuals. If the need requires qualification, the organisation may send the employee to obtain a qualification, which is acquisition of theoretical knowledge. If one wishes to address competence or an experience gap one may use the LGSETA, which holds a list of accredited providers, to address learning needs, or these could be achieved through demonstrations in workplace settings, eLearning, reading, research or simply shadowing a colleague during the engagement of work. There may be coaching and mentoring for senior managerial positions, which may be more appropriate, or even study visits to various municipalities locally or internationally.

2.8. National and provincial governments play important roles in needs identification.

Effective identification of needs necessitates prioritization, facilitation, and linking needs with available resources and coordination in the most effective ways for capacity building response (Capacity Building Framework, 2008-2011:76). The National Treasury introduced the Municipal Minimum Competency (MMC) programme without first conducting a formal needs analysis. This initiative aimed to respond to the capacity gaps that emerged following the implementation of new legislation introduced by the White Paper on Local Government, 1998. The introduction of the "Performance Regulations by the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) in 2006 was followed by the National Treasury's Competency Regulations in 2007". This regulatory progression was later complemented by the COGTA, which introduced amendments to the Municipal Systems Act in 2010. The new MMC replaces the previous qualification when the "Profession of Town Clerks Act 75 of 1988 and the Municipal Accountants Act 21 of 1988" was repealed. The Institute of Municipal Financial Officers (IMFO) was the professional body that sought to regulate the requirement for the development of local government practitioners in the local government financial field.

2.9 Performance problems in the workplace

Identifying the underlying causes of performance challenges is essential and requires a structured approach supported by appropriate tools and technologies in the needs analysis process to enhance organisational performance capacity. This could also imply that training and development interventions can be eliminated (Rosset, in Coetzee, 2007:81). At times, training is not the ultimate solution when knowledge, skills and attitude are deficient and options such as on-the job assistance and practice are more beneficial (Blanchard & Thacker, 2004). The first phase of the MFMA implementation was to have training on what the MFMA requirements would be and used technical assistance programmes to communicate the MFMA implementation from 2003 to 2007 (South Africa: 2003:15).

2.10 Standard practice before any workplace training is implemented

The standard practice before any workplace training is implemented is to conduct a training needs analysis. Botha and Coetzee (2007:113) state that there are ethical considerations in conducting needs analysis or skills audits as they involve collection of sensitive information relating to the knowledge and skills gap and respecting the individual's needs and rights. Mirabile (2019:14) states that Competency-Based Needs Analysis focuses on identifying the specific competencies required for optimal performance in a role. Jacoby (2021), and Dalkir and Liebowitz (2019) emphasise individual gap analysis personalised needs assessments by identifying skills gaps relative to job demands and targeting skills development to improve engagement by addressing specific employee needs. Hidayat et al. (2022) and Aguinis and Kraiger (2009) state that strategic needs assessment focuses on aligning training with long-term organisational goals, prioritising future skills, and focuses on both current and anticipated organisational needs. Harteis (2018) and Tessmer and Richey (2019) state that organisational contextual analysis examines organisational goals, culture, and environment to identify needs, focusing on how they impact training. To ensure training relevant to strategic objectives, consideration of external and internal factors must be considered.

Local government human resource practices have been weak (South Africa: State of Local Government Report, 2009:98). The local government sphere opted to implement mandatory training rather than doing needs assessment to determine the skills gap in its senior managers despite information that the organisation generated through competency assessment tests.

2.11 Training and development

The goal of training in the workplace is to sustain employees to achieve effective performance assigned to a specific job profile (Rothwell, Sullivan & Mclean, 1995:48). "Formal training in the workplace facilitates planned short-term efforts to modify competencies, attitudes and beliefs, knowledge or skill behaviour" (Botha & Coetzee, 2007:48). Work-based training is to satisfy the organisation's future needs as well as possible performance improvements within a specific period. The training period of the MMC was scheduled over an eighteen-month period. Individuals were given a timetable of five years (1 January 2007-2013) for the implementation and skilling process (South Africa: MMC, 2007). All education, training and development needs designed to meet the identified individual learning and development needs, are required to be cost effective and add value (Botha & Coetzee, 2007:80).

2.11.1 Career development, age, experience

Most participants who participated in the study were mid-career and hence their approach to development has a very different expectation in terms of self-worth and professionalism. Thus, Trotter (2006:8-9) states that adult learning theories will guide development activities, and presents the 'age and stage' theory, which states that people do not stop learning. The stage theory focuses its attention on the "distinct, qualitative differences in modes of thinking, while the age theorist was interested in tasks common to most adults at various times in the life cycle". Trotter, furthermore, discusses Levinson et al. (1979) who believe that mid-forties and early fifties begin to "build structures for the rest of their lives". Trotter contends that during this phase adults focus on more lasting relationships, work, and spiritual commitments. He furthermore states that development programmes must take the practical knowledge of senior managers into consideration. Trotter (2006:11) and refers to Knowles' (1980) assumption on adult professional development as "motivated to learn as they experienced needs and interests that the learning would satisfy. Learning for adults was life-long, and experience was the main resource for adult learning, with a need to be self-directed in their learning, and individual differences among people increased with age". Loeng (2018:4) states that Knowles' andragogy (1980) was very practically oriented in terms of "planning, directing, and evaluating adults' learning". Knowles' beliefs on individuals' maturity lists the follows:

- “Self-concept moves from one of a dependent personality towards being a self-directed human being.
- They accumulate a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasingly rich resource for learning.
- Their readiness to learn becomes oriented increasingly towards the developmental tasks of their social roles.
- Time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application, and, accordingly, their orientation towards learning shifts from one of subject-centeredness to one of performance-centeredness in their self-directed learning. In (1984), Knowles added a fifth assumption:
- As a person matures, the motivation to learn is internal (Knowles, 1984)”

One can assume that training would be more to either sharpen a skill or engage in learning activities which may specifically be directed at what they select is a need at a given time.

2.11.2 Time

The importance of time spent on training programmes will contribute to value that senior managers may derive from self-investment in their education. Becker’s (1964) concept of “human capital theory views education and training as an investment” where individuals allocate time and resources to acquire skills that will increase productivity and earnings. Becker (1996:30) states that skills can be viewed as the individual property rights of an individual. He also states that the permission of the person possessing it must be sought as investing in training, and hence incentives are present in acquisition of the training time spent. Specialised knowledge is useful for one sector, and it may have no usefulness for others, especially if it is not well timed or valued as a means of wanted acquisition and property skills. According to Becker (1996:37), training that is linked to an industry/occupation is less likely to have a high turnover based on the skilling.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991:181) posits that individuals’ intentions to engage in behaviour such as enrolling in a skills development programme, are influenced by their attitudes, perceived behavioural control, and subjective norms. The Expectancy-Value Theory (Vroom, 1964) suggests that individuals choose to engage in behaviours based on

the expected outcomes and the value they place on those outcomes. The Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA) in training involves weighing the costs (including time) of a training programme against the benefits, such as skills acquisition and career advancement. The “70-20-10 Learning and Development Model” advocates that 70% of learning is acquired from on-the-job experiences, while 20% of learning comes from social interactions, and only 10% formal training. The Time-Based Learning Theory explores the impact of time constraints on learning efficacy, particularly in adult education. It acknowledges that adults have varied time availability due to work, family, and other commitments (McCall, Lombardo and Eichinger, 1980).

These theories emphasise the importance of balancing time demands with the need for effective and practical learning outcomes when selecting or designing skills development programmes. Time-Based Learning Theory is not attributed to a single developer, nor is it formalised as a widely recognised theory by any specific individual. Instead, it is a concept that emerged from educational research and practices that focus on how time constraints influence learning, particularly for adult learners and those in continuing education. The MMC programme completion scheduled for over 18 months, which would suggest a high demand on time of senior managers to attend the training programme.

2.12 Competency development

Competency development focuses on applying new knowledge and competencies to work after training. “Competencies relate to specific description of work tasks or job outputs that have to be achieved to demonstrate satisfactory job performance” (Botha & Coetzee, 2007:48). Robinson (2006:161) states that competency frameworks define the “dimension of the job and provide the criteria by which effectiveness of performance can be evaluated”. The performance involves shaping of “attitudes and beliefs through training, which involves raising awareness of the preconception to modify behaviour” according to Botha and Coetzee (2007:49).

2.13 Approaches commonly used to define competencies.

To build quality leadership aligned to business strategy, individuals with a mixture of competencies and disposition are needed. For industry to accept the competency modelling approach, a fair amount of engagement of stakeholders in the environment is needed to build

the acceptance of these approaches. Competencies relate to behaviour required for success in the job. Behavioural traits such as motivation and personality make up important dispositions, which lead to success. George (2015: 1) states the demands from community, the alignment with rigid legislative regulations such as supply chain, and the needs to expand and maintain a standard of service delivery, further compound the demands on leadership capacity.

2.14 International comparisons in terms of Competency Development

In modernising local government administration, various strategies are implemented to address sustainable management. In this section, the attention will be on various international practices introduced in the practice of local government globally. Competency should drive performance to contribute to well-managed organisations within a set profession. The 1980s became a prominent period in developing towards public sector leadership frameworks, when reforms adopted more private sector approaches within the New Public Management (NPM) movements. According to Charih et.al (2007:25), Horton (2000:308) and Bhatta (2001:194-5)) the United States followed by the United Kingdom have entrenched skills and competencies development for leaders of public sector organisations. “Strategic and integrated approach to development” was used to meet challenges of an ever-changing society.

2.15 Competency development in the United States of America

Boyatzis (1982) was generally viewed as the founder of leadership competencies identification since he was the key consultant for the McBer group during the 1980s. Horton (2000:308), cited in Jarbandhan (2011:23), asserts the conclusion of Boyatzis “there was no single factor, but a range of factors that differentiated successful from unsuccessful managers”. The United States of America (US) is deemed the “first country to develop a Senior Executive Service (SES) in 1978”, according to Hood and Lodge (2004:324). Within the US framework for the SES, it identifies 26 competencies across six categories. The six categories are:

- “Leading of change;
- leading people;
- result driven;
- business acumen;

- building coalitions; and
- communication”.

Bolden et al. (2003) explain the strategy used for selecting new candidates, and to train executives on core competencies prescribed, such as leadership, adaptability, and communication. Charhi et. al (2007:28) state that the complex environments in the new millennium demanded new thinking on core requirements. Jabandhan (2011:27) lists the new competencies as:

- “adaptability to new challenges and skills for private and public sector;
- negotiations;
- ability to retain talent for good results;
- leadership ability to interact with the community and effective teams;
- knowledge, information, and security management; and
- identification of candidates to work in the public service and working in complex safe environments”.

2.16 Competency development in New Zealand

The Lominger Competency Framework has sixty-seven traits that a manager needs to possess, and the State Service Commission adapted its framework from these. The New Zealand Government implemented competency frameworks in the 1980s as part of its reform outcomes to manage performance (Bhatta, 2001:198). The clustered competencies are the following: “strategic skills; operating skills; courage; energy and drive; personal and interpersonal skills; organisational positioning skills and acting with honour and integrity”.

2.17 Competencies developed in Australia

“The Public Service and Merit Protection Commission (PS&MPC) created the Senior Executive Service (SES) in 1984”. In 1999, it strengthened “the Senior Executive Leadership Capability Framework” (SELFCF), which clustered “five competencies for senior managers”, namely (Bhatta, 2001):

- “the shaping of strategic thinking,
- the achieving of results,
- the cultivating of a productive working relationship,

- exemplifying personal drive and integrity, and
- communicating with influence”.

Charih et al. (2007:32) argue that the global context significantly influenced government thinking, prompting the development of competencies such as understanding policy advice and development in the role of a key adviser, mastering the public sector context, “engaging in global governance and leadership networks, developing interpersonal relationships, and gaining familiarity with the external environment”.

2.18 Competency developed in the Netherlands

The Netherlands established its “Senior Public Service” (SPS) in 1995 with 28 competencies clustered into seven groups (Hoogendam and Vandermeulen, 2000, cited in Bhatta, 2001:199). These are: “coherent governance, problem solving; interpersonal behaviour; operational effectiveness; impact; resilience and governance sensitivity” (Bhatta, 2001:200).

2.19 Competency model in the United Kingdom

The Senior Civil Service (SCS) competency framework sets six main competences as core related behaviour for a senior manager to be knowledgeable in. They are “giving purpose and direction; making a personal impact; thinking strategically; getting the best from people; learning and improving, and focusing on delivery” (Bhatta, 2001:201). Bolden et al. (2003:20) and Hood and Lodge (2004:321) assert the competency movement was encouraged by private sector developments. Jarbandhan (2011:29) cites the works of Bhatta (2001:200); in Charih et. al. (2007:26) to have led the transformation process in 1999 as part of the Modernising Government White Paper. The Wilson Report of 1999 elaborated on this too stating that knowledge and information seeking behaviour has contributed to transformation.

The South African state bases itself on the Westminster system so it should be expected that the local government system should bear some resemblance to what exists in the United Kingdom. The Employer Organisation for local government (EO) tasked with the responsibility of maintaining standards of people management and development of leadership competencies in the United Kingdom as stated by Bolden et al (2003:22) list twenty classified competencies for local government officials, namely: “Change; Communication; corporate focus, that is, organisational effectiveness, performance learning

and awareness; customer focus; decision making; equity and diversity; focus on results; impact and influence; information management; integrity; leading people; partnership; personal management and drive; political awareness; project management and process management; resource management; safety service improvement; strategic focus and team building".

2.20 Public Sector Reform in Tanzania

The Tanzanian reforms are influenced by the NPM paradigm, the aims of which include reducing the core functions of the state, drawing boundaries between political and administrative roles; efficiency; accountability; building relationships between private and public sector; reducing corruption; the reorganisation of staff and establishments; changing the values and attitudes of staff and exploiting new technologies. Therkildsen, (2000:61-71.) states that Tanzania has been involved in various Structural Adjustment programmes reinforced by the World Bank; European Union, International Monetary Fund and others, which realise the global views and systems of international economies. The leadership development frameworks of Tanzania use the best practices such as "Australia, United States, United Kingdom, Canada, and New Zealand" (Jarbandhan, 2011:29-30). It adopted twenty-four leadership competencies as part of its model by which they recruit public servants. The eight main headings for appropriate competency required by the Tanzanian state are:

"Communicate ideas clearly; encourage others' abilities; build effective teams; demonstrate personal mastery; assess client's needs; promote continuous innovation; set direction and create a shared vision." Accordingly, the promotion system in place promotes leadership based on merit and encourages a learning organisation.

2.21 Global training theories and practices

To summarise the models in the various international practices on competency development, as outlined by Tshilongamulenzhe, (2015), one can deduce the following:

2.21.1 The Anglo-Saxon model "(Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the USA, and the UK)"

Is characterised by the following (Tshilongamulenzhe, 2015:11):

- “Looks at the balance of supply and demand.
- Individual employees are responsible for acquiring general training, while organisations provide specific in-house training.
- Government only steps in when markets fail. (e.g. unemployment)
- Stakeholders adopt a voluntary approach to skills development to meet skills need”.

2.21.2 Asian Tigers model (Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan)

Is represented as (Tshilongamulenzhe, 2015:12):

- “Development of skills and the economy can be accelerated if government controls the supply and demand for skills.
- Involves stakeholders' government, trade unions and employers.
- Government is the authority in terms of demand for skills.
- Strength: Strong skills base across all sectors, social partners influence joint regulatory bodies to broaden scope of training
- Employers provide useful training to service its members to support skills development”.

2.21.3 “Germanic model (Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Denmark)”

Is listed as (Tshilongamulenzhe, 2015:13):

- “Skills development is market driven.
- Government, unions and employers integrate to determine the need for delivering qualifications and training for various occupations in different sectors.
- Government provides the legal frameworks in industries to limit the discretion of managers. This is a planned model; it integrates levels of government and social partners and links the institutional structures of vocational education and training with the economy.
- Strengths: it produces large volumes of intermediate skills.
- Shared system of training culture”.

If stakeholder representation occurs in the business decision, human resources grow (Tshilongamulenzhe, 2015:13). South Africa's local government sphere is yet to establish a model for what competency development is.

2.22 National Government Competency Development for Senior Management Service

The development of competency models in South Africa has been part of broader efforts to professionalise various spheres, improve organisational performance, and align with global best practices. This process has been driven by various governmental and professional bodies, particularly in response to the need for standardised skills and performance criteria for public and private sectors.

The state has development goals, instituted after the 1994 democratic elections. Capacity development is an important vehicle in the transformation agenda of South Africa. The human resource development policy favoured a society and organisation that would be learning-centred. The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) is responsible for developing the public service to produce officials with experience, knowledge, and competencies to lead public sector organisations into the transformation process, which would be required for the new civil service. DPSA then became a significant proponent of competency modelling within the public sector. In the early 2000s, the South African Government recognised needs to establish competency frameworks to enhance public service delivery and align with international standards.

The development of competency frameworks was first introduced in 1998 with the performance management systems. The DPSA identified a set of general management competencies to promote a shared understanding of effective management practices, support the “performance management system”, and guide the development and identification of needs among senior management service members. The “Senior Management Service” (SMS) Competency Framework was first introduced in 2003. It was designed to identify the “core competencies” required for managers in top positions in the public sector. This framework was aimed at improving leadership, management skills, and service delivery in South Africa (SMS Handbook 2003:7).

The Core Management Criteria (CMC) linked organisation strategic objectives to performance in all human resource training, development and performance management. Eleven core competencies determine performance standards in performance agreements, assessed in performance reviews and appraisals. The sound management practices as the

standard for result-based performance in senior management positions are “strategic capability and leadership, programme and project management; financial management, change management, knowledge management, service delivery innovation, problem solving analysis, people management, client orientation and customer focus, communication, honesty and integrity” (DPSA, 2006: Chapter 4, Annexure E, 1–5). In the context of client improvement, customer service, communication the development of a public sector ethos is guided by the Batho Pele Principles, which emphasize the soft skills that public servants should embody. The principles developed were “consultation, service standards, courtesy, access, information, openness and transparency, dealing with complaints, giving best value”. DPSA Competency Framework for Human Resource Management and Development was launched in 2009, this framework sought to establish consistent HR competencies across government departments (SA: DPSA: 2009).

2.23 Human Resource Development and SETAs

Based on the National Human Resource core criteria identified for skills development along with legislation such as “SAQA Act of 1995; the Skills Development Act of 1998, and the Skills Levies Act of 1999, the enabling environment was created in South Africa”.

The Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) played a pivotal role in developing competency models tailored to specific industries. These bodies were “established under the Skills Development Act of 1998” promoting skills development and training.

- **The Industry-Specific Competency Frameworks:**

SETAs have developed various competency models specific to industries such as finance, construction, and healthcare to ensure that training programs meet industry needs and improve employability (SA: NSDS:1998:).

2.24 Professional Bodies and Institutes

The “South African Board for People Practices” (SABPP) as a professional body, has been instrumental in developing competency frameworks within specific professions. The SABPP HR Competency Model was introduced to standardise human resource competencies across the profession, ensuring professionals meet a set of defined competencies (SABPP: Strategy 2020-2030). The key proponents in the field of government are the following departments, sectoral authority, and professional associations.

- **“The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA):** Spearheaded the development of public sector competency frameworks.
- **The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs:** Legislates for Human resource practices in local government.
- **National Treasury:** Legislated for financial competencies
- **The Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs):** Developed competency models aligned with industry-specific needs.
- **The South African Board for People Practices (SABPP):** Developed human resource competency model, to standardise HR practices”.

The development of competency models in South Africa has been driven by the need to enhance skills and performance across various sectors. This process has seen collaboration between government departments, industry bodies, and professional organizations to establish frameworks that align with national priorities and international standards. These efforts to standardize competencies have played a crucial role in improving workforce effectiveness and ensuring the relevance of training programs across different sectors.

2.25 Professionalisation

Professionalisation derives from the word ‘profession’, which has characteristics linked to specialised knowledge, and expertise, which are obtained through a degree of theoretical and empirical-based knowledge systems obtained through education and training (Gornitzka & Larsen, 2004: 466). Professionalisation is related to a worldview relating to values; ethics, commitment, and principled conduct (van Bockel, 2005:6). It has largely been a concept associated to large corporates and specific to public sector management (Aucoin, 1990: 315; Hughes, 2018: 115; Osborne, n.d.; Gaeber, n.d.: 321-328). Within each profession, often the job requirement may need a form of skilling to ensure that individuals stay abreast with the latest developments in the field of practice to meet the workplace demand.

The development of competency models in South Africa has been driven by the need to enhance skills and performance across various sectors. This process has seen collaboration between government departments, industry bodies, and professional organizations to establish frameworks that align with national priorities and international standards. These efforts to standardize competencies have played a crucial role in improving workforce

competencies. Thompson (2000:7) argues that professionalism is defined as “a body of specialized knowledge that forms the foundation of professional expertise”. It is linked to “a commitment to high standards the acceptance of both collective and individual responsibility, using knowledge to enhance effectiveness”. This ensures “adherence to values and principles that guide professional practice”, emphasizing autonomous judgment over bureaucratic rules. According to Sundin and Hedman (2005:2), professionalism highlights the relationships connecting “occupational groups, theoretical knowledge, and the practical application of that knowledge”. Occupational groups are integral to professionalization frameworks, as they serve as the foundation for the very existence of the individual professionals’ effectiveness and ensuring the relevance of training programs across different sectors. The Professionalisation Framework for local government (2013:8) stressed that there is not a “one size fits all” definition for local government and differentiates based on the various career paths of professionals to categorise types in local government as technical, management, administrative and public service professionalism.

2.25.1 Continuous professional development

The “Health Professions Council of South Africa’s system of continuous professional development” through learning and accumulation of a point system specific to the occupational field of practice with a foundation in ethics, human rights, or health law, is designed to ensure that practitioners stay relevant to new developments in the field of practice as new knowledge evolves (HPCSA: CPD Guideline 2017:8).

One can generally conclude, based on occupation, that professionals possess qualities which use theoretical knowledge, education and training, and codes of professional conduct with the right attitude to serve the public, vested in a professional organisation which aligns codes of conduct towards workplace needs in consultation with its stakeholders (Picciotto, 2011:168).

The Professionalisation Framework for Public Service (2023:4) distinguishes between being “professional” and “professionalisation”. “Professional and professionalism includes the practices, conduct, values, and behaviour that a person exhibits regardless of training, qualifications, or responsibility levels. The changing of individual attitudes, behaviour, and performance towards serving the public is deemed as professionalisation”

Capacity building programmes outline Focus Area One as Strengthening Leadership and Professionalisation of Municipalities by strengthening the quality of management. The structured, accredited development of “leadership and municipal management training, includes policy procedures on recruitment and performance management” for mainly senior managers followed by middle manager. The programme equally states engagements with national, SALGA, LGSETA, formal tertiary institutions, professional associations, and the human resource component in municipalities.

Focus Area Two is called “Hands-on-Support” and speaks about a range of modes to target individual and institutional development over time. Focus Area Three speaks about skills development. Focus Area Four speaks about refining policy and the necessary legislation and procedures. Programme Focus Area Five is about co-ordination of national and provincial government to take responsibility for strengthening their constitutionally mandated functions (South Africa, COGTA, Capacity Building Framework, 2008-2011:95).

2.26 Staffing and organisation

HR is matched with what the organisation’s vision and mission state and what it hopes to achieve. This sets into motion a recruitment and selection process where qualifications and skills are identified to meet the specificity of the organisational requirements. In most organisations the seeking of such skills looks for a qualified individual who has acquired a diploma, degree, postgraduate degree and/ or experience amounting to either 2 to 5 years, in order to be deemed as highly qualified and professional in a specific occupational field.

Local government specifically requires candidates in its recruitment phase to the senior management service, essentially the top executive positions, to be qualified as follows: a qualification is the appropriate discipline, essentially public administration or accounting, engineering, and development planning. CHEC (2016) states that a ‘qualification’ is a registered national qualification that has structured learning outcomes with a specific purpose. This qualification, designed to equip students in practical competence and a foundation for further education, is assessed based on “exit level outcomes, registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and awarded by a recognised institution” at NQF level 6 - Diploma, 7 - Degree, 8 - Honours and higher (South Africa: CHEC 2016:10). In

addition, experience is requiring at senior management or middle management level in the field of practice. This can be regarded as a standard norm in any managerial vacancy advertised in the public sector and private sector.

Knowledge is often one of the main criteria sought by organisations defined in the following ways as stated by Krathwohl's (2002: 41(4), 212-218) whose taxonomy categorises knowledge into four types: "Factual Knowledge (K1): Basic elements that students need to know to be familiar with a discipline or solve problems within it. This includes terminology and specific details. Conceptual Knowledge (K2): Understanding how basic elements fit together within a larger framework, including knowledge of classifications, principles, theories, models, and structures. Procedural Knowledge (K3): Knowing how to do something, including methods of inquiry, criteria for using skills, techniques, and methods specific to a subject. This includes knowing appropriate procedures to use. Metacognitive Knowledge (K4): Awareness and understanding of self-cognition, self-knowledge, strategic knowledge, and knowledge about cognitive tasks; contextual and conditional knowledge". Senior Managers would have had all or some of these specific knowledge sets to be successfully in the appointment process to the position and have gained experience to display these knowledge typologies.

2.27 Summary

This chapter focused on professionalism and "human resource management in the South African local government". The concept professionalism encompasses elements like "knowledge, competence, associations, expertise, closure, status, schooling, attitude, and skill". It emphasises the importance of professional associations in ensuring standards and currency of practice in local government. The chapter also explored various human resource theories that inform organisational management, such as Systems Theory, Universal Theory, Contingency Theory, Institutional Theory, AMO Theory, Resource-Based Theory, Human Capital Theory, Scientific Management Theory, Human Relations Approach, Human Resource Approach, and Talent Management Approach.

Performance Management in the workplace examined performance within local government, highlighting legislative frameworks like the LG: Municipal Systems Act, Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulation. The chapter outlined KPAs for senior managers,

including factors like “basic service delivery, municipal institutional development and transformation, local economic development, municipal financial viability and management, good governance, public participation, community, and social development”. It discussed performance agreements linking managerial performance to organisational goals and highlighted how training may be provided to address performance gaps.

The chapter critiques the MMCF training for assuming a standardised training approach without considering individual needs or expertise. The chapter delved into the connection between individual performance targets and organisational goals, emphasising the role of the IDP and SDBIP in measuring service delivery and performance. The alignment of performance agreements with the SDBIP is crucial as the latter serves as the benchmark for evaluating service delivery performance. The chapter discussed the importance of needs analysis and skills development in local government, highlighting the role of the Skills Development Act. It also underscored the importance of motivation, training, and development.

Further, this chapter stressed the need for personalised training and development plans to address competency gaps and support career growth, highlighting the importance of ongoing and equitable access to development opportunities for senior managers. The various approaches were explored around needs analysis, emphasising the significance of identifying both proactive and reactive needs. It underscored the importance of considering ethical aspects when conducting needs analysis or skills audits. Also discussed was competency development, focusing on the ability of individuals to apply new competencies in the workplace. The significance of competency frameworks in defining job dimensions and evaluation criteria.

The chapter presented international comparisons of competency development practices, highlighting models from various countries, including the “United States, New Zealand, Australia, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Tanzania, and summarised these models into the Anglo-Saxon, Asian Tigers, and Germanic models” and analysed their strengths and weaknesses. The development of competency frameworks in South Africa’s national government, specifically the SMS explored and the role of the DPSA in developing

the SMS Competency Framework to improve leadership, management skills, and service delivery highlighted.

The role of SETAs in developing industry-specific competency frameworks and professional bodies, such as SABPP, in developing competency frameworks for specific professions was discussed. Finally, the chapter discussed professionalisation in the context of local government, emphasising its links to specialised knowledge, expertise, values, ethics, and commitment. It highlighted the importance of continuous professional development in ensuring practitioners remain current with evolving knowledge and practices.

Overall, Chapter 2 emphasised the complex interplay of professionalism, human resource management, competency development, and "performance management in the local government context in South Africa". It highlighted the need for a comprehensive approach that considers individual needs, organisational goals, legislative frameworks, international best practices, and ethical considerations. Chapter 3 explains the legislative, regulatory and competency frameworks applied to the practice in local government.

CHAPTER 3

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEGISLATIVE, REGULATORY AND COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS

3.1 Introduction

Chapter Two provides the theoretical framework of the study explaining the research problem as it occurred in local government. It drew on studies conducted on competencies from international practice and sketched the context for the South African local government sphere. The onset of democracy in South Africa required a full revision of state machinery facilitating the meeting of developmental changes required in line with the needs of communities previously excluded during the apartheid system of government.

According to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Local government was identified as the sphere of government represented as the closest to the people" where the most service delivery will be seen by communities (South Africa, 1996, Chapter 7, Section 81). The third sphere of government was established in 2000 to deliver on Chapter Seven of the Constitution (SALGA, 2015:16). To put matters into context, local government was framed by the White Paper on Local Government in 1998 (South Africa: 1998).

Local government systems require preparation to develop a strategy through credible IDPs and to build capacity politically and administratively, addressing service delivery backlogs. It also has to do with the inclusion of communities to create a public participation system and manage intergovernmental relations to realise effective and efficient local government. Strengthening financial reforms brought about the implementation of the MFMA and within its prescripts the need to strengthen financial management. National Treasury developed the MMC training programme to replace the old system of Town Clerk financial regulation and professional association and to fill the void that arose from changes brought about in the reforms for the new democracy.

This chapter delves into legislation promulgated for local government and subsequent regulation. It focuses on the competency framework to further elaborate within the context of municipal competence with the view of delivering effective service to communities. The

sphere structure in South African places most of the development and delivery at the feet of municipal government as outlined in the Constitution of South Africa, 1996, and further expanded in the Municipal Structures (1998) and Municipal Systems (2000) Acts.

3.2 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996

According to Section 195(1)(h) of the Constitution (South Africa, 1996:99) "...good human-resource management and career development practices, to maximize human potential, must be cultivated." Furthermore Section 195 (1) states that "...public administration must be broadly representative of South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness, and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation." This provision clearly paves the way for a local government public service adequately trained to have the prerequisite skills or competency. In section (154) (1) of the Constitution, (South Africa,1996:75) the role of municipalities in co-operative governance is to be supported by "the national and provincial government, by means of legislative and other measures, must support and strengthen the capacity of municipalities to manage their own affairs to exercise their powers and to perform their functions". Section (154) (2) "allows organized local government, municipalities and other interested persons an opportunity to make representations with regard to draft legislation". This sectional reference clearly defined municipalities in cooperative governance. Section 155(7) places responsibility on national and provincial governments for the legislative and executive authority ensuring performance effectively by municipalities in relation to their function set out in Chapter Seven on local government. To give outcomes to these provisions, further legislation was enacted to support municipalities in their function in the "Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998, the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 and the Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003".

Chapter 9 of the Constitution establishes several independent institutions, collectively known as "state institutions supporting constitutional democracy." These institutions designed to strengthen democracy, promote accountability, transparency, and good governance (SA,1994:92). The Auditor-General of South Africa (A-G) is an institution with roles and functions of independence and accountability (Section 181:2) "subject only to the Constitution and the law". The A-G "must be impartial and perform its functions without fear, favour, or prejudice, is accountable to the National Assembly and must report on its activities

and the performance of its functions". According to Section 188, the A-G "must audit and report on the accounts, financial statements, and financial management of all national and provincial government departments, municipalities, and any other institutions or entities as required by national legislation. The A-G must submit audit reports to any legislature that has a direct interest in the audit and to any other authority prescribed by national legislation". These reports must reflect any instances of "unauthorised, irregular, or fruitless and wasteful expenditure", among other issues. The Public Audit Act 25 of 2004 elaborates on the A-GSA's mandate and operational framework.

The sole objective of the A-G is "to ensure transparency, report on accountability and the use of public resources. By auditing public accounts, the A-GSA helps to identify inefficiencies, mismanagement, and corruption, contributing to improved governance. The reports produced by the A-G are critical for the oversight role of legislative bodies, enabling them to hold government entities accountable in terms of financial management and the overall performance and management of government departments.

Overall, the A-GSA ensuring that government entities manage public finances effectively and in accordance with the law, thereby supporting constitutional democracy and good governance therefore the audit reports will serve as the baseline performance report for municipalities in the study.

The Constitution allows for the regulation and financial monitoring of local government for efficient and effective spending. The autonomy is granted to local government over its own affairs. However, the mandatory involvement of national and provincial government ensures a cooperative mutual relationship always exists amongst the three spheres of government. (South Africa, 1996, Section 215 and 216)

3.3 The White Paper on Local Government, 1998

The White Paper on Local Government, in Chapter Two (South Africa, 1998:95), presents options such as "performance-based contracts for senior staff that improve accountability, with the focus on outputs". These contracts could be renewable based on performance targets achieved. It advocated a system of codes of conduct developed to deal with issues of

corruption, financial or ethical misconduct. It equally states that municipalities “must guarantee the gender and racial composition to reflect the demographics of the South African society”.

The White Paper (South Africa, 1998:104) asserts the “regulator: A Local Government Training Sector Education Authority” (LGSETA) will be the coordinating body for local government training and funding through the levies received from the National Skills Fund paid by municipalities. Through the forecast development needs of South Africa, a capacity building and training regime would have to follow for what was envisaged as necessary to deliver on the services delivery agenda in the South African local government context. The White Paper, in Section 6 (South Africa, 1998:106), outlines the role of the other spheres of government in ensuring administrative transformation as support for capacity development training and service delivery technical support. It states that “the development of systems and regulatory frameworks which support municipal delivery by providing guidance and certainty”. It further states that the approach should not be prescriptive, but where a municipality fails to improve performance, it may be prescriptive. The regulation in local government on minimum competency was imposed or prescriptive as regulated by National Treasury.

3.3.1 The Municipal Structures Act 117, of 1998

The Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998 (South Africa, 1998b) defines “capacity, in relation to a municipality” as including “the administrative and financial management capacity and infrastructure that enables a municipality to collect revenue and to govern on its own initiative the local government affairs of its community”. Council’s role in section 82(1) is to appoint (a) MM as accounting officer and (b) an acting MM, Section 82(2) asserts that the person with relevant skills and experience for the position must be appointed. As of 2007 the skills as experience are set out in the MMC. Section 83(3) “determines that district municipalities must seek to achieve developmental goals by building the capacity of local municipalities in their areas to perform their functions and exercise their powers where such capacity is lacking”. The “mandate” of the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (DCOG) is “to ensure the implementation” of the Municipal Structures and Systems Act for the sphere.

3.3.2 Municipal Systems Act 32, of 2000

The concept of “capacity support within local government is outlined in Section 25(1)(b) of the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, mandating the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) must be align with the municipality's available ‘resources and capacity’ to ensure effective implementation”. Section 51 of the Municipal Systems Act states that “A municipality must within its financial and administrative capacity establish and organise its administration in a manner that would enable the municipality to (MSA, 2000:62)”:

- a) “Be responsive to the needs of the local community.
- b) facilitate a culture of public service and accountability among its staff
- c) be performance orientated and focussed on the objects of local government in terms of Section 152 and its developmental duties in terms of Section 153 of the Constitution”.

“The mandate of the Department of Cooperative Governance (DCOG) includes implementing the Municipal Systems Act, which provides the conceptual framework for local public administration, human resource management, and training in local government in accordance with Section 72(e). This framework emphasizes competency through training and skills development of municipal staff. This may include in-house training, in alignment with the requirements of the Skills Development Act, No. 81 of 1998, the Skills Development Levies Act, No. 28 of 1999, and subsequently the Municipal Finance Management Act, No 56 of 2003”. A cooperative agreement between ministers would be concluded to allow any form of capacity development from one ministry to another to happen. The MMC regulation was derived out of the MFMA allowing National Treasury to make such regulation applicable and mandatory.

Section 55 outlines the “role of the Municipal Manager (MM) as the head of administration, requiring that council appoint an individual with the “necessary skills, expertise, competencies, and qualifications”. Additionally, it mandates that all reporting and supporting documentation submitted to the Department of Provincial of Local Government for vetting scrutiny by the MEC ensure regulatory compliance i.e. with the MMCF”. The MEC then forwards the information to the National Minister for record-keeping. If any shortcomings are identified, the MEC—after consultation—may declare the appointment inconsistent or seek a

declaratory order to nullify it due to noncompliance. Since 2023, this process has become increasingly common, with the MEC frequently taking councils to court to enforce compliance with legislation regarding acting appointments that meet the qualifications required as specified in the municipal minimum competency framework. (South Africa, MMC: 2007).

3.3.2.1 Provision for co-operative governance

Regarding provision for co-operative governance, Section 106(g) “by the substitution for subsection (2A) of the following subsection” reads: “(2A) The Minister may, subject to applicable labour legislation and after consultation with the Minister of Public Service and Administration, make regulations relating to the duties, remuneration, benefits and other terms and conditions of employment of municipal managers and managers directly accountable to municipal managers” (South Africa, MSA: 2022). National Treasury would have consulted the Minister of COGTA to have the regulations on municipal minimum competency approved before implementation.

3.3.3 The Municipal Finance Management Act 56, of 2003

“The Municipal Finance Management Act, 56 of 2003 (MFMA), emphasises that capacity building is an activity undertaken for a set of outcomes”. Section 34(1) of the MFMA states that “the national and provincial governments must by agreement assist municipalities in building the capacity of municipalities for efficient, effective and transparent financial management”. Thus, capacity building must be undertaken in a cooperative and integrated way by all government spheres. The mandate of National Treasury is the functioning of the MFMA. With the rollout of all the new legislation, it became important for each organ of state responsible for capacity development to draft a framework necessary to guide the practice of capacity development and competence frameworks. These organs: DPSA regulating for national and provincial government through the Senior Management Framework, COGTA for local government human resource management appointment conditions and regulation of the employment relationship and National Treasury frameworks and capacity development for the implementation of MFMA regulations. (Ntliziywana, 2010:55)

3.4 LG: MSA 2006: Municipal Performance Regulations

The introduction of performance regulations in 2006 by COGTA was to assist local government by monitoring the performance of senior managers. It equally introduced the

signing of performance contracts to measure and evaluate performance. If performance is satisfactory, it would be rewarded with a bonus and, if it is not, then corrective measures must be introduced to address performance which affords the opportunity to identify gaps within the skills pool of managers and to recommend training or any other capacity development intervention. The Performance Regulation purpose is for measuring the result of developmental local government and the IDP objectives and goals. In structuring capacity development for local government, the Performance Regulation sets the standard of having the necessary qualifications to occupy the space. The requirement for “appointment of municipal managers and managers directly accountable to the MM” include having “a recognised bachelor’s degree in a relevant field, five years relevant experience and core managerial and occupational competencies”. COGTA asserted itself as the department “responsible for the human resource regulation” for the sphere and setting performance requirements matched with skills profiling for local government (COGTA: 2006).

3.5 The Municipal Minimum Competency Regulations 2007 Draft phase

The Explanatory Memorandum attached to the Draft MMC Regulations of 2007 explains the need for wider implementation of the MFMA as an important “strategy to modernise and improve financial management of local government”. It further relates the “fundamental principles of effective and efficient public resource utilisation “are important management practices in terms of transparent accountable government reforms. The importance of the changes is in line with international best practice, “measured by the skills and professionalism of officials” working in local government (South Africa, MMC. 2007:4).

The MFMA contains “specific provisions requiring all officials who manage, supervise, and operate in financial and supply chain disciplines to meet the minimum competency levels”, which explains why regulations were developed. The MFMA gives power to capacity development in Section 83, 107 and 119 to “meet prescribed minimum levels of financial and supply chain management”. The stakeholder bodies consulted were the “Accountant-General, Department of Cooperate Government (DCOG), later COGTA, Provincial Departments of Local Government (DPLG), South African Local Government Association” (SALGA) and a professional body, the Institute for Municipal Finance Administration (IMFA),

an indication it was seen as the only professional body to consult as a key stakeholder at the time. (South Africa, MMC. 2007:7).

Municipalities must “develop appropriate strategies to assess staff competencies, provide resources and opportunities for training”, and include it as part of the performance agreement. Section 68 of the MSA allows for the development of appropriate capacity building based on municipal and individual needs, and a municipality may receive support from the Local Government Sector Education Training Authority (SETA) for funding (South Africa, MSA. 2000:77). The National Treasury registered a “unit standard based certificate in municipal financial management” offered by universities to assist in the skills development and capacity building programmes. This training is registered with the Local Government SETA as part of the initiative. As stated, this is to ensure a more professional workforce and to improve services to the community. In effect, this means that National Treasury has taken an explicit role of developing the human resources of municipalities in a very regulated manner (South Africa, Draft MMC Regulations. 2007:6).

3.5.1 The Regulation on Municipal Minimum Competency 2007

The development in local government in South Africa sought to strengthen the capacity of senior managers by the introducing the “Municipal Regulations on Minimum Competency Levels, 2007, effective as from 1 July 2007, for a municipality or municipal entity”. The regulations stated that “After 1 January 2013 no person may be employed that does not meet the requirements of the Regulations” as a compelling condition towards compliance with the training programme. All appointed officials at executive level were required to attend the compulsory training. The training had unit standards specified and differentiated based on the Municipal Manager and CFO and a lesser amount for senior managers by a targeted date (South Africa, National Treasury, MMC. 2007:3).

The competency requirement was also linked to the performance contracts of individuals. The prescript requirement further aimed to ensure executive professionals with occupational competency in higher education at the national qualification framework level of six or seven that is, diploma or degree. A further requirement of senior managers is to have, at least, five to seven years of work-related managerial experience linked to the budget size of values under and over R500 million. The list of competency requirements are “strategic leadership

and management, strategic financial management, operational financial management, governance, ethics and values in financial management, financial and performance reporting, risk and change management, legislation, policy and implementation, stakeholder relations, supply chain, audit, and assurance". The functional areas to manage a municipality's various unit standards between sixteen and twenty-four are specified, requiring the senior manager to complete modules depending on the specification per job function. The job function and differentiation are divided into three categories, namely: Accounting Officer i.e. "Municipal Manager; Chief Financial Officer and Senior Manager" (South Africa, National Treasury, 2007:13). Table 3 summarises the differentiation among the categories and between high and medium capacity municipalities.

Table 3.1: Job categories differentiation

Description of MMC Requirement	"Higher Education Qualification"		"Work-Related Experience"	"Core Managerial & Occupational Competencies"	"Financial & SCM Competency Areas"
	<R500mil	>R500mil			
"Accounting Officers"	"NQF level 6 or Cert. in Municipal Financial Management"		"Min. of 5yrs Senior management Level"	"As described in Performance Regulations"	"The 9 required minimum unit standards per Regulation 3"
"Chief Financial Officers"	"NQF level 6 Or Cert. Fin. Man"	"NQF level 7 Or Chartered Accountant"	"Min. of 5/7 yrs. Middle management Level"	"As described in Performance Regulations"	"The 11 required minimum unit standards per Regulation 5"
"Senior Managers"	"NQF level 6 Or Cert. Fin. Man"	"NQF level 7 in relevant Field"	"Min. of 5/7 yrs. Middle management Level"	"As described in Performance Regulations"	"The 9 required minimum unit standards per Regulation 7"

Source: Adapted by the author 2025 from National Treasury: (MMC of 2007)

3.5.2 The Local Government Senior Management Competency Framework

As part of local government reform strategies, some form of financial skills development or training for the implementation of the MFMA was required. The National Treasury became

the custodian in addressing this, hence the compulsory introduction of the minimum competence framework, which regulated human resource requirement for finance.

The Draft Competency Guidelines of 2006, for Section 57 Managers, developed under the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, draw on the Senior Management Service (SMS) competency framework used within South Africa's provincial and national government sectors.

The competency requirements are divided into various clusters and outline the skills needed at each of the levels, which are contained in Annexure B of the framework:

Cluster 1: Qualification, Experience; Knowledge and Expertise

Cluster 2: Local Government Core Competences

Cluster 3: Leadership Competence

Cluster 4: Generic Competence

Cluster 5: Functional Competence

Fixed within each of these competences are requirements to enhance the skills needed. South Africa has been characterised by a particular political history of marginalisation in terms of community development, creating segregated systems of service delivery. The local municipal development agenda has been pursuing a policy of a redress strategy to ensure fair, equitable services to communities with government setting the tone on the requirements needed to navigate how complex the local government reforms to develop communities and deliver services would be. The cluster requirements are as follows:

Cluster 1: Qualification, Experience; Knowledge and Expertise

Within the first cluster of competency requirements, this research would test if senior managers, indeed, met this requirement by having qualification, experience, knowledge, and expertise.

This cluster forms the basis of the performance measurements framework which rates core competence as 20% and functional competence at 80%.

Knowledge through work experience in local government is an important requirement to be successful in a job. The core Occupational Competencies attained through qualification

allows for: the “interpretation and implementation of the legislative and national policy frameworks”. Other important competencies are “knowledge of developmental local government and performance management and reporting, and knowledge of global and South African specific political, social, and economic contexts, competence in policy conceptualisation, analysis, and implementation of knowledge in more than one functional municipal field discipline”. The section refers to the actual job occupied like human resources, technical service, or corporate service. Soft Skills such as mediation are necessary for job performance with all national and provincial sectors relating to the job functions and people. The last requirement for these leaders is exceptional dynamism in creatively improving the functioning of the municipality. All these attributes make up the 100% value assessment assigned to the performance agreement (South Africa, 2014: GNR: 12).

3.5.3 Core Competency Requirements for employees (20%)

The 20% captured as the CCR component of the performance measurement agreement relates directly to what is contained in the MMCF. This section is related to leadership abilities and/or capabilities. A standardised process administered across the local government spectrum so that there are very few differences between agreements from one municipality to the next. The specified “Core Managerial and Occupational Competencies” Follows (MMC: 2007) are:

“Core Managerial Competencies: Strategic Capability and Leadership Programme and Project Management.

Financial Management Compulsory: Change Management, Knowledge Management, Service Delivery Innovation and Problem Solving and Analysis.

People Management and Empowerment compulsory Client orientation, honesty and integrity” (COGTA: 2008).

3.6 COGTA: National Capacity Building Framework for Local Government: 2008 to 2011

The National Capacity Building Framework (NCBF) is about setting of overarching goals for contestant capacity building and developing frameworks for support to municipalities to address local priorities and creating an enabling environment for support. At that point, it

identified that staff needed upgrading in skills in “municipal management, finance, corporate services, technical services, and strategic development planning”. Further areas of skills shortages identified include the areas of “artisans, engineering, financial management, planning, economic development, and environmental health” (South Africa, NCBF, 2008-2011:5-12).

COGTA updated the “National Capacity Building Framework for the period 2012 to 2016”. It puts forward ideas on capacity, which is a “multi-dimensional concept, with three inter-related core elements, that is, individual capacity, institutional capacity, and environmental capacity” (South Africa, NCDF, 2012-2016). In deconstructing the thinking within the practice field of local government, capacity implies compliance with the implementation of the MFMA, MSA, along with the Disaster Management Act (DMA), and Municipal Property Rates Act (MPRA). In recognising the requirements for local government, Peters and van Nieuwenhuyzen (2013) state that the different challenges of municipalities in operating in different contexts will result in various challenges that municipalities may experience in implementing the regulations and laws for this sphere of government, and that the competence also varies with managers to implement them.

Within the human resource environment, a framework was developed to understand what the appointment of a candidate should look like based on the national competency development framework (South Africa, COGTA, CDFLG:2008).

The National Competency Development Framework for Senior Managers outlines a success profile introduced in 2008 for senior managers in municipalities. This profile allocates the following weightings:

Experience (30%): Described as “what I have done,” this refers to practical (work-related experience) in relevant fields.

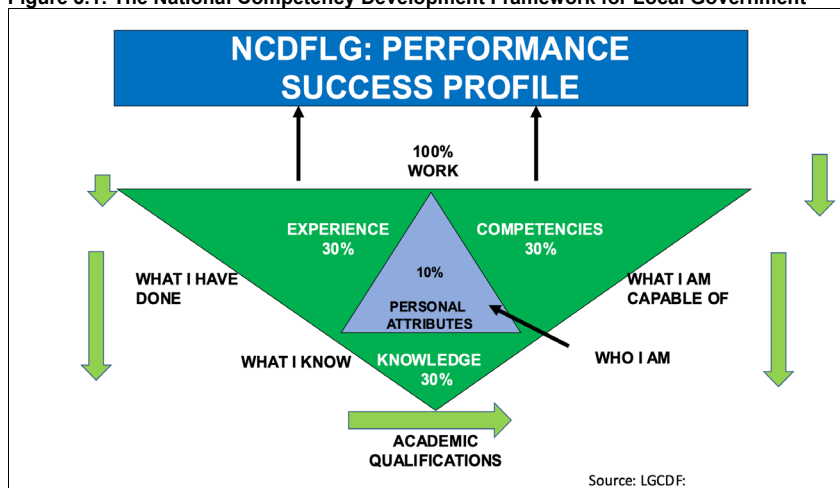
Competencies (30%): Defined as “what I am capable of”, this relates to an individual’s skills and ability to apply their experience (capability) effectively in the workplace.

Knowledge (30%): Referred to as “what I know,” this encompasses both specific knowledge within an occupational field (such as academic qualifications) and general knowledge.

Personal Attributes (10%): Described as "who I am", this includes personality traits and qualities such as leadership and personal disposition that influence how one leads an organisation.

Figure 3.1 outlines the traits to look for in a candidate and sets the assessment for prequalification to a senior manager's position. This forms the first basis of competency assessment criteria for practitioners to undergo at the interview stage for suitability assessment for the position of senior manager.

Figure 3.1: The National Competency Development Framework for Local Government



Source: Competency Development Framework for Local Government (2008)

3.7 The Municipal Finance Management Act, Circular: 60 of 2012

The MFMA. Circular 60 refers to the SAQA framework, 2000, provides for RPL, which recognises "learning" obtained through formal, informal, or experiential learning, which may relate to university, work, or community experience. The Recognition of Prior Learning may happen through an assessment of appropriateness against learning outcomes to obtain credits towards the MMC. The exemption granted is from attending certain contact sessions. However, the earning of equivalent credits will happen through the assessment process

(MFMA, Circular 60. 2012:3). This contradicts the RPL conditions, which require assessment of the candidate on outcomes of the course designed and through evidence of knowledge gained in the workplace in formal and informal ways, is assessed and declare competent to obtain course credit recognition, advanced standing for entry to a programme or access to a learning programme.

The governing framework on RPL states that for any recognition of prior learning only 50% will be accredited towards attaining of a new qualification. It further states that the prior learning recognition may not specifically relate to local government. It equally states that officials in local government with “more than three years work experience lacking formal qualification may prove their knowledge and skill relevant” to the required “Certificate in Municipal Financial Management with a SAQA ID 48965 on NQF level 6 consisting of 166 credits” (MFMA Circular 60. 2012:3 (*refer to SAQA RPL Policy for reference in addition*)). This suggests that despite any occupational specific qualification rated higher than an NQF level six, a training process will still have to be undertaken by a “senior manager in the local government sphere” if RPL is applied, the unit standard final assessment would still need to be written. Equally, an individual without the minimum qualification who might have been appointed without any formal qualification is provided for with the MMC at the cost of those who had qualification.

RPL is necessary for the development of a training system meant to support the transformation of the education systems in South Africa. The transformation in education is viewed as a holistic process in the application of assessment. The RPL system is about “opening access to education and training” to accommodate redress of the past system of injustice in education. Knowledge construction is a dynamic process that can occur through one’s life where learning takes place. “RPL is defined by The National Standards Bodies Regulation, (1998) issued by SAQA: Act 58, of 1995 as follows: “The comparison of previous learning and experience of a learner obtained against learning outcomes required for a specific qualification accepted for the purpose of the qualification which meets the requirements”. This concedes that learning takes place in all situations whether “formal, informal, or non-formal”. Recognition of experience can be measured against “specific learning outcomes for a specific qualification”, the system of “credits awarded” towards a qualification. To outline the process, it is simplistically stated as “identifying what the

candidate knows and can do". Seeking to link skills, knowledge and experience to a specific standard assessment against the criteria of a qualification for a candidate. The assessing against those standards will "credit the candidate for skills, knowledge and experience built up through formal, informal, and non-formal learning that occurred in the past" (SAQA:RPL, 2002:7). Cooper and Harris (2013:1) explored the knowledge question in RPL and its feasibility in disciplinary field or knowledge domain. It asserts differentiation of knowledge gained from life, work experience, academic knowledge but also states that the two knowledge systems are not the same. MMC implementation did not distinguish between the two systems. Ralphs (2012: 76) outlines the complexity in the RPL process of assessment and evaluation and that it is an evolving phenomenon.

Van Ruler (2005:162) explains the Knowledge Model for professionalism theory within the context of organised groups of experts who apply knowledge to practice because the individual undertook training in a specialised field associated with a professional body. This criterion is applied in the "appointment conditions of senior managers in local government" and underscores the very importance of this recognition. It would then lead as common cause that RPL, as a practice, be applied should any professional qualification be introduced in an organisation.

Experienced staff who have worked in an organisation for many years have very clearly defined expectations matched with their career and age. Trotter (2006:8) states that with an individual's increasing age they are much more reflective in their careers, making informed decisions about professional development. For this reason, training and development programmes should have practical consideration for knowledge acquisition.

3.8 The Competency framework for professionalisation of Local Government

The MMC (2007) implementation of the framework for professionalisation of Local Government lists the following:

- a) "Section 57 managers must belong to a professional organisation.
- b) Ensure that professional associations monitor the Code of Conduct of their members in local government.
- c) If S57 managers are suspended all municipalities must get concurrence on the proposed suspension from the Member of the Regional Council (MRC) of local government and national minister to suspend without remuneration.

- d) Strengthen the internal capacity of municipalities to reduce reliance on external consultants; and
- e) Qualified and skilled staff appointed to oversee the implementation of byelaws" (S.A.MMC, 2007:10).

3.8.1 Professional bodies

Professional bodies, or 'professional associations', 'professional societies', and 'professional councils', vary in terminology across regions globally. A 'professional body' is defined by the SAQA (2023) as a "body of expert practitioners in an occupational field, including an occupational body". According to the NQF Act 67 of 2008, "statutory and non-statutory bodies of expert practitioners in a particular occupational field" must apply to SAQA for recognition as a professional body (Section 29). When recognition is obtained, a professional body applies to SAQA for professional designations registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) as stated in Section 30 (RSA, 2008). This was an important part of creditability for professional associations according to Chetty, Mokwete and Starin (2023:19). It ensures that the managing, recognition of a person within a prescribed qualification is an important basis to advise and assist individuals in the recognition process by professional bodies. Professional bodies see their roles as a structure to receive complaints about members not conforming to practice, setting practice standards, advancing training for intended practitioner's and advising sectors on prescribed qualifications.

The terms 'professional bodies' and 'professional associations' "indicate some level of regulation either by the government through education and training departments or by a body or an authority mandated" to perform a function for local government, such as, SALGA.

3.8.2 Purpose of a professional association

The "NQF Act 67 of 2008 and the SAQA Policy and Criteria (as amended in 2023) outline the functions of professional bodies, as specified in Section 9 (a–l). These include promoting the objectives of the NQF, enhancing public trust in professions, fostering social responsibility and ethical standards, and encouraging pride and sustainability within professional communities". The policy also supports international best practices, public protection, and data-driven insights. Additionally, it promotes RPL, lifelong learning through "Continuing

Professional Development" (CPD), and the development of a national career advisory system.

A professional board establishes criteria to regulate a high standard of professional training and conduct amongst its members. The field of Industrial Psychology sets the standard of having a master's degree and a one-year Internship, which should be completed within an accredited institution or alternatively at the place of work because of the limited number of accredited institutions. Industrial psychologists also register in terms of professional requirements with the "South African Board for Personnel Practice" (SABPP). The aim of SABPP is to maintain a high standard of professionalism and ethical behaviour for personnel practitioners. The SABPP sets standards for training, competence requirements, and advising on skills acquisition and development. A system of categories applies to registration such as "Master HR Practitioner; Chartered HR Practitioner; HR Practitioner; HR Associate and HR Technician". A qualification, in addition to appropriate experience and proven competence and continuous development, is a requirement at each level (Schreunder, 2009:7). According to SALGA (2010:6), it encourages senior managers to belong to a professional body in line with their occupational category for the purposes of sharing practices, experiences, challenges and building capacity. It further notes that professionalisation should be institutionalised to encourage work ethics and build the developmental state. The MMCF includes the registration with and the belonging of senior managers to professional bodies.

3.8.3 Professional associations for local government

SALGA has the mandate constitutionally in two areas to exercise oversight over municipalities. The protection and enforcement of rights of municipalities and constructively engaging on areas where local government finds difficulty. SALGA, in its 2017-2022 strategy, states that it hopes to reach outcomes of "sustainable inclusive economic growth, spatial transformation, good governance, resilient municipal institutions and financial sustainability and greater fiscal equity". It shares "best practices in the sector" to improve the delivery of services. SALGA works closely with the COGTA (SALGA, 2015:11). The role of SALGA as the statutory organised voice of municipalities and provides capacity building support to its members. It equally supports councillors and traditional authorities in their function and roles (Capacity Development Framework, 2008-2012:81).

3.9 The South African Local Government Association

SALGA is pivotal in governance and administration of municipalities as defined by the Constitution. Its mandate and responsibilities are entrenched in the constitutional framework, which underscores its importance for the municipal sphere. The key functional role of SALGA is outlined in the next section.

3.9.1 Constitutional Role of SALGA

SALGA has a vital purpose in representing, supporting, and strengthening local government as defined by the Constitution of South Africa. Section 163 gives the mandate to SALGA as a key institution and is granted participation in the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) in favour of local government interests as represented in the national legislative processes. The Constitution mandates “national and provincial governments to support municipalities”, with SALGA providing advocacy, capacity building programs, and support to help municipalities manage their own affairs (Section 154). Municipalities are recognised as autonomous spheres of government, and SALGA advocates for their interests, ensuring they have the necessary resources and frameworks to function effectively (Section 151).

SALGA's legislative and operational mandate includes representing local government interests in legislative processes, influencing policy formulation and implementation, providing training and advisory services, and facilitating intergovernmental coordination. SALGA also promotes best practices, conducts research for effective governance, and mediates conflicts between government spheres. Its operational structure includes governance bodies like the National Conference and the National Executive Committee as well as provincial structures to ensure its mandates are executed effectively at the provincial level.

In employment relations, SALGA integrates aspects of Unitary, Pluralist, and Marxist theories, emphasising pluralist principles due to South Africa's labour history. It represents municipalities in trade union negotiations, develops balanced policies, and provides training to enhance municipal capacity in managing employment relations. While SALGA plays a significant role, the Treasury's decisions, such as the MMC Framework training programme, illustrate areas where SALGA's influence may be limited by higher government directives. SALGA was not the training provider, neither could it provide a representative voice in the

periods where the senior managers were resisting attendance at the MMC compulsory training (Department of Local Government: 2016). SALGA recognised the complexity of professional bodies for local government and makes the case for their occupational professional registrations which are statutory requirements promulgated in various Acts (SALGA: Professionalisation Framework 2013:6).

3.10 Occupation-specific appointment in a municipality as a complex organisation

To be employed with in a municipality, one must be occupationally qualified and skilled as part of one's profession. Additionally, one must be conversant with laws and regulations associated with one's profession. Some of the knowledge areas a senior manager must be conversant with, which relate to the functions as "stipulated in Part B of Schedule 4 and Part B of Schedule 5 of the Constitution" would include knowledge on laws and policies in the management of:

- "Beaches and amusement facilities,
- cemeteries, funeral parlours and crematoria,
- traffic and parking,
- Fencing and fences
- Air pollution,
- Municipal health services, among others".

To perform these functions, various occupational specialisms are required for the functioning of a municipality. If one looks at the occupation category of finance, it will require of a Chief Financial Officer the following knowledge role and function in a municipality. "The CFO's statutory responsibilities are explicitly spelt out in Section 81 of the MFMA. In terms of the Act, the CFO is administratively in charge of the budget and treasury office; must advise the AO on exercising powers and duties assigned to the AO in terms of the Act; must assist the AO in the administration of the municipality's bank accounts and in preparation and implementation of the municipality's budget; advise senior managers and senior officials in the exercise of powers and duties assigned to them in terms of Section 78 or delegated to them in terms of Section 79; perform such budgeting, accounting, analysis, financial reporting, cash management, debt management, supply chain management, financial management, review and other duties as may in terms of Section 79 be delegated by the AO" (Nation Treasury, CMA Framework, 2022:30).

Therefore, much specific legislative knowledge and policy will also form part of the competency to perform the jobs. Table 3.2 extracts some of the knowledge areas associated with the occupation. The specific legislation in local government which gives rise to professional bodies are as follows: "The Auditing Profession Act 26 of 2005, The Health Professions Act 56 of 1974, The Engineering Profession Act 46 of 2000, The National Archives and Records Service of South Africa Act 43, 1996, The Planning Professions Act. 36 of 2002, and The Professional Technical Surveyors Act 40 of 1984". It would then stand to reason that many professionals would hold their association memberships as important to belong to and be guided when a new practice is introduced or any new developments. The table will further expand on the multitude of legislation which is applicable to the various occupational categories (SALGA, Professionalisation Framework, 2013:7).

Table 3.2: Occupation knowledge area

Extraction of minimum standard of legislative knowledge for all senior management positions in the Municipalities (note not an exhaustive list)	
"Core Knowledge of for all managers to work in local government".	
"White Paper on Local Government (1998) Local Government: Municipal Demarcation (Act, 27 of 1998) Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act No. 117 of 1998) Local Government: Municipal Structures Amendment Act (No. 1 of 2003) Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000) Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act No. 56 of 2003) Local Government: Municipal Demarcation Act, 1998 (Act No. 27 of 1998) Local Government Laws Amendment Act (No. 51 of 2002)"	
Position specific knowledge in addition to the above	
Director Corporate Service "Skills development Amendment act (No. 31 of 2003) Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act no. 2 of 2000) Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 Labour Relations Amendment Act (No. 12 of 2002) Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997 (BCEA) Basic Conditions of Employment Amendment Act (No. 11 of 2002) Employment Equity Act 1998 Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 Occupational Health and Safety Act Unemployment Insurance Fund Act Pensions Fund Act Transfer of Staff to Municipalities Act Unemployment Insurance Amendment Act (No. 32 of 2003) Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Amendment Act (No. 52 of 2002) Smoking and Other Workplace Legislation Public Holidays Act 35 of 1994, amended by 48 of 1995 Promotion of Equality and Prevention	Director Finance / CFO "Division of Revenue (No 7 of 2003), (No 5 of 2004) and (NO 1 of 2005) Supply Chain Policy and Regulation GRAP, GAMAP Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act (No. 56 of 2003) Local Government: Remuneration of Public Office Bearers Act, 1998 (Act No. 20 of 1998)"
	Director Technical Service "Water Service Act, Road Traffic Act No. 29 of 1998 Sanitation Act, National Water Act 1998 Water Services Amendment Act (No. 30 of 2004) Eskom Conversion Act No. 13 of 2001 Blueprint on the Restructuring of The Electricity Distribution (2001) Access to information Special framework and SDF Spatial data infrastructure act (No. 54 of 2003)"
	Director Community Service "National Road Traffic Amendment Act (No. 20 of 2003) SAP Service Amendment Act Cemeteries By Laws"
	Director Town Planning "Squatter By Laws Land Use Management Act Land Restitution Act Town Urban Planning, Communal Land Rights Act No. 11 of 2004 Land Transport Transition Amendment Act 2001 National Environmental Management Amendment Act (No. 8 of 2004) National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (No. 10 of 2004)

of Unfair Discrimination Act Unemployment Insurance Contributions Act (No. 4 of 2002)"	Adjustments Appropriation Act (No. 27 of 2004) Local Government: Municipal Demarcation Act, 1998 (Act No. 27 of 1998)"
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Source: Compiled by Author 2025: COGTA:2025 list of Legislation:
<https://www.cogta.gov.za/index.php/docs/cogta-acts/>

The “Municipal Performance Regulations of 2006” in S26(8) state that the occupational competency framework requires a senior manager to have “competence in self-management, interpretation of, and implementation within, the legislative and national policy frameworks, knowledge of developmental local government, knowledge of performance management and reporting, knowledge of global and South African specific political, social and economic contexts, competence in policy conceptualisation, analysis and implementation, knowledge of more than one functional municipal field/discipline, skills in mediation, skills in governance, competence as required by other national line sector departments, exceptional and dynamic creativity to improve the functioning of the municipality”. This indicates that there is a vast level of knowledge required to occupy such a position and belonging to a professional association or registration with a professional council becomes paramount for officials at senior management level to continuously stay abreast of the latest development and relevance for implementation to work practices. All the afore-mentioned criteria in the competency framework require provincial oversight “from the Department of Local Government” in a Province and National Government.

3.11 Municipal oversight performance reports by the Department of Local Government

The White Paper (1997) states that “the key role and responsibility of provinces is that of a support role”. This role is stated in section 155(6) of the Constitution, which requires provincial government to provide for the monitoring and support of municipalities in the province, promoting the development of local government capacity to enable municipalities to perform their functions and manage their own affairs”. The development, assessment, and monitoring of the municipal strategy, the IDP is contained in the “Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000. Chapter five sections 24, 25, 26, 31 and 32” allow for provincial support, assessment, monitoring and approval of the municipal strategy by the MEC for Provincial Local Government.

The Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000 vests power in provincial local governments as per Chapter Six, for overseeing the performance of a municipality. The establishment of a performance management system, reviewing for the monitoring of the system, core components, setting indicators and targets for the audit performance measurement and annual performance reports or Section 46 report (MSA, 2000:56-57).

The municipality, according to MSA section 67(1) must, in line with the “Employment Equity Act, develop and adopt appropriate systems and procedures to ensure fair, efficient, effective, and transparent personnel administration in the recruitment, employment and career development practices” (South Africa, MSA, 2000:76).

3.12 Municipal Performance Report of 2014

According to Section 105 of the Municipal Systems Act, every MEC for local government in each province is required to put in place systems to monitor how municipalities carry out their duties and to evaluate the type of support they need to improve their performance. This creates a responsibility for both provincial and national departments involved in capacity building to carefully consider and identify the specific types of support municipalities require.

The issue of performance is sometimes compounded by the lack of capacity to perform. The total of senior management positions in the Western Cape amounts to 158 posts and 149 posts are occupied, while nine posts were vacant at the 30 municipalities across the province, resulting in a “vacancy rate of six percent”. The report indicates that only 19 women occupied senior management positions in local government across the Western Cape. In general, the tendency of under-representation of women at senior level is common in most municipalities. In terms of performance management required relating to strategic leadership, this is an area of underperformance in a legislation-driven environment (South Africa, Department of Local Government: 2014:26). Equally, Statistics South Africa’s latest reports for municipal census of 2021 reported that “only 30% of women were appointed at senior management level” in local government in the Western Cape to occupy these positions (South Africa, Stats, 2024).

The Municipal Performance Report indicated “a decline in the overall status of internal controls due to a lack of accountability within the leadership culture”. It was also stated by the A-G that senior managers were slow to respond to implement recommendations, along with “inadequate controls to ensure that laws and regulations were complied with”. The leadership was expected to “take a key proactive role in the audit recommendations and effectively implement and rigorously monitored and set action plans”. The audit findings feedback submitted a management letter explaining issues found which must be addressed and treated with the necessary importance to not repeat these findings in future audit reports (A-

G, 2016). This essentially provides the management the opportunity to reflect and improve performance on areas identified as weaknesses.

The report gives the Premier, in conjunction with the coordinating provincial cooperative governance department and provincial treasury, recommitment to “increased oversight and acceleration of provincial initiatives through the municipal governance review outlook processes for the achievement of clean administration across the province”. “The undertaking was in response to the negative audit outcomes, resulting in a specific oversight focus on emerging risks identified as highlighted in the management reports and monitored through municipal action plans”.

The Provincial Department of Local Government is tasked with monitoring and evaluating municipal compliance, including overseeing the appointment of senior managers in line with the competency framework, ensuring that interviews reflect these standards, and verifying the completion of the Municipal Minimum Competency (MMC) training within 18 months for those appointed without it. When municipalities fail to meet compliance requirements, the MEC is responsible for initiating a Section 139 intervention as “provided for in Section 155(7) of the Constitution” (South Africa, 1998). The regulatory role of provincial government, and its interpretation, was examined in the *“Habitat Council v Minister of Local Government and Development Planning”* case (2014). According to De Visser and Steytler (2014), the Constitutional Court clarified that both provincial and national governments are empowered to establish “norms and guidelines” to support and regulate municipal functioning.

3.13 Practical application to establishing training needs in local government

Skills audit establishes the capacity of an individual in the workplace and assesses any developmental needs of an employee. The process looks at formal qualification, experience, and competence relevant and specific occupational job category. The comparison to the requirement of the capacity of an individual views’ qualification, experience, and competence to be functional in the job. To establish learning needs, one assesses the difference between qualification, experience, and competence. Competence is the combination of knowledge, skills and attributes needed for an occupational post (SALGA, 2010:4). A skills audit did not form the basis for the MMC intervention or standard setting for professionalisation in local government.

3.14 The Skills Audit in Local Government - 2008

In 2008, the national cabinet commissioned a nationwide skills audit to assess the capacity within local government to identify critical skills and competency gaps to guide capacity-building interventions. The COGTA conducted this skills audit as the responsible department for local government capacity building. The picture in the Western Cape, audits showed that 172 out of 178 senior management positions were occupied, with only 33 managers participating in the skills audit.

The results revealed in the category of financial management, that 63.7% of managers performed at a basic level, while in the category of people and diversity management 69.7% scored at an intermediate level. In the area of client focus saw 51.5% perform at a basic level, and in the category of strategic leadership and management, 60.6% scored at a basic level. "Risk and change management, analytical thinking and problem solving, communication, and governance performance also showed varying levels of competency". Overall, 24.2% of managers scored at an advanced level, while 45.2% performed at a basic level. Despite the optimistic outlook in the Western Cape, low participation of senior managers in the needs assessment process indicated a need for national standardised interventions in the areas of capacity that were surveyed. These were "financial management, diversity management, client focus, strategic leadership and management, risk, change management, analytical thinking, problem solving, communication and governance performance management".

The skills audit was conducted after the decision to implement mandatory MMC training in 2007. This clearly suggests that the compulsory nature of the MMC was aimed at strengthening financial management, rather than holistic improvement of municipal human resources based on the cabinet decision for a national audit. The result of the audit should have indicated a benchmark for what the training should have focused on for local government even though a low participation rate of senior managers was noted in the assessment process (33). However, the assessment highlighted the need for a more comprehensive approach to skills gap or needs assessment identification in municipalities.

This was reinforced by high turnover rates at the Municipal Management level in May 2010, indicating that candidates who might have been surveyed at the time already left the employ based on the appointment process of councils. In essence, this survey could not necessarily have provided a generalised view on what was the status of management capacity in the Western Cape. A more focused approach would have to be engaged in to reveal what the needs and gaps would be to strengthen the senior management services in local government. A skills audit serves the purpose according to van de Walde (2020:49) as stated by Fletcher (2000:33) as the determination of the skills base of an individual or a group. Amongst the determination in conducting the audit it will reveal, as Srivastava (2005:51) states, the competency standard to appoint the adequate skills in senior managers at various occupational groups and positions for the overall performance and capacity of the organisation.

3.15 Experience of managers in the Western Cape

The Demarcation Board's 2010/2011 financial year report revealed that "the Western Cape had the highest rate of dismissals at 13%". The report also compared work experience across various municipal roles nationwide. It found that "municipalities in the Western Cape employed the most experienced municipal managers, Chief Financial Officers (CFOs), and technical services managers. On average, municipal managers in the Western Cape had 14.62 years of experience", compared to the national average of 10.58 years and just 5.17 years in the Free State. "CFOs in the Western Cape averaged 20 years of relevant experience, significantly higher than the national average of 11.24 years and vastly more than the 4.1 years reported in the Free State". Likewise, technical services managers in the Western Cape averaged 17 years of experience, versus 10.82 years nationally and 6.6 years in the Free State, followed closely by Northwest and Limpopo provinces. The report also highlighted that Gauteng had the most experienced Corporate Services and Integrated Development Planning (IDP) managers (State of Municipal Capacity, 2012: 5–6).

In terms of qualifications, the report noted that municipal managers had the highest academic credentials, often surpassing those of other Section 57 managers. Half of the municipal managers held postgraduate degrees, and nearly one in three had either a master's degree or PhD. Corporate Services managers were also found to possess high levels of academic qualifications. Spatial Development Managers had the highest

qualifications overall, with over 50% of the 468 planners employed in metropolitan municipalities primarily in the City of Cape Town. However, a severe shortage of such professionals was noted in category B municipalities, as was the case with engineers. The Western Cape metropolitan area employed the largest number of planners.

One concerning observation from the report was that “nearly half of technical services managers did not possess undergraduate degrees”, despite overseeing services that constitute the largest share of municipal assets and expenditures. Nevertheless, the report did indicate an overall improvement in the qualifications of senior managers compared to findings from the 2008 capacity assessment. This improvement was evident across all categories, including technical services managers. The data gathered from this report was incorporated into this study to support the conclusion that senior managers appointed in the Western Cape generally had more relevant experience and qualifications, in line with the requirements of the Municipal Minimum Competency Framework (MMCF).

3.16 Complexity of municipal environment and the organisation

The MMC is seen as the golden bullet that will fix issues of managing a complex organisation such as local government from an individual perspective. The nature of a municipality is lined with multiple layers of organisational delivery legislation and service delivery actions and activities. To this end, there have been multiple initiatives to strengthen the capability of the organization. The following section highlights various strategies implemented centrally to “support the role and function of local government” the organisation who expected to deliver development change through strategies outlined in the IDP. The section reviews the “state of local government, Operation Clean Audit, “local government turnaround strategy, and the back-to-basics strategy to support, capacitate and strengthen local government capability”.

3.17 The State of Local Government Report, 2009

The State of Local Government Report of 2009 described the new institution in the phase of building a strong capable organisation to deliver on the principle of the Constitution in Section 153, which speaks of the duties of a municipality in the development trajectory (South Africa, DCOGTA, 2009:27).

Compliance with regulation has been the biggest issue in local government, resulting in a lack of accountability from both the administration and council-(South Africa, DCOGTA, 2009: 42). The report signalled the period when many municipal managers in the Western Cape had been on suspension, highlighting the need for DCOGTA to focus on the “separation of powers in the municipality”. This signified a period of administrative difficulty in implementing the requirements of the developmental agenda and opened the need for provincial and national interventions. Identified in the “State of Local Government Report” were issues in management after the local government transitional period (1998-2005) when the 843 local authorities were merged into 284 and the introduction of new democratic municipal legislation in 2000 (South Africa, DCOGTA, 2009:64). Various interventions were implemented to strengthen municipal capacity as support to the mammoth task of delivering services to communities historically disadvantaged and others.

3.18 Operation Clean Audit 2009

This report further emphasised from the audits of 2006/7 that 154 (54.4%) of the 284 municipalities received negative audit reports (A-GSA, 2006/7:55). The A-G report identified that municipalities lacked controls, were mismanaged, and lacked governance principles, which accounted for the state municipalities found themselves in. It prompted the COGTA, on 12 August 2009, launched Operation Clean Audit that allowed the progress of municipalities to support and monitor remaining unclear up to 2014. Audits are instruments by which municipalities are measured to show effective performance management that should result in sustainable ways for service delivery outcomes to communities. This has become the tool to assess municipal performance in relation to the implementation of various legislation.

The year 2000 was a period where the link between municipalities and provinces was not clearly established in terms of the function of each sphere. The planning for sustainable service delivery had to be addressed amidst the challenges and the service delivery backlogs created by the apartheid state. The paving of delivery strategies was set in motion for the future of local government, working in a cooperative manner so that services to all people could be delivered in a sustained way to narrow the divide of past inequalities. The introduction of the “Local Government Turn-around Strategy (LGTAS)” was to realise this ideal.

3.19 Local Government Turn-Around Strategy, 2009-2014

In terms of the LGTAS, the ideal municipality will strive to contribute towards the developmental state by fulfilling the following functions (LGTAS, 2009-2014):

- "Providing democratic responsive government for local communities,
- ensuring sustainable services to communities,
- promoting social economic development,
- promoting a safe and healthy environment,
- community involvement,
- facilitating a culture of public service accountability, assigning clear responsibilities for the management, and
- coordination of administrative units and mechanisms".

The LGTAS highlighted capacity and skills shortages as a key underlying cause of challenges faced by municipalities. A lack of sufficient human capital hindered the establishment of a professional administration and strained relationships between labour, management, and Council. To address this, municipalities were encouraged to develop and implement their own customised turnaround strategies aimed at building professional administrative capacity aligned with the political vision outlined in the electoral mandate.

3.20 Back to Basics 2014

This was a diagnostic done on local government, which revealed that one-third of municipalities still found issues relating to competency and skills to deliver services. This was the general picture relating to South African municipalities, but it is not the case for most of the Western Cape's municipalities (South Africa, 2012. COGTA). The strategy states that IDP must form the basis of collaborative skills amongst the three spheres and action plans to avoid a fragmented governance system by promoting intergovernmental liaison for development outcomes (South Africa, 2013, COGTA: Annual Report).

The listed strategies above provide a level of understanding for the complexity of what is involved in managing to obtain a clean audit outcome and, importantly, the delivery of service to communities across the spectrum of society. Human resource selection and skills is an important factor in the institution's ability to delivery these services.

3.21 Appointment of senior managers

Appointments at senior levels commence for a five-year fixed term usually aligned to the election period. There are councils that have opted to appoint senior managers on a permanent basis, but most still opt to appoint on a five-year term basis. This brings about frequent managerial changes, and most appointed officials hardly see a second term in office.

3.21.1 Appointment Overview

Figure 3:1 (Section 3.4: 50), sketches the process of appointment for a senior manager in the LG: Regulations on Appointment Conditions of Employment of Senior Managers. The Annexure B. outlines the qualification requirement, years of working experience and the assessment test requirement. (MSA: Regulation: 2014:8).

The setting of a minimum higher education qualification, with five years of work-related experience and the signing of a performance agreement was part of the new requirements for appointment. The performance regulations and the financial management and SCM competency levels were listed.

According to the Municipal Performance report of 2006/2007 most municipal managers had occupied this position for less than two years. The working experience of these officials was also the same with an average of the less than two years of working experience at senior management level. The MFMA was promulgated in 2003, while the Municipal Systems Act and Municipal Structure Act were published in 2000, setting the scene for organisational structures, posts, and appointments according to the new legislation. This is the assumption used when senior managers were appointed, although a few managers came from the old regime when a system of appointment of Town Clerks was used in the transition period after 1994. These had formed the senior management echelon in local government.

3.22. Appointment Conditions for Senior Managers

“The skills, expertise, qualification, and competencies required for the position of Municipal Manager” can be found in the Regulations on the Appointment of and Conditions of Service for Senior Managers. Municipalities must conduct competency assessment in line with the

competencies as required. The potential candidate undergoes a competency assessment test which is regulated by COGTA. Within these reports it would then assign and rate candidates according to the assessment ratings of competence. This entails the early capture of gaps an individual might have if they are appointed to one of the senior management positions in a municipality. This information is submitted as a compliance report when the appointment is secured and transmitted to provincial and national government (SA, COGTA, 2014, Regulation on Appointment Conditions).

“The Municipal Regulations on Minimum Competency Levels, 2007, issued in terms of Local Government: Municipal Financial Management Act 2003, provides that every accounting officer of a municipality and municipal entity must meet the following minimum competency requirements:

- Financial and supply chain management competencies, as prescribed in the regulations and described in these guidelines.
- Core managerial and occupational competencies, as described in Municipal Performance Regulations issued in terms of the Municipal Systems Act.
- Higher education qualification at NQF Level 6 or a Certificate in Municipal Financial Management.
- Minimum five years’ work experience at a senior management level”.

All the unit standards prescribed must have been completed, failing which the incumbent will be deemed “not to be qualified for appointment to the position of municipal manager”. In effect this weighting of minimum competency focuses on the functional demand of a position located in a set occupational field of professionalism or qualification. Three of the categories already encompass a candidate with experience, qualification, and a level of competence. The Financial and supply chain management competence, as regulated, can be acquired through a specific training programme once in the job or, if the candidate had entered such a training programme, during the tenure of working in a municipality at the senior level.

3.23 National Treasury Compliance Conditioning and Monitoring System for MMC of 2007

The MMC regulation of 2007 was introduced for senior managers giving an opportunity until 2013 to obtain the qualification over a six-year period. The regulation explicitly stated that should they not obtain competence in the MMC the employment contract would result in

termination on grounds of not meeting the competency requirements as a senior manager. The first phase of the implementation was set to lapse on "1 January 2013". The implementation of the compulsory training requirement was communicated through the MFMA Circulars 9, 17, 24, 47 and 60. As a result of poor compliance (75 out of 157) from senior managers who obtained the qualification, various extensions were granted by National Treasury to obtain the qualification beyond the 2013 deadline. The MFMA Circular 60, allowed for the applications for special merit cases and this was valid until July 2014. A further formal extension was granted through an "MFMA Exemption Notice of March 2014, lapsing 30 September 2015" (115 out of 157 now met the requirement). This all signalled that it was not as easy to meet the compliance requirement for various reasons. The municipalities had to institutionalize the compulsory requirement in the human resources processes of recruitment, training and development and retentions. Municipalities started adapting formal employment contracts to include the training requirement of the MMC.

The DPLG was responsible for generating the compliance reports to COGTA and National Treasury on the completion rate of senior managers adhering to the requirement and applying to National Treasury for extensions. The Status report produced by DPLG is captured in Table 3.3. reflecting that by 2017 (130 out of 163) had MMC qualification and 18 had not completed yet.

Table 3.3: Completion progress Report: DPLG (2013; 2016; 2017)

Levels of Compliance with the new regulations introduced in 2007		Provincial statistics		
Deadline 1 – 15 May 2013; Deadline 2 – 15 Sept 2015; Deadline 3 – Sept 2017		2013	2015	2017
Compliant with 2013; 2015,2017 deadlines		75	121	130
Not compliant with 2013,2015,2017 deadline	In process – has special merit case	79	19	18
Vacant position		3	18	15
Compliant 2017	Report to standing committee			
Missing			3	
Total Posts		157	161	163

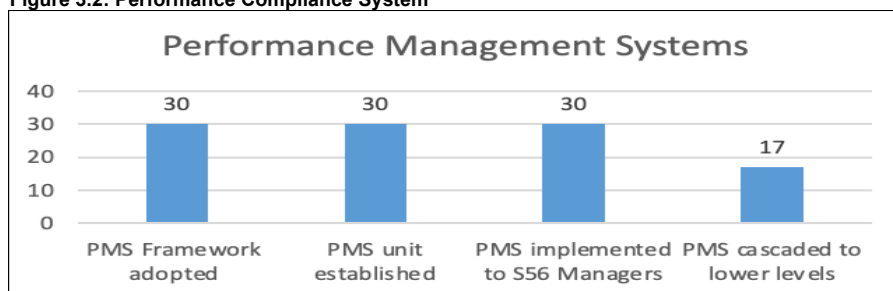
3.24 Noncompliance in reporting on human resource training compliance

Annexure B, an Excel spreadsheet issued by Treasury reported in March 2016 that municipalities were not providing updates through MFMA Circular 60, This clearly indicated that municipalities were not coping with the level of compliance with the compulsory MMC requirements. On the status of MMC in 2015, COGTA reported nationally that there were 225

municipal managers and 128 or 46.38% were deemed competent. For the CFOs category, there were 227 with 140 (or 50.72%) deemed competent and for other senior managers out of 787, only 200 or 20.6% were deemed competent. The report stated that out of 28 municipal managers, 20 were competent, which constituted 66.67%; with CFOs, there were 30 with 18 or 60% competent and 110 senior managers with 19, or 17.27%, competent (SA, DCOG: 2015).

The response of National Treasury was to issue a further MFMA circular to provide guidance on enforcement requirements of a conformist nature. Figure 3.2 illustrates the level of compliance by the 30 Western Cape Municipalities with the submission of “adoption of a performance management framework, establishing a performance management unit”, implementing PMS to S56 Managers, and cascading to lower levels processes.

Figure 3.2: Performance Compliance System



Source: Municipal Annual Report 2013/14

Clarify on the “perceived contradiction” between the DCOG regulations on appointment and conditions for senior managers issued on 17 January 2014. Comparing the two regulations, they are supposed to be complementary. DCOG regulations take the minimum competency levels to the next level and introduce performance levels and rewards by implication. Regulations 2(2) (b) Annexure A and B of the DCOG regulations elaborate further in that regard. Annexure A emphasises the importance of tertiary qualification, while Annexure B describes tertiary qualifications and occupational specific qualifications as the key requirements for a senior manager to work in local government (MSA, Appointment Regulation, 2013: 97-121).

3.25 Performance of everyone in line with the performance contract

The formal compliance requirement for a municipality to be functional is the adoption of the IDP, budget, annual financial statement, and annual reports. SDBIP is a detailed plan to align with specific performance targets and indicators for each senior manager through which performance is measured. The individual signs a performance agreement with a council, as is the case with a municipal manager; other senior managers sign an agreement with the municipal manager. A national performance framework is used to assess performance. The evaluation is conducted with the national competency framework, and an individual development plan allows the individual to state what development areas they think they need at the start of the contract. These are national standard agreements for all personnel working at senior levels across the country (MMC, 2013:34).

3.26 Performance measures of public sector organisations

The Auditor-General is the only body that measures actual performance of public sector organisations, including municipalities. It expresses its opinion based on audit findings as unqualified, qualified, disclaimer, adverse and 'other matters with findings'. It is a very important consideration when reports are published annually indicating municipal adherence to compliance requirements deadlines, performance targets and financial spending. The external audit communicates to the public on the findings on the stability of a municipality and its management capabilities. It indicates how the taxpayers' money is spent to deliver the services a municipality is required to provide, in accordance with Chapter Seven of the Constitution. The Auditor-General uses a rating scale for the measurement of the performance of a municipality and ranking it from One, meaning excellent, to Five, meaning non-compliant with legislation. This is a Constitutional mandate to report to the community on the spending of government and municipalities, as stated in Section (188-189). Table 3.4 details the specific audit categories which effectively measure public funds usage, governance and service delivered, infrastructure and community engagement in the affairs of the municipality. The various colours represent the level of risk or performance a municipality achieves in delivering these services.

Table 3.4: Classification of audit reports on municipalities

"Audit of the annual performance reports or non-compliance with legislation of municipalities".						
Ranking 1 Excellent Management Good' Improved	Ranking 1:1 Good Management In Progress or unchanged	Ranking 2 Satisfactory Management	Ranking 3 Poor Management Intervention Required Regressed	Ranking 4 Very poor unreliable management Intervention Required	Ranking 4.1 Additional concerns Compliance Performance Financial issue need addressing	Ranking 5 Extremely Poor Compliance Performance Financial issue need addressing
Unqualified with no findings Clean Audit	Unqualified with findings	Qualified with findings	Disclaimer with findings	Adverse with findings	Other matters with findings	No report
"The audit opinion passing the critical tests fair presentation of financial statements. The report may have uncertainties or other matters that the auditor considers as significant or important to mention. Findings are justified on the usefulness or reliability of the annual performance reports or non-compliance with legislation".		"The financial statements contain material misstatements in specific amounts ad not enough evidence not satisfactory except for certain information or parts where the auditor cannot assert conformance".	"The audited entity could not supply information or evidence to support the information, transaction, and balances in the financial statements. This is not the desired state for any municipality".	"The financial statements are unreliable as the information and records of the financial statements do not match what the auditors has. This is an undesired state for any municipality".	"The audit opinion is unqualified financially, but auditors had concerns leadership needs to focus on. A management letter is issued".	"Audit not finalised at legislated date".

Source: Auditor-General (2012) Measurement standard

3.27 Audit cycles

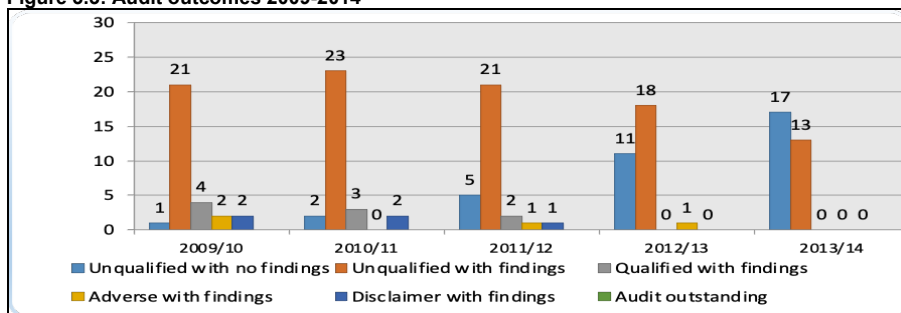
The Municipal Systems Act and Regulation 32 of 2000 relate to the "functions and powers, community participation, integrated development planning, performance management, local administration and human resources, municipal services, municipal entities, credit control, provincial and national monitoring and standard setting, and legal matters". It is these issues, which form the basis of accountability by which the Auditor-General measures performance of municipality on finance and compliance. The audit data of municipalities, for the benefit of this study, started from the 2005/2006 financial year, considered the base year for monitoring municipalities under the new suites of municipal legislation introduced since 2003, the data considered in the year 2017/18. The representation of municipal information presented as

Metro and regional data; regions will include the number of municipalities within those geographical regions of the Western Cape.

3.28 General overview of audit outcomes for the Western Cape municipalities

The picture of Western Cape municipalities provides a variable picture of audit outcomes measured from 2009 to 2013 with a few municipalities rating in the top performing category of 'unqualified audit with no findings' or clean audit. Most municipalities for this period found their performance position as 'unqualified with findings', which is the second best and almost a clean audit. The rest of the municipalities were in the more negative categories of not achieving the performance required in terms of legislative compliance. Figure 3.3 depicts audit outcomes for Western Cape municipalities from 2009/2010 to 2013/2014 financial year.

Figure 3.3: Audit outcomes 2009-2014



Source: General Audit Report by the A-G on local government audit outcomes of the Western Cape, 2013/14

3.29 Audit Performance of Municipalities

The municipal audit performance during the first years of MFMA requirements and the A-G's performance measurement for the purposes of public accountability are depicted. The legislative mandate in Section 53(1)(c)(ii) defines the "Service Delivery Budget Implementation plan" (SDBIP) details of the service to be delivered. The annual budget must indicate monthly projections of revenue to be collected, by source. The revenue generated from the "operational and capital expenditure by vote", the "service delivery targets and performance indicators for each quarter and other legislative prescribed matters." This would also include the performance and financial objectives of municipal entities like the "Cape Town International Convention Centre" (CTICC) in Section 93B(b) of the Municipal Systems Act (MSA) and Section 87(5)(d) of the MFMA". Communities will also observe tangible

service delivery in their wards through area-specific allocations managed by sub-councils and suburbs. These criteria are fundamental to municipal financial audits, encompassing both “financial and non-financial information, which is integral to the audit process conducted by the Auditor-General and is included in Section 47 reports by the Department of Provincial and Local Government”.

3.30 The foundation phase into new MFMA (2003)

The MFMA was promulgated in 2003. This implied that all systems and processes had to implement the requirement of the new financial reform legislation. However, historically most municipalities really began to settle in by the 2005/2006 financial year and the first report of the Auditor General emerged taking into consideration the new audit requirement in the new democracy. The rating scale implemented resulted mainly in negative performance by municipalities which is reflected in the Audit reports in tables and numbered as Annual Financials (AF) 1, 2, 3 and 4. These reports assessed how often “the A-G issued audit opinions based on the functionality of the organisational performance management system”. They evaluated compliance with performance information standards, the “effectiveness of internal audit functions (self-management), the role of the audit and performance committee in reviewing the annual report, and the functioning of the municipal public accounts committee (also a form of self-management)”. The goal was to ensure that municipalities were adequately prepared for the A-G's audit findings and transparent in communicating to the public how public funds were used.

The measurement of frequency of occurrence reported in the foundation stage indicates that the senior management of municipalities experienced the following negative outcomes for municipal financial audits:

- Qualified opinion – 72.9% or 43, 52.5% or 31, 18.6% or 11, and 1.7% or 1.
- In the category of Adverse with findings the frequency result is 1 or 1.7%.
- Unqualified with emphasis on matter: 15 or 25.4%, 28 or 47.5%, 41 Or 69.5% and 43 or 72.9%.
- In the disclaimer category there were two years when this occurred 6 or 10.2% and 15 or 25.4%,
- No report was submitted in 1 or 1.7% of senior managers not complying with the “legislative requirements”.

This is indicative performance of managers as it indicates internal control weaknesses/internal audit weaknesses, and/or noncompliance with laws and regulation: MFMA & MSA, debtor control and management, financial statement issues, supply chain management (SCM), asset management, provisions, credit control, staff matters/ HR, performance management (PMS) and “fruitless and wasteful and Irregular and unauthorised expenditure”.

3.31 The Employment Setting of Municipal officials

Senior Managers within the municipality do not necessarily belong to a union which is important for public sector employees, for the regulation of the employee and employer relationship. In terms of the function and employment relationship, municipal senior managers account “to the municipal managers and in turn account to the municipal council”. This implication means that the public servant accounts and implements the political will of their employer (Sarmavicius, 2006:2). The public servant “must deliver services to communities” which are in line with the “Batho Pele principles” or “putting People First”, appealing the standard of public service delivery as set out by government (Abbot, 2006:188; Osamwonyi and Ugiagbe, 2013:231).

3.32 Local government human resource development refreshed

More recently, “Circular No. 12 of 2022 addresses the implementation of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000, along with the Municipal Staff Regulations and Guidelines (GNR 890), as published in Government Gazette No. 45181, and other related regulations”.

This circular reinforces a more focused approach to the human resource function within local government, positioning it as the primary department responsible for regulating staffing practices. These regulations, outlined in Section 120, cover key areas such as staff establishment, recruitment and selection, capacity building, training, competency, and skills development, among others.

Additionally, the circular emphasises the importance of standardising practices by creating uniform regulations aligned with the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 goals. These

goals include "building a capable developmental state, stabilising the political-administrative interface in municipalities, making local government a career of choice, developing technical and specialist professional skills, enhancing accountability and oversight, and improving interdepartmental coordination". Despite asserting its position in local government human resources, it makes this regulation "in conjunction with" the "Regulation on Minimum Competency levels", 2007, issued in the MFMA of 2003.

3.33 The National position for senior manager completing the MMC

The more recent reports also indicate that the MMC remains unfulfilled in its original intentions. The State of Local Government Report (COGTA, 2021:77) illuminates the following:

- "By 31 January 2020, only 1,565 out of 2,747 municipal officials met the required minimum competency standards.
- Among 248 Chief Financial Officers (CFOs), only 128 (51.6%) achieved compliance, while 53.7% of senior managers fulfilled these standards".

It is important to note the amendments of regulations, as outlined in Government Gazette No: 41996 of 26 October 2018, permit municipalities to appoint officials who have not yet completed the prescribed unit standards. These appointees are given a grace period of "18 months from their appointment date to meet the competency requirements".

While the introduction of minimum competency frameworks for senior management aimed to enhance governance, concerns remain about their effectiveness. This is particularly relevant given that these frameworks are set at NQF level 5, whereas many senior managers already possess qualifications at or above NQF level 6. Ntliziywana (2014:55) suggested that "a special cabinet committee be established" where laws and regulation "of the national, provincial and local government can be reviewed" that have a direct impact on the sphere. Steytler and Stevens made representation to the NCOP (2022:1) making the case in terms of the powers the NCOP to constitute a committee to look at the overlaps in legislation which cause legal uncertainty in the competent administration of Municipalities.

3.34 Summary

This chapter concludes by summarising the regulatory environment and various initiatives implemented to strengthen “the capacity of municipalities in South Africa, since reforms in the democracy in the year 2000”. It acknowledges the ongoing challenges related to compliance, performance, and the need for effective human resource management practices. The chapter lays the groundwork for the subsequent chapter, which outlines the methodology employed in the study, “to evaluate the effectiveness of the MMC training programme” in local government.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter explained that senior managers did not meet the MMC regulatory framework for local government in terms of setting out the competency requirements contained in the regulatory changes as the deadlines to complete this qualification came and went with not all managers completing. This chapter discusses the various approaches used to conduct the study covering the research philosophy, methods used to collect and analyse the data, research population, sampling techniques, and instruments applied to test the reliability and validity of the study. The various statistical instruments and techniques are discussed.

The empirical study explored whether the compulsory competency training through the MMC resulted in effective and efficient performance and service delivery to communities in the local government sphere, through various data collection instruments. A mixed-methods approach was employed.

4.1.1 Primary data collection

The primary data collection instrument was a questionnaire, which was designed to assess the perceptions and experiences of senior managers regarding the MMC training and its impact on their performance and service delivery.

Focus group discussion: Following the completion of the questionnaire, a focus group discussion was conducted. It took place in the same session, allowing participants to elaborate on their responses and engage in a deeper exploration of issues addressed in the questionnaire. The concurrent completion of the questionnaire and the focus group discussion ensured that participants' initial thoughts were captured quantitatively, while their more nuanced views and group dynamics were explored qualitatively.

4.1.2 Secondary data collection

Audit and performance reports: secondary data were collected from various audit and performance reports, which provided an objective basis for evaluating the impact of MMC training on the performance of senior managers in local government. These reports were used to triangulate the findings from the primary data and assess the broader effects of the training on service delivery outcomes.

This explanation clearly outlines the methodology used and emphasises how the questionnaire and focus group discussion were integrated to enrich the data collection process.

4.2 Research paradigm

The specific paradigm and philosophical assumption that informed the study was the transformative paradigm, which has three aspects. Firstly, the ontological stance ("nature of reality") where participants are actively involved in constructing realities. Secondly, the epistemological stance ("how reality is known", "the nature of knowledge"), with participants active involvement in arriving at the result (realities). Thirdly, the axiological stance ("the values associated with areas of research and theorizing", "role of values") considers participants beliefs and values during the construction of realities (Creswell, 2017: 36-37).

A paradigm refers to a group of beliefs where the researcher in a discipline chooses what should be studied, how research should be done and how the results should be interpreted. (Bryman, 1988:40). In Kuhn's view (1970) crisis in a discipline gives way to a new revolution, which gives rise to a new paradigm, which then normalises a new period of scientific enquiry. Burrell and Morgan (1979) state that a paradigm consists of two assumptions, which are objectivist in an organisation comprising real processes and structures that can be viewed from an external viewpoint. These researchers provided a framework for understanding social theories, including organizational analysis, by outlining two fundamental dimensions that shape paradigms: ontological and epistemological assumptions. These dimensions influence how we view and study organizations and their processes. The ontological assumptions relate to the nature of reality. Burrell and Morgan distinguish between two perspectives namely objectivism which assumes that reality exists independently of individuals and organizations are viewed as real, tangible entities with structures and

processes that can be objectively observed and studied; and subjectivism which suggests that reality is socially constructed. Organizations are seen as existing through the shared meanings and interpretations of the individuals within them. The epistemological assumptions relate to the nature of knowledge and how we understand or acquire knowledge about the world. The positivist or external viewpoint focuses on observable phenomena and measurable facts. This aligns with an objectivist perspective, emphasizing the scientific study of organizations from an external viewpoint. The interpretivism or internal viewpoint centres on understanding the subjective experiences and meanings individuals attribute to organizational life. This aligns with a subjectivist perspective, emphasizing the study of organizations from the participants' perspectives. The application to organizational studies Burrell and Morgan argues that paradigms in organizational analysis stem from these assumptions of either an objectivist approach treating organizations as concrete entities with measurable processes, often studied through quantitative methods; or a subjectivist approach which views organizations as dynamic and shaped by human interactions, often explored through qualitative methods. By understanding these two viewpoints, one can appreciate the diverse paradigms used to study organizations, ranging from functionalist (objective) to interpretivist (subjective) approaches.

Bryman et.al. (2018:19) assert that the subjectivist assumption refers to an organisation socially constructed to make sense of the individuals' social experiences and is understood from the viewpoint of individuals directly involved in its activities. For the benefit of this research, the individuals involved in the compulsory training programme are senior managers in the local government environment. The paradigms make assumptions of organisational research as regulatory, describing what happens in an organisation and how to improve them, but not making judgements or radical assumptions about the how the organisation should achieve its objectives. Local government is judged through extreme regulatory lenses and prompting radical interventions, which the MMC deemed compulsory for managers, despite the formal requirement of having occupational specific qualification to hold a senior position. Senior managers are expected to have a formal qualification in an occupational field to be assessed and found suitable to occupy the senior management position.

In considering the two paradigms, namely: objectivist and subjectivist, there are four assumptions in the study of organisations. The functionalist assumption deals with problem-solving orientation leading to rational explanations. The interpretative assumption questions the existence of the organisation to understand the experiences of those who work within it. The radical humanist assumption views the organisation as a social arrangement from which individuals are emancipated by the need for change. Finally, the radical structuralist assumption views the organisation as a structure of power relations, which results in conflict. Senior managers view the mandatory requirement as in conflict with core occupational competency in their positions as senior managers. Management training through the MMC falls within the functional paradigm as it emphasises control, compliance, and functional efficiency. Bryman et al. (2018:20) assert that the paradigm debate draws attention to the relationship between epistemology (knowledge) and ontology (truth and reality) in public management research and supports the ideal of a qualitative study largely because it considers the opinions of senior management in focus group discussions as an ethnomethodology analysing the conversational data collected to establish the themes that may emerge.

4.3 Focus of the study

The study is a qualitative study, exploratory and descriptive in nature to reach findings and conclusions on the Municipal Minimum Competency Framework and its impact and use in the local government sector. Mouton (2002:79). The model of attaching compulsory work-based training to the occupation of a job is a unique feature for senior management positions in local government, especially since the requirements are in addition to the occupational qualification required for a senior position such as an accountant needing a degree in accountancy and an engineer needing an engineering qualification. It is descriptive in nature as it strives to extract a structure from the source material, which is not apparent, hence the data needs to be extracted to see if such a structure must be revealed.

The study is descriptive to describe a situation or event or to explore the specific characteristics of a variable (Mouton, 2002:8). The MMC training has become a practice in local government. One must be certified as competent to occupy a senior management position in local government for a municipality to perform well.

4.4 Qualitative design

Research methodology is the process of research and decision where the researcher selects a problem to explore and to accomplish the research aim. The field of human science mainly uses two methodologies, namely: qualitative and quantitative methodology, as stated in Bryman et. al. (2014:38). Mouton (2001:75) states that research methodology focuses on the research process and the procedures or tools used to implement it. The author further states that three dominant methodological paradigms are prevalent in social research, namely: quantitative, qualitative, and participatory action paradigms. The world of politics, business, social interactions, and living things are the objects of systematic and methodical enquiry referred to as World 1 phenomena (Mouton 2001:7). The search for truth and knowledge will help us cope better with challenges and demands to offer plausible valid descriptions and explanations of the world's epistemic or authentic truthful knowledge. The qualitative research approach attempts to study human action and perspectives on social action (Mouton, 2001:270). Qualitative methodology uses qualitative methods such as theoretical selection, case studies; qualitative data collection uses semi-structured interviews, personal documents, and other methods to construct stories and participation observation. Qualitative methods of analysis may use grounded theory, narrative analysis, discourse analysis and analytical induction. Qualitative research can be distinguished from quantitative research as it occurs in the natural setting such as the municipal environment and the actor perspective, or the insider view is emphasised. The qualitative researcher is the main instrument in the research process (Mouton, 2001:270).

4.5 Quantitative and Qualitative design

Quantitative analysis uses experiments and surveys, whilst qualitative research is appropriate to study behaviour and attitudes. The phenomenologists view human behaviour in relations to the process of interpretation of their world, meaning the person's viewpoint. The MMC brought about attitudes and the anthropological, or emic (insider) perspective allows the researcher to understand the behaviour, practices and decisions of the participants observed (Mouton 2001:271). Local government has its own understanding or emic (insider culture) perspectives of their world. The qualitative researcher believes that there is no "truth" or "reality" and reality is socially constructed.

Within the application of qualitative methods, participants are aware of the intended purpose and interactive nature included in the research process. The quantitative researcher believes truth exists, the research is deductive, with an objective, while respondents are blind to the experimental hypothesis, falls within positivism or modernism and assumes that there is a solid truth to be progressively exposed to World one or meta-science (Ashworth, 2003:153).

The postmodernist philosophy posits that there is no truth, and the researcher is not detached from the research process but actively involved. Post-modernists ask, what are the assumptions? What are the questions? Postmodernism refers to the age following modernism (Bryman, 2018:155). Qualitative research methodology, with an emphasis on relativity and context, are perfect for professional counselling regarding emphasis on the individuality of human experience, culture relativity, and development change or ethnography. (Myers, Witmer &, Sweeney, 2001).

The study made use of multiple methods as a means of avoiding single method biases. The qualitative, quantitative, triangulation allows for the inclusion of documentary evidence such as audit reports, municipal performance reports, interviews, and focus discussion to reach conclusions.

4.6 Focus group discussion

The study used focus group discussions as a qualitative means of exploring the opinions and experience of participants who had undergone and completed training on the prescribed sixteen or twenty-four competency modules. The composition of focus groups consisted of senior executive managers of a municipality. As a means of determining the competencies achieved before attending the training, a structured questionnaire (quantitative) was administered to determine the professional profile, and competencies present before the training interventions. This was intended to bring insights about new competencies acquired after participation in the MMC training.

The focus group discussion (qualitative) explored if participants had been declared competent to work in local government and the impact compulsory training had had and if it had changed the performance of the municipality in terms of service delivery or the approaches/skills of the individuals concerned. Focus groups can be traced back as far as

1920 when Bogardus and Turnstone used them to develop survey instruments. Writers such as Merton and Kendall (1946) developed focus groups further as stated in Wilkenson, Kritzing & Barbour (2003:199).

Focus groups can provide a researcher with valuable information and research data in a relatively efficient manner. The focus group method can be used in almost any environment to answer a variety of questions relating to needs assessment, programme evaluation, and exploratory studies, combined with other qualitative and quantitative methods using assessment measures such as pre- and post-surveys. The focus group, as a qualitative method, allows for participants to express their views and perspectives on an issue as members of a group sharing the same experience (Bryman et al., 2018:232). The method allows the discussion to be unstructured, with the emphasis on participants jointly constructing meaning.

A questionnaire administered at the start of the focus discussion process, which allowed for the gathering of various items of professional information relating to age, qualification, years of experience and number of municipalities worked at, offered relevant information for recognition of prior learning. The questionnaire was developed with closed-ended questions to test the appropriate requirement of having a minimum qualification to occupy a senior management position in local government. This was important for quantitative analysis of the data and, possibly, to establish the stability of senior management positions or issues of career mobility. Important in this is the experience of incumbents in positions at senior management level and their ability to influence municipal performance. The study considered the skills appointed officials had when they were appointed to their jobs, as a basis, compared to requirements of the competency defined in the framework to be regarded as a qualified professional.

An interview(qualitative) schedule was developed for the interview process of senior municipal managers or Section 56 managers who were unable to participate in the focus group discussion due to the demands of their work. Bryman et.al. (2018:225) state that an interview may have an unstructured questionnaire meaning that while there may be a general set of themes or topics to cover, the specific questions and their order are not predetermined. Instead, the interviewer adapts questions based on the flow of the

conversation, allowing for flexibility and deeper exploration of responses. There was no fixed questions or order unstructured interviews allowing interviewers to ask questions spontaneously. It is respondent-led discussion – The interviewer follows up on interesting points raised by the respondent, making the conversation more dynamic. It is exploratory in nature and common in qualitative research, this approach helps uncover deep insights, emotions, and experiences. It emphasizes open-ended questions – Instead of yes/no answers, the questions encourage detailed responses and storytelling. The same prompts are used in the focus group discussion since the main issue of concern is the implementation of the municipal minimum competency training. The interviewee responded to only the relevant points, which was of use for the study. The importance of using this technique in the interview was to allow flexibility for participants to explain their understanding of the issue and the impact it had in the field of local government. Individual interviews allowed for a similar level of depth and flexibility as focus group discussions. This approach enhanced the robustness and comprehensiveness of the study by ensuring that all relevant data was captured, regardless of the method used.

4.6.1 Focus group procedure

To complement the quantitative questionnaire and gain deeper insights into participants' experiences, focus group sessions were conducted with municipal officials. These sessions aimed to explore perspectives on municipal audits, the Municipal Minimum Competency (MMC) programme, and professional development in local government.

4.6.2 Structure of the Focus Group

At the beginning of each session, participants were provided with a brief introduction outlining the purpose of the study and the role of the discussion.

A short quantitative questionnaire was distributed at the start of each focus group to capture demographic information (age, ethnicity, length of service in local government, qualifications, and training background).

The focus group discussions then followed a semi-structured format using a guiding set of open-ended questions aligned to the research objectives these were:

Objective 1 (Qualifications & Experience): Questions on appointment processes, traits, behaviour.

Objective 2 (AG Reports & Performance): Questions referencing audit reports, performance management, municipal performance differences, service delivery.

Objective 3 (Relevance of MMC): General understanding of MMC, professionalisation, HRD value, implementation.

Objective 4 (Content & Training Delivery): Usefulness, value-add, content-specific course areas, delivery relevance, needs analysis, RPL.

Objective 5 (Framework Proposal): Gap interventions and advocacy for change in training

The facilitator encouraged interaction among participants, ensuring that discussions remained on topic while still allowing flexibility for participants to share experiences in their own terms.

4.6.3 Participant Selection and Composition

A purposive sampling strategy was employed to select participants with relevant experience in local government. Each session included 4–7 participants, comprising Accounting Officers (AOs), Chief Financial Officers (CFOs), and Senior Managers. Selection criteria included length of service in local government, current position, exposure to the MMC programme, and professional qualifications. Small group sizes facilitated meaningful engagement and ensured all participants could contribute.

4.7 Research population

A total of two hundred and ninety-four (294) municipalities exists in South Africa in the nine provinces of South Africa. The Western Cape is divided into one Metropolitan Municipality with five districts, consisting of the Central Karoo District with four municipalities, none of which participated in the study; Cape Winelands, consisting of five municipalities of which

two municipalities participated; Overberg District, three out the five municipalities participated, Garden Route District, previously known as Eden District, with eight municipalities and six of the municipalities participated, and the West Coast District with four of the six municipalities participating in the research. The research population comprised thirty (30) municipalities located in the Western Cape, each with a Municipal Manager (South Africa, MSA, 32:2005:67). The next level of position within the organisational structure of a municipality are senior managers or the Section 56 posts as legislated in the Municipal Structures Act and popularly known within the municipal environment. The size of a municipality determines the composition of the executive management team. It may be as few as two persons in a very small municipality, or as large as thirteen (13) executive managers in a metropolitan municipality, most of which have six (6) senior managers. The senior executive posts in the Western Cape municipal sphere may be, at least, two hundred (200) executives in total. One hundred and fifty-four (154) managers occupy these positions. The study sample included fifty-nine (59) managers from fifteen (15) municipalities constituting the population and representing thirty-eight percent of the population.

4.7.1 Sampling Strategy

Non-probability sampling is a form of purposive sampling so a researcher cannot generalise to a population. Purposive sampling applies to case studies and people in case studies who are relevant to the research question (Bryman et.al., 2018:186). The case studied involved local government and municipalities, which form part of the Western Cape government which employs senior managers within the framework of the specification for such appointments.

A purposive sampling strategy was employed to select participants with relevant experience in local government. Participants were municipal officials who occupy key positions, including Accounting Officers (AOs), Chief Financial Officers (CFOs), and Senior Managers. A total of 4–7 participants attended each focus group session. Selection criteria included:

Length of service in local government, position held (permanent or contract); exposure to MMC and related professional development programmes.

In response to the scheduled focus group discussions ten (10) municipalities participated in the focus group discussion as full managerial teams, while five responded as groups of two or one person due to the demands of service delivery making it impossible to participate in

the schedule focus group event. This suggest that 33% or 10 of the total population of 30 municipalities participated as a focus group, while 17% or five participated as individuals interviewed. In a population of 87 senior managers in the participating municipalities 67% or fifty-nine (59) Senior Managers participated or respondents in the study.

Morgan (1997) and Mouton (2002:292) state that the main advantage of focus group discussions is the comparison of participant observation and interaction on the topic. As a technique, focus group interviews rely on the ability to observe interactions on the topic. While this is a clear advantage, individual interviews allow for more interviewer control, the greater the amount of information each informant has time to share. The advisable standard is to have between three to five focus groups to provide new insights into a phenomenon. Ten focus groups contributed to the validity of the sample selected and the opinion of senior managers on the object of the enquiry. Individual interviews could further strengthen or support the data gathering through the open-ended questionnaire to avoid groupthink phenomena.

The mixed methods application examined the delivery requirements to the community as evaluated in the reports such as audit performance, the section forty-seven municipal reports as a basis for this exploratory study. These reports are generated through the office of the Auditor General as a constitutional requirement and the reports generated by the Provincial Department of Local Government as oversight reports on municipal performance and service delivery. This report is completed in compliance with the legislative obligations the MEC for Local Government in Section 47 of the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000. It provided an overview on the performance of municipalities, identifying underperformances and remedial actions and reflects the key Provincial Government interventions rolled out in support of municipalities.

4.7.2 Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire

The validity of the questionnaire was primarily established through **content validation**. Each item was designed and cross-checked against the **Municipal Regulations on Minimum Competency Levels (2007, amended 2018)** to ensure alignment with the statutory requirements applicable to Accounting Officers, Chief Financial Officers, and Senior Managers. This direct mapping to legislation ensured that the instrument accurately reflected

the competencies prescribed by regulation and was legally and conceptually relevant to the research objectives (Bryman, 2016; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019).

In addition, **face validity** was tested by means of a **focus group session** with selected participants from the target population. Face validity refers to the extent to which a research instrument appears, on the surface, to measure what it intends to measure (Heale & Twycross, 2015). During the session, respondents reviewed the clarity, appropriateness, and relevance of the questionnaire items. No changes were proposed, which indicated that the instrument was both understandable and acceptable to practitioners, thereby supporting its credibility and usability in the study context (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

4.7.3 Reliability

Reliability was also assessed through the same focus group process. Since all participants reported that the questions were clear and consistent, the instrument demonstrated preliminary reliability. Although no formal test–retest procedure was conducted, the absence of ambiguity in the items and the shared agreement among respondents provided evidence of stability and consistency (Taherdoost, 2016). This suggests that the target population was realised, and validity and reliability could be established based on the size of the population of the selected sample. It served the purpose of qualitative and quantitative data collection to solicit the views of people affected by the compulsory implementation of the MMC training programme and its relevance for improving performance and audit outcomes relating to the content of the study (Bryman, Bell, Hirscholson, Dos Santos, Du Toit, Masenge, Van Aardt and Wagner, 2014).

4.7.4 Limitations

Two limitations in the validation process are acknowledged. First, no advanced statistical validation methods such as factor analysis or Cronbach's alpha were employed to measure construct validity or internal consistency, as the study's primary focus was on compliance with legislative requirements rather than on scale development. Second, reliability testing was limited to a single focus group session. While this confirmed that the questionnaire was acceptable to practitioners, additional approaches such as a larger pilot survey or test–retest reliability could have provided further confirmation of instrument stability.

Despite these limitations, the validation strategy adopted—anchoring the questionnaire to legislative requirements (content validity) and confirming clarity and relevance through a

focus group (face validity and preliminary reliability)—was considered sufficient for the purposes of this study.

4.8 Data analysis

The focus group discussions, interviews and the questionnaire evaluated the skills managers possessed before the training was imposed and, furthermore, established if it impacted the skills of managers. The questionnaire confirmed the various areas of the study in particular:

- The position of the individual in the organisation confirming level of seniority.
- The age of the individual to determine the level of the individual in the career cycle.
- Years of working experience at senior management level will assist in determining if the experience was gained at local government level.
- Qualification, academically and occupational discipline to determine skill and knowledge of participants.
- Qualification in MMC to determine level of legislative compliance.
- Recognition of prior learning as an important part of skills recognition.
- Demographics of male and female and ethnicity.

The intended outcome of the competency framework is to impact on the ability to manage a municipality as efficiently, effectively, and economically as possible. While the expectation is to deliver efficient, effective, and economic services, officials have a responsibility to respond to the developmental challenges of finding innovative ways to deliver on the national agenda of services to all and the eradication of backlogs relating to housing, water, and sanitation.

Qualitative analysis was used to analyse data and extract information by identifying themes in the data, field notes and recordings. Themes emerged depending on the number of times a set phenomenon was stated and then coded. Certain themes emerged more prominently than others, which resulted in a form of counting in the data analysis phase quantifying informally in giving prominence to an emerging theme in order of priority or importance to the participants (Bryan et.al., 2018:61). This part of the data collection instrument was an open-ended questionnaire frame, which was used in the focus group discussion. This resulted in data collected through qualitative open-ended questions transformed into more quantitative variables and used for statistical analysis, which allowed for the capitalisation of the strengths of each for higher quality data. (Mouton, 2002:368).

The data analysis was multi-faceted as various themes and reports were coded and recorded on Microsoft Excel and afterwards transferred to SPSS for further analysis. Bryman (2018:336) states that coding is about interpreting and re-presenting the data for the research purpose from the original texts taken from documents, interviews, notes, and transcripts. Data was selected, processed, and condensed to process the relevant data for the purpose of analysis and to understand what the data was saying (Miles et al. 2013:12).

To code the primary data, a process of data filtering was first manually done after the transcriptions of the focus group discussion and individual interviews. Transcripts of verbal response were themed into issues frequently spoken about in the focus group discussions, which resulted in the emergence of twelve themes categorised with meaning and evidence. ATLAS.ti was used to analyse the qualitative information to test if the central themes emerged in the frequency of words or descriptions used by participants for effectiveness and the quality of data analysis (Curtis & Curtis, 2011; Scales, 2013).

The primary data collection in the eleven focus group discussions and 4 individuals interviews delivered at least 851 quotations representing at least 25 categories of discussion which were then divided into subcategories and finally to 12 code clusters which will be presented as discussed in this research under the various objectives of the study. The study generated rich qualitative information which was transcribed into data collected, cleaned, and coded to check the inaccuracy, or uncompleted data to improve the quality, through correcting mistakes by discarding input that did not generate sufficient response from the group discussions and did not reach consensus from the groups (dos Dantos, Hirshchsohn, Wagner, 2021:397).

The 11 focus group discussions recorded 59 invited participants. Four municipalities that agreed to form part of the focus group discussion had a crisis and only three municipal managers arrived for the appointment and one senior manager at the location meeting. The researcher opted to continue with the discussion since the participant/ responded was an important stakeholder, the accounting officer and an important research participant/respondent who could share valuable insights on the topics from a leadership perspective. The input was crucial and valuable to the study considering that a mixed method

approach was the research procedure decided on. Thus, there were 59 participants/ respondents, instead of the intended 87. (See Annexure table on filling of vacancies).

The data sourced from the Auditor-General's reports, offers a numerical ranking from 1 to 5 which assess municipalities for financial and legislative compliance or its performance in a given financial year. In this framework, Category 1 was assigned a code of 1, denoting a clean audit or superior performance. Category 1.1 signifies good management with minor issues. Code 2 indicates satisfactory management, while Category 2 Code 3 check this represents poor management requiring interventions. Code 4 represents very poor performance with unreliable management, and Code 4:1 signifies poor performance with additional issues. Finally, Code 5 denotes extremely poor compliance, performance, and financial issues that must be addressed.

Table 4.1: Audit ranking

Ranking 1	Ranking 1:1	Ranking 2	Ranking 3	Ranking 4	Ranking 4.1	Ranking 5
Excellent Management	Good Management	Satisfactory Management	Poor Management	Very poor unreliable management	Additional concerns Compliance	Extremely Poor Compliance
Good'	In Progress		Intervention Required	Intervention Required	Performance	Performance
Improved	or unchanged		Regressed		Financial issue need addressing	Financial issue need addressing

The objective was to compare these ranking codes with the audit outcomes of mandatory training and establish a link between when officials attend and complete training and its impact on improving municipal management. This analysis aimed to determine whether the training intervention in local government has achieved the desired outcomes of enhancing management within municipalities. It is crucial to understand the current situation, given that local government has undergone administrative reforms to implement new financial legislation, namely the MFMA, MSA, and Municipal Structures Act. These reforms outline the processes municipalities must follow to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and service delivery to the community.

Bryman, Bell, Harley and Hirschsohn (2022:414) state that univariant analysis summarises data of one variable at a time and does not deal with causes or relationships. It allows one to use frequency tables belonging to categories for any type of variable (Babbie and Mouton,

2002:422). Bivariant analysis allows a variety of techniques when examining a variable that is related, in terms of variance, to another. Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) is used to analyse the relationship between two interval or ratio variables, while Spearman's rho (ρ) is used to analyse the relationship between ordinal variables and other interval or ratio variables. Contingency tables or two-way frequency tables or crosstabs present categorical data in terms of frequency count or percentages.

Pearson's correlation coefficient measures the strength of a linear relationship between two variables. A correlation coefficient between 0 and 1 indicates no relationship, while a value of 1 or -1 indicates a perfect relationship. A value of 0 means there is no positive or negative increase for every increase in the other variable. Spearman's correlation coefficient, on the other hand, is based on rank order rather than assigned values and is used to establish correlations between ordinal and interval or ratio variables. The value of Spearman's rho will be positive or negative and will vary between 0 and 1.

In testing the relationship between qualifications and MMC qualifications in relation to audit findings, statistical significance was applied. Multivariate analysis uses statistical techniques to explore the structure of simultaneous relationships between three or more variables. The data typically consists of rows collected from different respondents with variables in separate columns.

Pillai's trace, a statistic produced by MANOVA, ranges from 0 to 1. The closer Pillai's trace is to 1, the stronger the evidence that the explanatory variable has a statistically significant effect on the response variable. Pillai's trace was used to test the statistical significance of Tests of statistical significance indicate how confident researchers can be that their findings can be generalised to the population sample from which the sample was drawn. The chi-square test is used to establish how confident one can be that there really is a relationship or association between two nominal variables. The calculation is based on cross-tabulation or contingent tables. Whether the chi-square values are statistically significant or not will depend on the number of categories of the two variables analysed and is governed by the degree of freedom which is the (number of rows -1) with the (number of columns -1). Multivariant analysis explores the structure of simulation relationships among three or more variables.

The techniques of factor analysis use theory and concepts to uncover the underlying structure of a set of variables. Its main use is to reduce many variables into small number of factors (Bell et al., 2022:425). From the statistical techniques employed, variables analysed were obtained from the questionnaire, position, highest qualification, years of experience, years of experience in senior position, number of municipalities worked at, age, gender, professional body, professional registration, when one completed the MMC, RPL, length of contract, and date employed. The variables were measured against audit reports from 2008 to 2019, amounting to at least 15 audit reports as part of the distribution.

The data was cleaned and coded for meaningful input into SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science). All respondents were given numerical values (1-59) to enhance the analysis on SPSS. This was the numerical system used for respondents, while the respondents' municipalities were given numbers (1-15) for input into ATLAS.ti used for coding and analysing transcripts, and field notes generated from the focus group discussions.

The numerical data from SPSS were presented as univariate analyses, allowing for single variable description. As it does not deal with causes and relationships amongst variables, these were expressed as frequency tables. A frequency table reports the count of each of the categories of the variable. Most of the demographic data were captured in frequency tables (Quesada & Masenge, 2021:414). Bivariate analysis is applied to two or more variables at a time to uncover if there is a relationship between/among them. This will be interpreted through the t-test, chi-square, and factor correlation unclear. The factors tested were age, experience, qualification, completion of MMC and audit reports obtained from secondary data sources.

4.9 Ethical Considerations

When conducting research various ethical issues must be considered by the researcher when engaging with participants involving humans and the environments they work in. The integrity of the research must always ensure a high moral stance for the protection of research participants and organisations. The research was reviewed by CPUT reviewers where the research instrument the quantitative questionnaire was circulated among two reviewers offering improvements to the development of the questions posed. The supervisor

issues and supported the research process by drafting a letter from CPUT to be submitted to the municipalities requesting permission to conduct the research. The process of obtaining consent from municipalities had to accompany the ethics submission and hence 15 letters of consent was secured from participating stakeholders. This was submitted along with the proposal along with the questionnaire was further submitted to the CPUT Ethics Committee for reviewing and approval awarding a certificate of approval to conduct the research. The participants were further advised and given the opportunity to provide consent at the focus group session and equality advised if they were uncomfortable to respond to any question, they may omit it. No participants used this to withdraw from the process however some opted to not necessarily express opinion in parts of the discussion. Thus, an honest, fair open and transparent research process was administered ensuring confidentiality of participants.

4.10 Summary

This chapter outlined various methods used to find a common thread in the data to make the data meaningful. Chapter 4 outlines the research design and methodology employed in the study that investigated the impact of the Municipal Minimum Competency Framework (MMC) on the performance of senior managers in local government.

The study aimed to determine whether the compulsory competency training through the MMC resulted in effective and efficient performance and service delivery to communities. The Research Paradigm: The study adopted a transformative paradigm, recognizing that participants actively construct realities, and their beliefs and values shape the research process.

Exploratory studies aimed at gaining new insights into a topic, clarifying concepts, or identifying patterns without necessarily providing conclusive answers. The research design is flexible and open ended, allowing for adaptation based on emerging findings to understanding what, why, and how of a phenomenon rather. Qualitative or Mixed-Methods include interviews, focus groups, literature reviews, and case studies. Quantitative elements may also be included but are usually not the primary focus. The research focus of the study was qualitative, exploratory, and descriptive in nature. It was exploratory because the MMC training was a unique and compulsory requirement for senior management positions in local government. The descriptive nature of the study aimed to extract a structure from the

collected data to reveal patterns and themes related to the impact and use of the MMC framework. The research design was a Mixed-Methods Approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data collection methods to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

The primary data collection instrument was the questionnaire which was designed to assess the perceptions and experiences of senior managers regarding the MMC training and its impact on their performance. Focus group discussions were conducted with senior managers to explore their opinions and experiences in more depth. Participants were encouraged to elaborate on their questionnaire responses and engage in discussions to construct meaning collectively. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with senior managers who were unable to participate in focus group discussions. The interview schedule followed similar prompts to the focus group discussions, ensuring consistency in data collection.

Secondary data was collected from audit and performance reports to provide an objective evaluation of the impact of MMC training on the performance of senior managers. These reports were used to triangulate the findings from primary data and assess the broader effects of training on service delivery outcomes.

The research population and sampling made use of purposive sampling: The study used non-probability purposive sampling to select municipalities and participants/respondents relevant to the research question. The sample size comprised 30 municipalities in the Western Cape. The study included 59 managers from 17 municipalities, representing 38% of the population. The focus group and interview participation were 10 municipalities who participated in focus group discussions as full managerial teams, while 5 participated through individual interviews.

Data Analysis was qualitative analysis and data from focus groups and interviews were analysed by identifying themes, coding the data, and quantifying the prominence of emerging themes. The software was ATLAS.ti and used to analyse qualitative data and test the emergence of central themes. Microsoft Excel was used for initial data coding and recording while SPSS was used for statistical analysis of quantitative data, including univariate and bivariate analyses. The quantitative analysis and statistical techniques were employed to

analyse the relationship between qualifications, MMC certificate, and audit findings. Triangulation of the study used the incorporating documentary evidence such as audit reports and municipal performance reports alongside qualitative data from interviews and focus group discussions to enhance the validity and reliability of the findings.

The chapter emphasizes the use of multiple methods and triangulation to mitigate potential biases and ensure the robustness of the research findings. It also highlights the importance of qualitative data analysis techniques in identifying and interpreting themes related to the impact of MMC training on senior manager performance in local government. The next chapter provides the data presentation and analyses the data against the variables selected and themes and codes decided on.

CHAPTER 5

PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter explained the research methodology that was followed in the research study, namely the mixed approach of quantitative and qualitative research. Qualitative and quantitative data are presented, analysed, and interpreted in this chapter. The data was analysed in accordance with the stated objectives of the study outlined in Chapter One and the results are interpreted accordingly.

This chapter presents and analysis the data collected through the questionnaire, focus group discussions and interviews. Quantitative data was used to assess qualifications, experience and professional development of senior municipal managers as outlined in Objective 1, while the qualitative data from the FGDs and interviews explore the perceived impact and institutional experiences of the MMC training in Objectives 2 and 3. The various units of analysis are analysed to take into consideration the local government sphere, organisation, groups, and individuals. **Part A** of the instrument served to cover the data from the questionnaire completed by respondents, while **Part B** covered qualitative data generated from 11 focus group discussions transcriptions. Four individual interviews were also conducted mainly with municipal managers because at the appointed time for the focus group discussions, senior managers were engaged in crisis management, the target was 15 municipalities.

To reach conclusions, various statistical analyses were adopted for the objectives under the variations of the quantitative analysis instruments, and all content was descriptively analysed arising from the focus group discussion. The variables in the questionnaire were used to determine position in the organisation, highest qualification, occupation/discipline, years of experience as senior manager, middle manager, municipalities worked at, age, professional body registration, gender, employment status/length of contract, RPL, and MMC completed, these will be presented as tables. This forms part of the quantitative data and ties into the requirements for appointment criteria as specified in the MSA for the municipal manager and

Section 57 managers. The data will be presented under the set objectives of the study under the various themes that were decided upon.

5.2 Presentation of quantitative data analysis

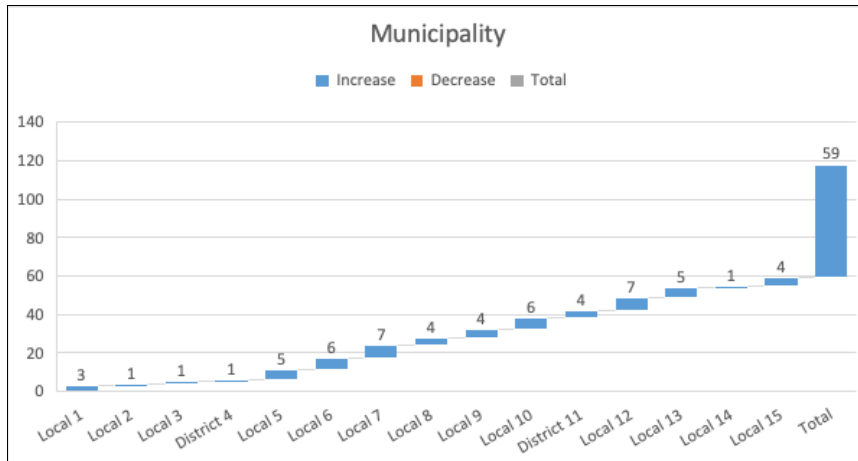
Objective 1: to ascertain the qualification and work-related experience of senior managers appointed to the position

This section details the following data: of respondents of municipalities and their location, post levels of senior managers, qualifications of senior managers, occupational qualifications of senior managers, years of experience at senior level, years of experience at middle management level, number of municipalities worked at, age of respondents, membership of professional body, gender, employment/appointment status, length of contract, RPL and MMC training completed. Secondary data were used as baseline data reported through the Auditor-General reports on the opinions on performance management.

5.2.1 Research population demographic data

Fifteen municipalities or 50% of the 30 municipalities, participated in the study, with a research population comprising 59 senior managers. Municipalities with the highest number of participants were selected for focus group discussions, while those with only a single participant were included in the individual interviews. As shown in Figure 5.1, two municipalities had 7 participants each, constituted 11.9% of participants and contributed the largest group to the focus groups, followed by municipalities with 10.2% (6 participants), 8.5% (5 participants), and 6.8% (4 participants). These numbers align with guidelines on keeping focus groups manageable during the facilitation process (Bryman & Bell, 2018:233). Significant in the participation rate of municipalities is that it constituted 50% or 15 of the 30 municipalities in the Western Cape Province

Figure 5.1: Municipalities that participated in the study



Source: Author's Field data (2024)

5.2.2 Introduction and geographic location of focus groups population

The municipalities listed in Figure 5.1, which participated in the study were further organised into various regional districts within the Western Cape Province. There are five regional districts in the province. District municipalities are essentially responsible for bulk service provision in the geographical boundaries of a given region. They are distinguishable from local municipalities in that they do not have a residential base from which rates and taxes are collected. The section that follows lists the various municipalities as participants in the study, excluding the Central Karoo District.

5.2.2.1 Region One: Cape Winelands (District)

The Cape Winelands regions consist of Breede Valley Municipality, Langeberg Municipality, Cape Winelands District, Stellenbosch Municipality, Witzenberg Municipality and Drakenstein Municipality. Two municipalities in this region participated in the focus group discussion, namely: LM10 and LM11.

5.2.2.2 Region Two - Eden/Garden Route (District)

The region named Garden Route District, Bitou Municipality, George Municipality, Hessequa Municipality, Kannaland Municipality, Knysna Municipality, Oudtshoorn Municipality, Mossel

Bay Municipality are classified as Category B municipalities. The following municipalities formed part of the study: LM 1; LM 2; LM 3; LM4, LM 5 and LM 6.

5.2.2.3 Region Three Overberg (District)

The region namely Overberg District, Cape Agulhas Municipality, Overstrand Municipality, Theewaterskloof Municipality and Swellendam Municipality are classified as category B municipalities. The following municipalities participated in the study in this region: LM 7; LM 8; and LM 9.

5.2.2.4 Region Four West Coast

The West Coast Region consists of six municipalities, one of which is a district municipality with no residential base, and the others are local municipalities or Category B municipalities whose capacity is classified as low or medium with annual budgets lower than R500 million (MSA, 1998:16). The local municipalities in the West Coast are: Swartland, Saldanha Bay, Berg Rivier, Cederberg, and Matzikama. The following municipalities participated in the study: LM 12; LM 13; LM 14; and LM 15.

5.3 Position/titles used in municipalities

There are several post titles commonly used in municipalities for senior managers, largely consistent with the size of municipalities and the combined managerial job functions of each. The name CFO may also be the same job function as the Director Financial Services, Chief Accounting Officer, or Municipal Manager/head the organisation.

Table 5.1 presents the names of posts that were used by those who occupied the various managerial positions in the four regions of the Western Cape Province.

Table 5.1: The positions occupied at senior level

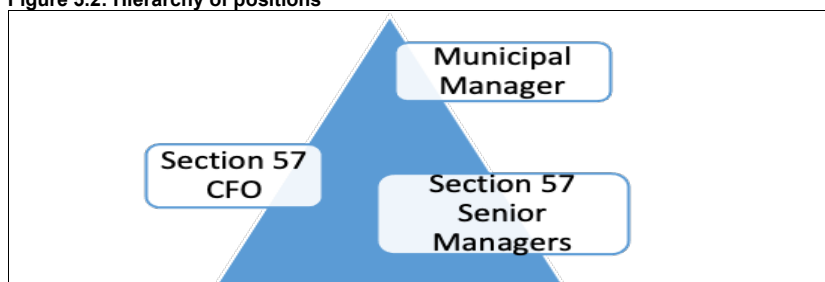
Position name	No of senior managers	Percentage
1 Director Community Service	9	15.3
2 Director Technical/Electro-technical Service	6	10.2
3 CFO	6	10.2
4 Municipal Manager – (Chief Accounting Officer)	10	16.9

5 Director/Manager Corporate Service	7	11.9
6 Director Civil Engineering	4	6.8
7 Director: Development Planning/Infrastructure and Planning	5	8.5
8 Director Protection Services	2	3.4
9 Director Economic Development	2	3.4
10 Director Financial Services	5	8.5
11 Director Management Services	2	3.4
12 Director Strategy & Social Development	1	1.7
Total	59	100.0

Source: Author's Field data 2024

The participants/respondents occupied various executive director designations with the greatest number (10) being Municipal Managers or Chief Accounting Officers 16.9 %, Directors of Community Service 9 or 15.3%, Directors of Corporate Services 7 or 11.9%, CFO and Directors Technical/Electrical Services 6 or 10.2%, respectively, Director Development Planning/ Infrastructure Planning and Director Financial Services 5 or 8.5%, respectively, with Director Civil Engineering 4 or 6.8% and Directors Protection Services, Economic Development, Management Services 2 or 3.4% and the Director Strategy & Social Development 1 or 1.7%. The fair spread of participants allowed for a holistic perspective on the opinion of the training programme. The effective hierarchy of positions is depicted in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2: Hierarchy of positions



Source: Author's Field data 2024

5.4 Introduction appointment conditions of senior managers

The prescription for appointment to senior management positions is specifically regulated and requires a qualification in a specific occupational category, years of experience at senior management and middle management level, while belonging to a professional body. The demographic information collected tested if senior managers met the required appointment conditions as set out in the regulation.

5.4.1 Qualification of senior managers

The distribution of qualifications ranged from national diploma to master's degrees. Table 5.2 indicates that one person (1.7%) appointed as a CFO did not make the qualification requirement for the position as set out in the regulation recording and NQF level 4. The majority of qualified senior managers had bachelor's degrees, that is, 26 or 50% of the research population, some had national diploma's, 13.5%, while others had qualifications over and above the minimum standard set by the Municipal Appointment Regulations, which is a three-year degree or a national diploma (SA, COGTA: 2014:8).

Table 5.2: Highest qualification

Qualification	NQF 7 Minimum bachelor's degree	No of Senior Managers	Percentage
1. Grade 12	NQF4	1	1.7
2. National Diploma	NQF6	7	11.9
3. Advanced Diploma	NQF7	1	1.7
4. Bachelor's Degree	NQF 7	26	44.1
5. Honours	NQF 8	11	18.7
6. Postgraduate Diploma	NQF 9	3	5.1
7. Master's Degree	NQF 10	10	16.9
Total		59	100

Source: Author's Field data (2024)

5.5 Occupational qualifications of senior managers

In terms of professional occupational competency, most fields were represented, which fell in line with the service delivery agenda of local government. The baseline degree in advertisements and as specified in the appointment conditions is a qualification in Public Administration, a bachelor's degree or equivalent. Qualification in public administration engages with facets of public organisational management, including policy development and

understanding, and legislative and governance environments. Most of the technical competencies require national diploma. As listed in Table 5.2, it stands to reason that qualifications in Public Administration dominate the qualification pool of senior managers at 30.5%, this suggests that municipalities tend to prioritize administrative and governance expertise over the technical fields. However, the relatively high proportion of engineering (22%) and accounting (13.5%) indicates recognition of the technical and financial skills necessary for municipal service delivery. The lower representation of law (6.8%) and environmental management (5.1%) highlights potential skill gaps in areas critical for compliance and sustainability. The minimal presence of other fields (1.7%) further reflects a narrow qualification spectrum, which may constrain interdisciplinary problem-solving

Table 5.3: Occupational qualifications of senior managers

Occupation category	No	Percentage
1. Public Administration/Management	18	30.5
2. Engineering	13	22.0
3. Accounting	8	13.6
4. Law	4	6.8
5. Economics	3	5.1
6. Environmental Health	3	5.1
7. MMC	1	1.7
8. Urban Planning	1	1.7
9. Arts	4	6.8
10. Property/ Business Management	1	1.7
11. Education	1	1.7
12. Social Development	1	1.7
13. Political Science	1	1.7
Total	59	100.0

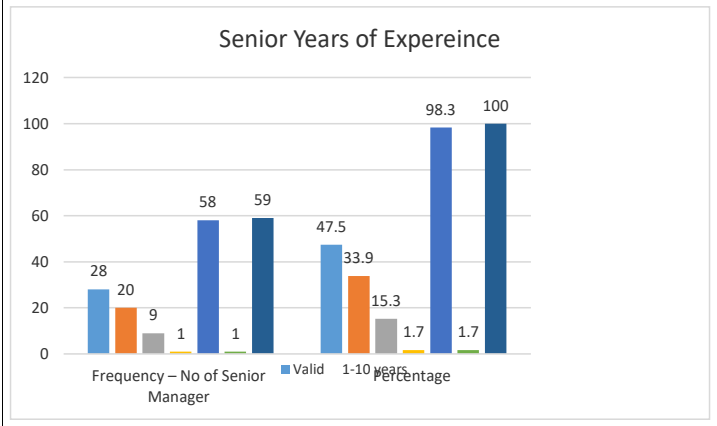
Source: Author's Field data (2024)

5.6 Senior managers' years' experience

The population recorded years of experience at senior management level ranging from 1–10 years (47.5%), 21–30 years (33.9%), and 31–40 years (15.5%), with only 1.7% exceeding 40 years Figure 5.3. This distribution implies that most senior managers had extensive prior municipal experience before the retraining process was introduced. Consequently, the MMC training was not targeting novices but rather experienced practitioners, raising questions

about whether the intervention served to update competencies, reinforce existing knowledge, or address gaps that persisted despite years of service.

Figure 5.3: Senior years' experience!



Source: Author's Field data (2024)

5.7 Years of experience at middle management level

Table 5.4 shows the experience senior managers had before appointment was concentrated in three bands: 22%, 32.2% and 44.1% of manager. This suggests that prior managerial experience was a decisive factor in advancement to senior management positions. The alignment with the formal regulation requiring at least five years of middle management experience indicates that compliance with regulatory standards shaped appointment patterns. However, this also raises the question of whether experience alone was considered sufficient for competency, or whether structured retraining through the MMC was necessary to bridge persistent gaps in performance and service delivery

Table 5.4: Years of experience at middle management level

	Year of experience	Frequency	Percentage
Valid	1. 1-10 years	19	32.2
	2. 11-20 years	26	44.1
	3. 21-30 years	13	22.0
	4. 31-40 years	1	1.7
Total		59	100.0

Source: Author's Field data (2024)

5.8 Number of municipalities worked at

The overwhelming majority of senior managers (94.9%) had worked in 1–5 municipalities, while only 5.1% (3) had experience in more than six municipalities. This pattern suggests that most managers build their careers within a local government institutional context, which may enhance in-depth organisational knowledge but limit broader exposure to diverse governance environments. The restricted mobility highlights the importance of MMC training as a standardised mechanism to ensure consistent competencies across municipalities, regardless of the number of institutions where managers gained their experience

Table 5.5: Number of municipalities worked at

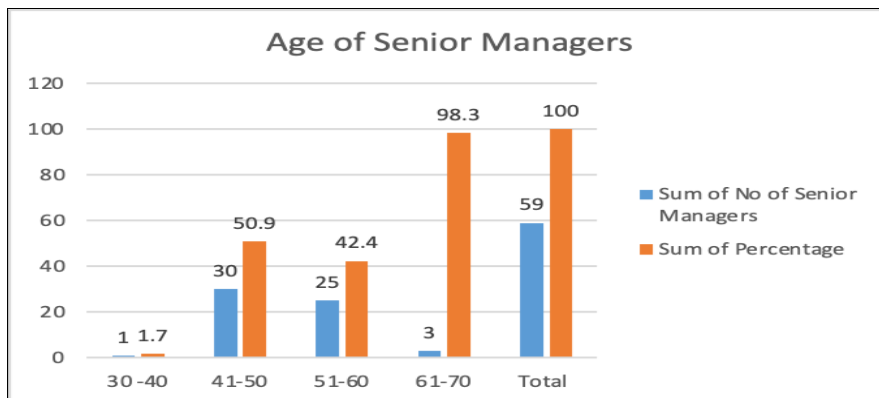
No of Years	No of municipalities worked at	Percentage
1-5	56	94.9
6-10	3	5.1
Total	59	100

Source: Author's Field Data

5.9 Age of senior managers

The dominant age category Figure 5.4, for senior manager appointments was 41–50 years (50% or 29), followed by 51–60 years (43% or 25). Only (1.7% or 1) of appointees were in their 30s, while (5.1% or 3) were between 61–70 years, despite the public sector cut-off age of 65. This age distribution confirms that appointments favoured experienced candidates, reflecting a preference for maturity and institutional knowledge over younger entrants. However, it also raises concerns about succession planning and generational renewal, as the limited representation of managers under 40 suggests a potential leadership pipeline gap. In this context, the MMC requirement becomes particularly important, as it provides a structured mechanism for professionalisation and competency assurance across different age cohorts.

Figure 5.4: Age of senior managers



Source: Author's Field data (2024)

5.10 Professional body

While the Municipal Competency Framework requires senior managers to belong to a professional body, 27 of the 59 surveyed did not hold any membership. The remaining 32 belonged to one or more professional associations, with some registered across two or three disciplinary fields. Most senior managers (6) belonged to The Institute of Local Government Management (ILGM). The rest of the senior managers or, at least, (5) belonged to one or two of the [Engineering Council South Africa (ECASA), South African Industrial Engineer (SAIE), Institute of Municipal Engineering South African (IMESA)]. A further (5) belonged to accounting bodies [Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) and the Institute of Municipal Financial Officers (IMFO), Supply Chain Students Association (SCSA), – Registered Governance Auditor (RGA), Chartered Institute of Governance, Finance, Audit & Risk (CIGFARO), Chartered Institute of Management Accounts (CIMA)], (Health Profession Council of South Africa (HPCSA). The (2) planners belong to South African Planning Institute (SAPI). There are (3) senior managers registered with Municipal Peoples Practitioners (IMPSA), Management Consultants (IMC), while the others belonged to other occupational professional bodies.

The dominance of fields with compulsory registration, such as engineering, accounting, and health, indicates that professionalisation is more advanced in technical and compliance-driven disciplines. Conversely, the absence of professional body membership among nearly

half of the managers suggests that the competency framework has not yet translated into uniform professionalisation across all areas of municipal management. This uneven distribution highlights a structural gap: while technical professions align strongly with Chapter 7 of the Constitution in fulfilling specialised local government functions, general management roles lack equivalent institutional mechanisms to enforce professional standards. Table 5.6.

Table 5.6: Professional body

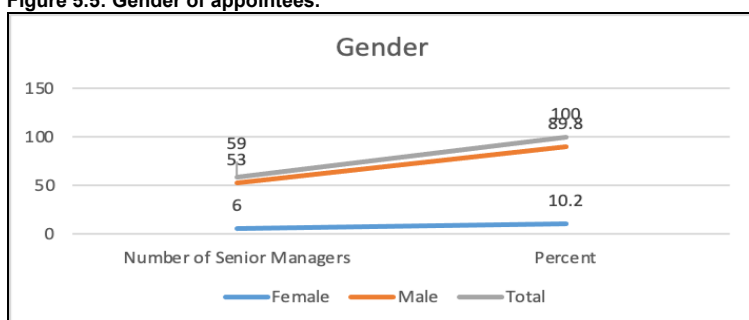
No			Professional Bodies according to Occupational Fields						N.	%
0	Planner	Law	Engineering	Account	Management	Health	Human Resource	Finance		45.7
1			ECSA							
2		Law Society								
3						HPCSA				
4		.						SCSA		
5			SAIE							
6								IMFO		
7					ILGM		IMPISA+	IMFO		
8	SAPI									
9			ECSA IMESA	SAICE						
10					ILGM					
11										
12					ILGM		IMPISA	IMFO		
13					ILGM		IMPISA			
14	SAPI									
15			IMESA; IMC		ILGM					
16				SAICA, RGA						
17				CIGFARO	ILGM					
18				CIGFARO						
19			ECSA IMESA							
20				SAICA, CIMA						
2		1	5	5	6	1	3	4	27	54.3.
TOTAL BELONGING TO PROFESSIONAL BODIES										
Not Reg. Prof. Body									32	45.6
TOTAL Participants N=									59	100.0

Source: Author's Field data (2024)

5.11 Gender

Few women were appointed at senior manager level indicating that the implementation of affirmative action policy as specified in the Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000 enjoys a low priority interest at appointment level. The fact that only 6 women or 10.2% of the 59 senior managers in the study were women, with males accounting for 89.8% suggests that gender equity is not being prioritized in municipal appointments, despite legislative requirements.as presented in Figure 5.5.”

Figure 5.5: Gender of appointees.



Source: Author's Field data (2024)

5.12 Appointment status

“The variation (Table 5.7) in appointment conditions reflects the influence of political cycles on administrative stability. While some senior managers enjoy permanent appointments, others are on five-year contracts that coincide with local government election terms, making their positions vulnerable to shifts in political leadership.”

Table 5.7: Appointment status

		Frequency – no of managers	Percent
Valid	0 Not Permanent	30	50.8
	1 Permanent	23	39.0
	Total	53	89.8
Missing	System	6	10.2
Total		59	100.0

Source: Author's Field data (2024)

Thirty of the 59 senior managers were not appointed on a permanent basis, but on five-year performance contracts. The percentage of permanently appointed managers was 39%, while contract appointments was 50.8%. This status quo accounts for staff turnover every five years with municipal elections when, legislatively, the contract appointments must be terminated to make way for a new cycle of appointments. At 39%, municipalities favoured this type of appointment with only the municipal manager's position being a five-year performance-based contract.

5.13 Appointed officials and MMC training completed.

The appointment of officials per municipality as it relates to the senior appointments and training. Table 5.8 summarises information on the appointed officials and MMC training completion in various municipalities.

Table 5.8: Managers completing the MMC training.

Municipality	Senior Management Positions	Year MMC Training Completed	Remarks
LM 1	6	2013: 3 managers completed; 2016: All completed	
LM 2	6	2016: All current staff completed despite high turnover	
LM 3	7	2012: 5 managers completed; 2 managers yet to complete	
LM 4	6	2010-2012: Most completed; 2015: 3 officials completed	Formerly known as Eden District
LM 5	6	2013: 3 managers completed; 2016: 2 more completed; 2 yet to complete	
LM 6	6	2013: None completed; 2017: All completed	"Training had no real impact on the municipality".
LM 7	7	2012-2013: All completed	"Municipality improved over time".
LM 8	6	2013: None completed; 2014: All completed	
LM 9	5	2012-2018: All completed	2015/16: "All managers had completed MMC. Except the newly appointed

Municipality	Senior Management Positions	Year MMC Training Completed	Remarks
			technical director".
LM 10	6	2008: MM and Director Corporate Services completed; 2009: 2 managers completed; 2013: 2 managers completed	"Municipal manager and director corporate services appointed since 2007-2018".
LM 11	4	2015-2017: All completed	"MM completed through recognition of prior learning; MM occupied position from 2007-2017".
LM 12	7	2012: All completed	
LM 13	5	2016: 2 managers completed; 2018: 4 managers appointed	"2013: No managers completed MMC".
LM 14	5	2012-2017: 4 managers completed	"1 position vacant"
LM 15	5	2012-2017: All completed	"All positions are permanent"

Source: Author's Field data (2024)

Completion of the Municipal Minimum Competency (MMC) training across municipalities was uneven, reflecting differences in institutional stability, leadership commitment, and staff turnover. Municipalities with stable leadership structures (e.g., LM 7, LM 12, LM 15) completed the training earlier and more comprehensively, which coincided with reported improvements in governance capacity. By contrast, municipalities with high turnover or delayed completion (e.g., LM 2, LM 5, LM 6, LM 13) showed inconsistent compliance, with some managers relying on recognition of prior learning (LM 11) or facing negligible impact from the training (LM 6). These variations suggest that the effectiveness of MMC training was mediated less by the formal availability of the programme than by political stability, managerial continuity, and the prioritisation of skills development within municipalities.

5.14 Recognition of Prior Learning

Table 5.9 reveals that an overwhelming majority of respondents indicated that they were not given the option to use RPL as part of the MMC qualification. Only eight were granted the

opportunity to not attend class but had to hand in all assignments and take examinations in courses they were supposedly granted RPL for.

Table 5.9: Option for RPL

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
Valid	0 No	51	86.4	86.4
	1 Yes	8	13.6	13.6
	Total	59	100.0	100.0

Source: Author's Field data (2024)

This suggests that the RPL mechanism within the MMC framework is inconsistently applied and, in practice, does not significantly reduce the workload or barriers for experienced managers, undermining its intended purpose of recognising prior competencies.

Objective 2: To explore the Auditor-General Reports on financial statements and municipal performance

The audit opinion relates to financial management, integrated development programmes and service delivery, municipal performance by auditing financial statements, performance development of the organisation and compliance of senior manager to legislation. There are two very important compliance events in a municipality, namely: drafting of an integrated IDP, which is the strategy of the municipality and approval of a budget. Within the management of the municipality, a senior manager is responsible for maintaining legislative compliance, delivering services, and consulting the community about service delivery and spending the budget as planned.

In the following tables, the qualification status of senior managers and the audit performance of the municipality as it relates to the rating scale of the Auditor-General's opinion on effective management are compared, the rating criteria being a rating of:

1. Clean audit is the top rating any municipality can achieve or unqualified with no findings.

2. Unqualified with findings, the second best meaning the findings are justified on the usefulness or reliability on the annual performance reports or noncompliance with legislation.
3. Unqualified with emphasis on matter and questions leadership. This is a negative state for any municipality obtaining such opinion.
4. Disclaimer no evidence to support the financial statement.
5. Adverse with findings is worse as the information in the financial statement are unreliable.
6. Qualified opinion indicates financial misrepresentation and not enough evidence of spending.

The information in the tables represent the picture of audit findings from 2005/2006 when the A-G started reporting in a consistent new template on municipal audits. The A-G adapted to the MFMA, which guides a municipality on financial legislative compliance and was promulgated in 2003. This required a period of introduction to the municipal environment with various information sessions and MFMA training programmes that supported the use of new legislation. The first municipal elections in the new democracy were held in 2000, which gave rise to the transformation phase where amalgamations of smaller municipalities into a main town Category B and a district or a Category C, essentially more rural in nature, took place. The tables are organised in three phases to depict the reform periods within the municipal life cycle after the first local government election and the transformation introduced legislatively, namely:

- **Introduction Phase 1** - this was the two years after MFMA introduction including the financial years from 2005-2009,
- **Consolidation Phase 2** - 2009-2014 this would be where municipalities gained greater understanding of municipal reforms, and
- **Superior Performance Phase 3** - from 2014-2022, this would symbolise that financial reforms should have been an integral normal operational standard and function.

All municipalities should be well settled, and legislative and performance compliance should be at advanced stage. (LM11) in Table 5.19, is used to demonstrate what the cycle of the

municipality was and the key legislative points and transition for a municipality, after which each municipality's audit position is presented in a table with audit outcomes.

Table 5.10: Audit phases

(L-11) - Municipal legislation Inception of MFMA 2003 requirements for performance: pre-interim phase 1994-1995; Interim 1995 -2000							
Municipal Audit Performance Requirement	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings					
Audit Introduction Phase 1	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008				
LM 11 Actual Performance	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Unqualified with emphasis on matters				
Audit Consolidation Phase 2	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13		
	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings		
Audit Superior Performance Phase 3 1st Deadline date for MMC: year obtained	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020
	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings

Source: Author extracted from AG reports

5.15 Audit performance result of LM1-15 Municipality

The LM 1 Municipality had poor audit results in 2005/6-2007/8 financial years. It managed two clean audits in 2012/13-2013/14. In the rest of the financial years, it ranked at 1.1 level, which was satisfactory, see Table 5.11. This seems to be the main constant in terms of municipal performance.

Table 5.11: LM1

	Phase 1 – Introduction				Phase 2 – Consolidation			
Municipality	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/13
LM1	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Qualified Opinion	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings
	Phase 3 – Superior Performance							
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings

Source: Author extracted from AG reports

5.16 Name of municipality: LM 2

The municipality had poor audit results from 2005/6 to 2007/8, 2009/10 and 2014/15. It improved its position to 1.1 ranking, meaning satisfactory with some issues needing attention in the 2008/9, 2010/11- 2013/14 and 2015/16-2017/18 financial years.

Table 5.12: LM2

	Phase 1 – Introduction				Phase 2- Consolidation			
Municipality	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/13
LM 2	Qualified Opinion	Qualified Opinion	No report submitted	unqualified with findings	Qualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings
	Phase 3 – Superior Performance							
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
	Unqualified with findings	Adverse with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings

Source: Author extracted from AG reports

5.17 Name of municipality: LM 3

The municipality had poor audit results from 2005/6 to 2008/9. It improved its position to 1.1 ranking, meaning satisfactory with some issues and needed attention in the 2009/10-2010/11 and 2017/18 financial years. The municipality maintained a clean audit status from 2011/13 to 2016/17.

Table 5.13: LM3

	Phase 1 – Introduction				Phase 2 – Consolidation			
Municipality	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/13
LM3	Adverse	Qualified Opinion	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Qualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings
	Phase 3 – Superior Performance							
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings

Source: Author extracted from AG reports

5.18 Name of municipality: LM4

The audit findings for the base year of 2005/6-2008/9 was adverse, qualified to disclaimer, indicating that the financial statements were not available for the outcomes of 2009/10-2012/13. The years 2013/14- 2015/16 maintained a ranking of 1, meaning clean audit. In the 2016/17-2017/18, the municipality regressed to credible 1.1 status with issues of concern in managing performance and finance. See Table 5.14.

Table 5.14: LM4

	Phase 1 – Introduction				Phase 2- Consolidation			
Municipality	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/13
LM 4	Qualified Opinion	Qualified Opinion	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Disclaimer with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings
	Phase 3 – Superior Performance							
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings

Source: Author extracted from AG reports

5.19 Name of municipality: LM 5

The municipality affairs, from 2005/6 to 2009/10, were managed poorly. In the 2010/11 and 2017/18 financial years the municipality had a ranking of 1.1, meaning satisfactory, but with some issues. In the years 2011/12-2016/17, the municipality had clean audit status.

Table 5.15: LM5

	Introduction Phase 1 -				Phase 2 – Consolidation			
Municipality	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/13
LM 5	Qualified Opinion	Qualified Opinion	Qualified Opinion	Disclaimer with findings	Adverse with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings
	Phase 3 – Superior Performance							
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings

Source: Author extracted from AG reports

5.20 Name of municipality: LM 6

The audit results of the municipality were that of weak management from the 2005/6 to 2007/8 financial year. The municipality progressively worked to improving its position from 2008/9 to 2012/13. From 2013/14 to 2017/18, the municipality achieved clean audit status.

Table 5.16: LM6

	Introduction Phase 1				Phase 2 – Consolidation			
Municipality	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/13
LM 6	Qualified Opinion	Qualified Opinion	Qualified Opinion	unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings
	Phase 3 – Superior Performance							
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	No report	Unqualified with no findings

Source: Author extracted from AG reports

5.21 Name of municipality: LM 7

The municipality since 2005/6 receive a poor audit. It received emphasis on matters in 2006/7-2007/8 and incrementally improved from 2008/9- 2011/12. It has maintained a clean audit status from 2013/14-2017/2018.

Table 5.17: LM 7

	Phase 1 – Introduction				Phase 2 – Consolidation			
Municipality	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/13
LM 7	Qualified Opinion	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings
	Phase 3 – Superior Performance							
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings

Source: Author extracted from AG reports

5.22 Name of municipality: LM 8

The Municipality has had negative audits from 2005/6 to 2008/9. It progressively moved to obtain a 1.1 ranking of satisfactory with some issues. As from 2013/14 to 2017/18 it maintained clean audit status.

Table 5.18: LM 8

	Phase 1 – Introduction				Phase 2 – Consolidation			
Municipality	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/13
LM 8	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Disclaimer with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings
	Phase 3 – Superior Performance							
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings

Source: Author extracted from AG reports

5.23 Name of municipality: LM 9

In five of the fiscal year, the municipality received poor audits from 2005/6-2011/12. In 2008/9, 2012/13 to 2013/14 fiscal year the municipality progressed to improve its audit position. As from 2014/15 to 2017/18, the municipality received clean audits.

Table 5.19: LM 9

	Phase 1 – Introduction				Phase 2 – Consolidation			
Municipality	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/13
LM 9	Qualified Opinion	Qualified Opinion	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	unqualified with findings	Disclaimer with findings	Disclaimer with findings	Disclaimer with findings	Unqualified with findings
	Phase 3 – Superior Performance							
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings

Source: Author extracted from AG reports

5.24 Name of municipality: LM 10

The first audit outcomes in 2005/6 indicated a qualified status, meaning that its affairs were not in order, followed by two more cycles (2006/7; 2007/8) with further serious management issues. In the years 2008/9; 2009/10; 2010/11; 2017/18, it passed the test for financial, performance and legislative compliance, but there were other areas requiring management attention. For the six years (2011/12; 2012/13; 2013/14; 2014/15; 2015/16; 2016/17), the municipality was in good standing as it met all the managerial requirements as set by the Auditor-General.

Table 5.20: LM 10

C	Phase 1 – Introduction				Phase 2 – Consolidation			
Municipality	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/13
LM 10	Qualified Opinion	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings
	Phase 3 – Superior Performance							
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021

Source: Author extracted from AG reports

5.25 Name of municipality: LM 11

The audit outcomes for the District Municipality have been negative from 2005/6 to 2007/8. However, it improved from 2008/9 to 2012/13 and found itself in the ranking order category of managing the affairs of the municipality, but that there were areas of concern as expressed by the Auditor-General. From 2013/14 to 2017/2018, the municipality strengthened its position to rank in managing its affair to meet the requirements of legislative compliance and presentation of financial statements in specified time. This marked an improvement in audit outcomes and performance from where the municipality started in 2005/6 receiving negative audits within the new legislative regime of regulation and reforms in local government management.

Table 5.21: LM 11

	Phase 1 – Introduction				Phase 2- Consolidation			
Municipality	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/13
LM 11	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	unqualified with emphasis on matters	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings
	Phase 3 – Superior Performance							
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings

Source: Author extracted from AG reports

5.26 Name of municipality: LM 12

The Municipality received negative audits from 2005/6 to 2007/8 but improved its financial position to a ranking of 1.1, which is satisfactory with some issues in the 2008/9, 2009/10 and 2017/8 financial years. The municipality achieved seven clean audits in succession from 2010/11 to 2016/2017.

Table 5.22: LM12

	Phase 1 – Introduction				Phase 2 – Consolidation			
Municipality	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/13

LM 12	Qualified Opinion	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings
	Phase 3 – Superior Performance							
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings

Source: Author extracted from AG reports

5.27 Name of municipality: LM 13

The municipality received five poor audits from 2005/6 to 2009/10. It progressed in 2010/11 to 2012/13 and 2017/18, which were ranked 1.1, meaning satisfactory with some issues. It received four clean audits from 2013/14 to 2016/2017.

Table 5.23: LM 13

	Phase 1 – Introduction				Phase 2 – Consolidation			
Municipality	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/13
LM 13	Qualified Opinion	Qualified Opinion	Disclaimer of Opinion	Disclaimer with findings	Qualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings
	Phase 3 – Superior Performance							
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings

Source: Author extracted from AG reports

5.28 Name of municipality: LM 14

Municipality LM 14 obtained negative audits from 2005/6 to 2007/8 and in 2011/12 but received satisfactory audits from 2008/9 to 2010/11 and from 2012/13 to 2014/15. From 2015/16 to 2017/18, the municipality received clean audits.

Table 5.24: LM14

	Phase 1 – Introduction				Phase 2 – Consolidation			
Municipality	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/13

LM 14	Qualified Opinion	Qualified Opinion	Disclaimer of Opinion	unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Qualified with findings	Unqualified with findings
	Phase 3 – Superior Performance							
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings

Source: Author extracted from AG reports

5.29 Name of municipality: LM 15

The municipality received three negative audits from 2005/6 to 2007/8. However, it improved its financial position to a rank order of 1.1, meaning satisfactory with some issues, from 2008/9 to 2013/14 and 2015/16. It received its first clean audit in 2014/15 and in 2016/17 and 2017/18.

Table 5.25: LM15

	Phase 1 – Introduction				Phase 2 – Consolidation			
Municipality	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/13
LM 15	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Qualified Opinion	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings
	Phase 3 – Superior Performance							
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	No Report	Unqualified with no findings

Source: Author extracted from AG reports

5.30 Data analysis of audit findings

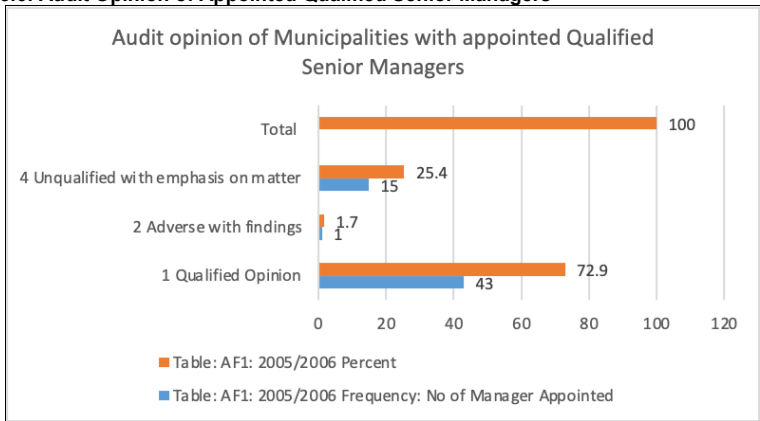
The following data presented represent various phases of the audits, which clearly integrate the MFMA requirements for financial and governance accountability within a municipality. It groups early implementation and levels of maturity in terms of meeting compliance in relation to municipal performance. The **Introduction Phase** relates to the early implementation of the MFMA, promulgated in 2003 and looks at the audit years when a standardised new format was used by the Auditor-General to assess municipalities. In the study, this typically refers to

the period of 2005 to 2009. The next phase called the **Consolidation Phase** starting from 2009 to 2014, while the last phase was called the **Superior Performance Phase** starting from 2014 to 2022 and 2022 being the reporting year for 2021.

5.30.1 Introduction phase

The introduction phase is the period after the promulgation of the MFMA in 2003, a new system of financial management for the local government sector. The typical outcomes in this period were that municipalities’ audits were not very favourable as they received training on the implementation of the MFMA, amalgamation of the various small municipalities into bigger towns and organisational structures decided on by councils. SA, 2020:41) The audits provided some forms of standardisation and were selected from 2005/2006 because this was the financial year of the first published financial information reports that was representative of 90% of municipalities. A typical description that could be assigned to this period is the ‘settling in period in the reform process’, sorting organisational structures, matching and placing human resource capacity, drafting of delegation policies and setting of what the new structures would be to implement all the new regulations from the systems and structures as legislated for local government.

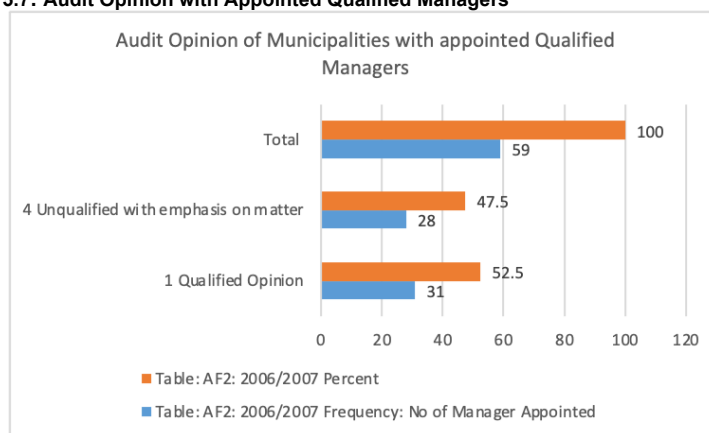
Figure 5.6: Audit Opinion of Appointed Qualified Senior Managers



Source: AF1: 2005/2006

In this introduction phase, figure 5.6, the audit findings were largely negative as the new MFMA reforms were introduced for implementation. Public statements through the management of senior managers depicted ratings from 1 qualified opinion, 72.9% or 43 managers; 2 adverse with findings 1.7% or 1 manager; 4 unqualified 25.4% or 15 senior managers, with emphasis on matters. In essence it was showing pictures of municipalities battling to meet the new compliance standards within the environments of financial reforms for South African local government sphere.

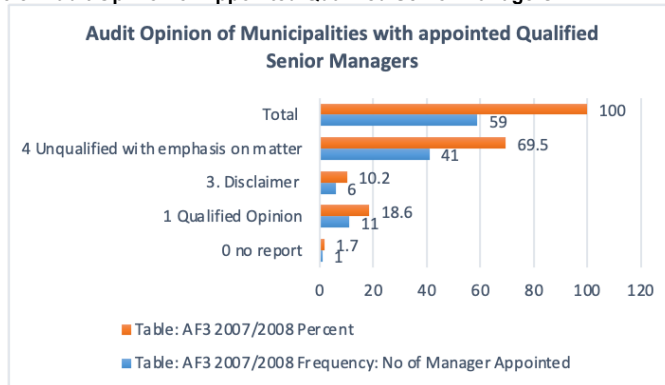
Figure 5.7: Audit Opinion with Appointed Qualified Managers



Source: AF2: 2006/2007

The audits Figure 5.7, seemed to have improved slightly in this period, AF2: 2006/2007 with 52.5% or 32 managers realising financial outcomes of 1 qualified opinion. The audit opinion in the hands of 47.5% or 28 managers was unqualified with the emphasis on matter.

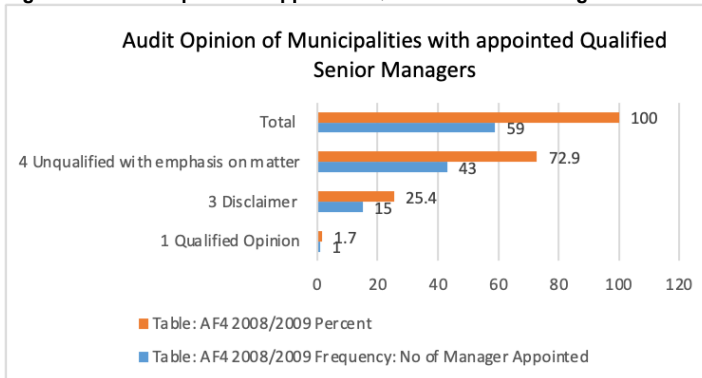
Figure 5.8: Audit Opinion of Appointed Qualified Senior Managers



Source: AF3 2007/2008

In Figure 5.8, the position of the AF3 period 2007/2008 reported negative results of 1 or 1.7% of municipality not handing in any reports for the A-G to report on. A further 11 or 18.6% received a qualified opinion; 3 received disclaimers and 4 unqualified opinions with emphasis on matters. These signified senior managers were really battling to meet the compliance requirement of the financial reforms or MFMA requirements.

Figure 5.9: Audit Opinion & Appointed Qualified Senior Managers



Source: AF4 2008/2009

Figure 5.9 represents the level of performance that was achieved and reported by the A-G's office. The audits of AF4 2008/2009 conducted were to establish instances of these negative results and to determine the frequency of the occurrence during the management cycle of the various senior managers who had qualification for the positions. The reported findings from the A-G's office indicated a rating of 1.1 or 1.7%, 3 disclaimers or 15 senior managers or 25.4%. Unqualified were 4 with emphasis on matter at 43 or 72.9% out of the 59 managers who were responsible for the implementation of the MFMA.

5.30.2 Consolidation Phase

During this phase, many municipalities started improving on the audit outcomes, moving from the 2009 to 2013 as follows. Adverse opinion 5 or 8.85%, Disclaimers for three years from 2009 to 2011, which were 4 or 6.8%. Unqualified audits with findings were 44 or 74.6%, 48 or 81.4%, 35 or 59.3%, 30 or 50.8% and 49 or 83.1% for these five years. Qualified opinion 6 or 10.2% in 2009. The first unqualified audits with no findings or a clean audit were first achieved in 2010 the status was 7 or 11.9%, 19 or 32.2%, 29 or 49.2% and 49 or 83.1%. See Table 5.26 and graph to indicate the steady progression line towards clean audits.

Table 5.26: Audit rating occurrence under senior managers

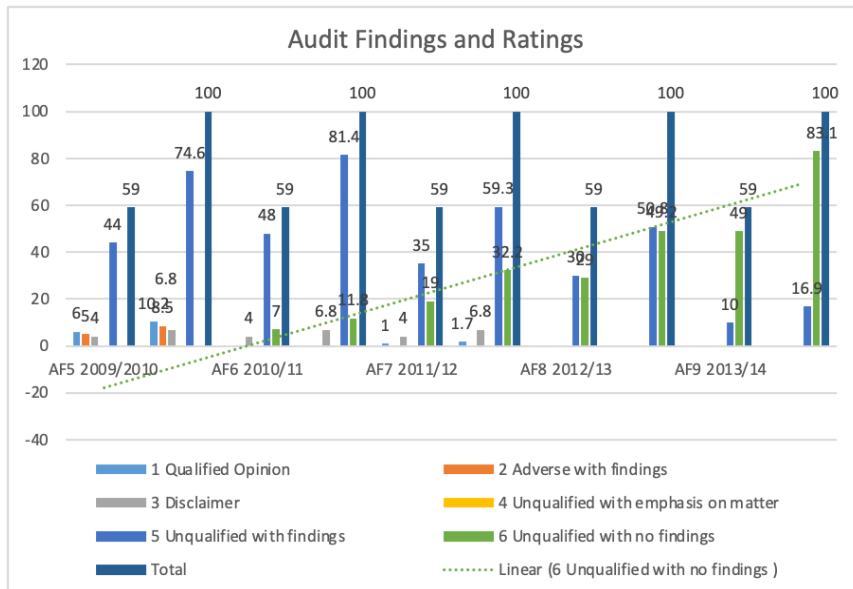
	AF5 2009/2010		AF6 2010/11		AF7 2011/12		AF8 2012/13		AF9 2013/14	
Audit finding by AG	Occur No of Managers	%	Occur No of Managers	%	Occur No of Managers	%	Occur No of Managers	%	Occur No of Managers	%
1 Qualified Opinion	6	10.2			1	1.7				
2 Adverse with findings	5	8.5								
3 Disclaimer	4	6.8	4	6.8	4	6.8				
4 Unqualified with emphasis on matter										
5 Unqualified with findings	44	74.6	48	81.4	35	59.3	30	50.8	10	16.9
6 Unqualified with no findings			7	11.8	19	32.2	29	49.2	49	83.1
Total	59	100	59	100	59	100	59	100	59	100

Source: Author

5.30.3 The plotting of the developmental trajectory towards clean audits

Figure 5.10 indicates an incremental improvement in the implementation of the MFMA rules and regulation. The management of municipalities in the complex environments occurred systematically to indicate that the management was improving as understanding of the MFMA regulation and reforms were understood. The clean audits symbolise that municipalities were working to improve the status quo. Having an audit outcome of unqualified with findings indicates that an auditee could produce a quality financial statement but could not produce a quality performance report or comply with all the key legislations (AG: 2021/22). In the case of 5 municipalities the audit finding was financially qualified opinion with findings meaning financial statements contained material misstatements not corrected before the financial statements were published and had challenges with the quality of the performance report and/or compliance with key legislation. Five had a **disclaimed opinion with findings** meaning the auditee could not provide evidence for most of the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements thus no credibility of the financial statements. **Adverse (2)** and **disclaimed (3)** opinions denote that not sufficient supporting documentation was attached in their performance reports, and they do not comply with key legislation.

Figure 5.10: Progression towards clean audits 2009-2014.



Source: Author

5.30.4 Superior performance

In the superior performance phase and audit findings, municipalities clearly continued to struggle with achieving their goals and targets for securing clean audits, while facing significant audit challenges. The years of superior performance were observed between 2014 and 2020. Audit outcomes can be summarised by focusing on the percentage of municipalities falling into different performance categories, benchmarked against the national total of 257 municipalities, which includes 8 metropolitans, 44 district, and 205 local municipalities. The Western Cape comprises 30 municipalities: 1 metropolitan, 5 districts, and 24 local municipalities. A review of the performance summary indicates that municipalities, despite many senior management staff holding MMC qualifications, still face difficulties in obtaining clean audits across the country, including in the Western Cape. Figure 5.27.

Table 5.27: Summary of overall audit findings in the country (257) as per A-G Report 2020

Year	No of Municipalities with Unqualified audits with No Findings	% of Total	No of Municipalities with Unqualified audits with Findings	% of Total	No of Municipalities with Adverse audits with Findings and Non-Reporting	% of Total
2014	54	91.5%	4	6.8%	1 adverse, 10 non-reporting)	1.7% 16.9%
2015	51	86.4%	8	13.6%	-	-
2016	54	91.5%	5	8.5%	-	-
2017	30	50.8%	29	49.2%	-	-
2018	23	39.0%	32	54.2%	-	-
2019	38	64.4%	11	18.6%	-	-

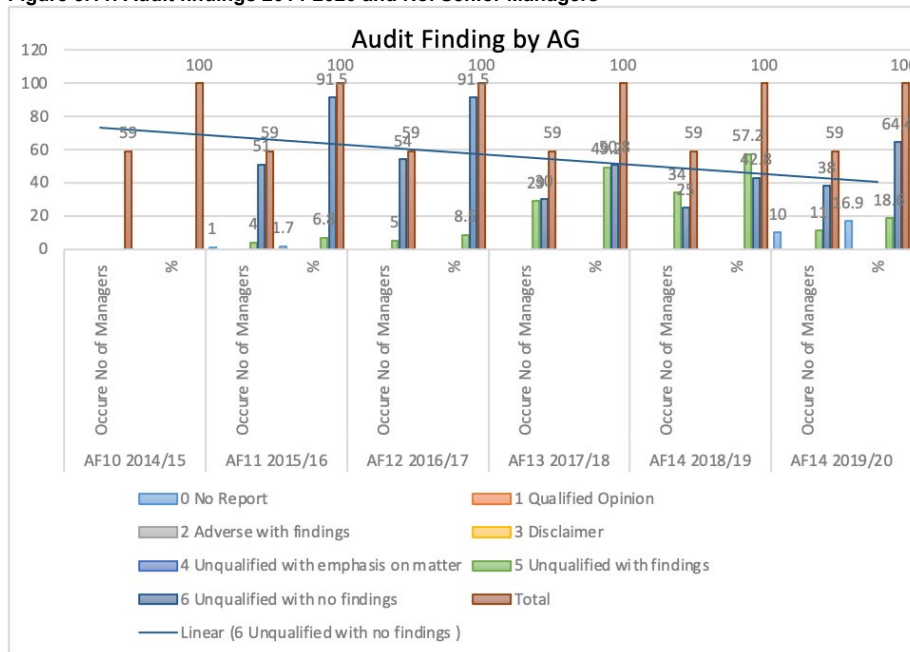
Source: Author

Although the Municipal Minimum Competency (MMC) regulations required compliance by 2013, ensuring that senior managers across 257 municipalities were financially competent, the subsequent audit outcomes suggest that this objective was only partially achieved. As indicated in Figure 5.27, between 2014 and 2016, an average of just over 50 municipalities attained “unqualified with no findings” audit reports from the Auditor-General, reflecting an initial improvement in financial governance and compliance. However, this progress was not sustained. From 2017 to 2019, the number of municipalities achieving clean audits declined significantly, with 30, 23, and 38 municipalities respectively regressing from the earlier gains. While unqualified audits with findings highlighted persistent weaknesses in governance, performance management, service delivery, and legislative compliance, the absence of new adverse findings after 2015 indicates some improvement in avoiding the most severe audit outcomes. The picture of these results suggests that while MMC training contributed to short-term improvements, it did not secure long-term governance stability, pointing to deeper systemic and institutional challenges beyond individual financial competence.

These findings highlight the ongoing challenges faced by municipalities in striving for improved audit outcomes and the importance of addressing audit findings to move towards clean audit results. The audit findings in Figure 5.11 for the years 2014-2020 represent the audit positions of municipalities in the Western Cape regarding performance representing the financial, governance and compliance realities across the period. In 2019/20 only six of the

municipalities obtained clean audits. Five were 'unqualified with findings', four with 'emphasis on matters', three disclaimers, two with adverse findings, and one with a qualified opinion.

Figure 5.11: Audit findings 2014-2020 and No. Senior Managers



Source: A-G 2014-2020 & Author

The 2019/2020 audit results reveal a mixed performance among participating municipalities. While 64.4% achieved clean audits, reflecting improved compliance and governance practices, 16.9% failed to submit any reports, which undermines accountability and transparency. The 18.6% or 11 that received unqualified audits with findings illustrate persistent weaknesses in financial management and legislative compliance. The 38 senior managers at the 15 municipalities, the concentration of clean audits in the Western Cape suggests that greater institutional capacity and a stronger grasp of MFMA implementation can produce superior governance, accountability and service delivery outcomes, highlighting the uneven application of national competency frameworks across regions. The following section explores qualitative insights provided by various senior managers.

5.31 Objective 2: Qualitative data presentation

5.31.1 Discussion of A-G Audit Reports

There were, at least, 651 quotations captured in ATLAS.ti expressing the qualitative views from the focus group discussions noting the feelings opinions and views of participants on the implementation of the MMC programme and its compulsory nature linked to professionalisation. At least, twelve comments were extracted to illustrate the experiences of participants and their opinions on the A-G Audit reports.

Table 5.28: Participants' key words or phrases related to audits

Participant Details	Comment Related to Audits	Common Words/Phrases
LM 15: Participant 55 – MM	"The municipality had good audits reports last year."	Good audit reports
LM 12: Participant 43 – MM	"I understand why the minister is doing. How many municipalities received adverse opinions there had to be an action."	Adverse opinions, action
LM 10: Participant 34 – Corporate Services	"The AG will always find issues; local government is complex to manage."	AG finds issues, complex to manage
LM 9: Participant 29 – CFO	"We must meet compliance requirements in too many different areas in our work such as Finance and Engineering etc."	Compliance requirements
LM 13: Participant 50 - Engineering Services, LM 13: Participants 52 – CFO	"Irregular Expenditure - introduce standard for supply chain certificate or a choice in other areas to understand local government. Supply chain training was needed; it was formal induction through SCM even if a CFO privately tell how LG procurement work."	Irregular expenditure, supply chain training
LM 15: Participant 56 – CFO	"Management reports COGTA every department wants your times we spend so much time. Management report quality improvement plan it is ridiculous. Management report is for management. "You do not get time to do anything; there is no one size fits all training. Too many reports for all sectors, province, COGTA – clean audit report we had to respond to improve quality – that letter is for management. This is insignificant matters."	Clean audit report, improve quality, too many reports
LM 14: Participant 54 – MM	"We cannot relate it to audit compliance there is irregular expenditure. It did not enforce compliance for all financial audit officials. Classified as irregular."	Audit compliance, irregular expenditure
Local 13: Participant 53 - Corporate Services	"It is about meeting the compliance, and your audit report will reflect this all the time."	Audit report, compliance
LM 10: Participant 33 – MM	"It is policy reports the AG reports leaves gaps. Never give proper researched documents. AG reports give no justification you must accept the reports. Management letter has no substance to the audit report. If it details queries, then you must develop an action plan for three years. it is repetitive findings note in financial management."	AG reports leave gaps, no justification, repetitive findings

LM 15: Participants – 57 – Corporate	<p>"Scores in the performance review seen as competent or incompetent it is an incorrect picture of your performance".</p> <p>"But the regulation says it must be done". "No judgement on knowledge or development. We score 70 to 80 % we have years of experience; but there might be cadres deployed that score 40% performance is compliance since it is legislative".</p> <p>"If you cannot do the job, you do not belong here."</p>	Scores, compliance, performance
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Source: Author

Table 5.28 The participants' views on the audit process reveal a predominantly negative perception, clustered around themes of compliance burdens, irregular expenditure, and the complexity of audit requirements and the quality or gaps in audit reports. Concerns about inadequate training, irrelevant or excessive reporting, and perceived bias in performance evaluations suggest a systemic disconnect between audit expectations and municipal capacity. The Auditor-General was often viewed as unfair, reflecting strained accountability relationships between oversight institutions and local government. Only two participants expressed positive views, emphasising good audit outcomes and ministerial interventions, which highlights how limited confidence in the audit process undermines its credibility as a tool for improving governance and performance.

Objective 3: To explore the relevance of the MMC for of local government

The MMC, by design, is structured as unit standards that form a complete certificate qualification in Financial Management. The training is grouped under various categories with various units which forms part of the training in the grouping these are: Strategic Management, Municipal Accounting and Risk Management, Governance and Legislation, Costing and Planning, IT Support and Project Management, Supply chain Management and Public and Private Partnerships.

5.32 The time demand to complete the MMC

Table 5.29 illustrates the time demand requirement to complete this qualification, the course structure of the MMC and the time demand on senior management of the municipality. Specifically, the function areas are strategic leadership and management, strategic financial management, operational financial management, governance, ethics and values in financial management, financial and performance reporting, risk and change management, legislation,

policy and implementation, stakeholder relations, and supply chain management. The training is organised as set out in Table 5.29.

Table 5.29: Description of the time demand to complete the qualification.

Municipal Minimum Competency Level Training – prescription of Section 83, 107 and 119 Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003 and Municipal Regulation on Minimum Competency Levels (RSA, Government Gazette 29967, 2007)

Group	Modules	Unit standard: Credits: 1 credit is 10 notional hours 15x10 = 150 hours/ 24hrs = 18 days	Contact Time - Days	Assignment time	Exam Time
	Strategic Planning & Multi Year Income and expenditure Management	2 x 15	2x4 = 8	8x2=16	4
	Budgeting Principles & Cycles	1x 15, 1x8	1x4, 1x2 = 6	8x2=16	2, 2
	Finance Reporting & Performance Management	2x12	2x3 =6	8x2=16	4
Municipal Accounting & Risk Management	Cash, Investment, Asset & liability Management	1x11, 1x10	1x3, 1x2=5	8x2=16	2, 2
	Risk Management: Internal control Framework Design & Audit Planning & implementation	1x10, 2x8, 2x12, 1x15	1x2, 2x2, 2x3 1x4 =16	8x6=16	2, 4, 4, 2
Governance & Legislation	Stakeholder Consultation and Ethics in Municipal Finance	1x8, 1x10	1x2, 1x2 =4	8x2=16	2, 2
	Intergovernmental Fiscal Relations, Legislation & Policy affecting Municipal Financial Management	1x12, 1x11, 2x15	1x3, 1x3 1x4 =10	8x3=24	2, 2 2
Costing and Capital Planning	Capital Planning & financing & Costing Principles	1x12, 1x11, 2x15	1x3, 1x3 2x4=14	8x4=32	2, 2, 4
IT Support & Project Management	Managing Information Technology Resources in Municipal finance	1x8, 1x12, 1x15, 1x10	1x2, 1x3, 1x4 1x2=11	8x4=32	2, 2, 2, 2
Supply Chain Management & Public and Private Partnerships	Municipal Supply Chain Management	1x12	1x3=3	8x1=8	2
	Public Private Partnerships	1x12	1x3=3	8x1=8	2
Total Capacity development Time	18 months = 173 days /249 working days year = 173/371	5-year contract = 1245 days in training: 173 days	86 days	29 days	58 days

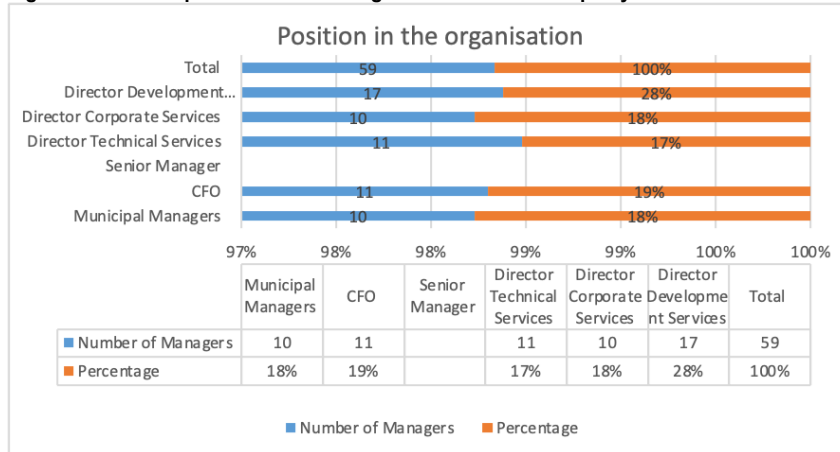
Source: Author

It should be noted that the compulsory timeline set for completion of the MMC implies at least 173 of the 249 working days per annum will be classroom days. This means at least 173 days being spent to meet the MMC certification programme requirements in the five-year contract appointment cycle of 1245 days. In the classroom, 86 days will be spent as the classroom contact time, a further 29 days is set out for assignments and 58 days to prepare and write examinations. This equates to nearly 14% of the five-year appointment cycle, raising concerns about the trade-off between time spent in capacity-building and time available for executing managerial duties. While such investment in classroom, assignment, and examination activities indicates the seriousness of the competency framework, it also highlights potential tensions between professional development requirements and the operational efficiency of municipalities.

5.33 MMC training completed as per regulatory requirements and deadlines set

The regulation promulgated by National Treasury was introduced in 2007 allowing senior managers to acquire the new prescribed training over a five-year period and reporting completion rates, which would be measured by January 2013.

Figure 5.12: Participants and their designations in the municipality



Source: Author

The MMC distinction between the number of modules through the legislation which mandates that the CFO and the municipal manager to complete 24 modules of the MMC, while senior managers are only required to complete 16 modules to be declared competent managers. This distinction is also reflected in terms of the competency declaration and differentiates between groups of managers and the actual requirement in an uneven number of units to be completed. Participants then receive the same kind of competency declaration if the compliance is met.

5.34 Compliance response across the spectrum of senior managers

Table 5.30: Year MMC completed

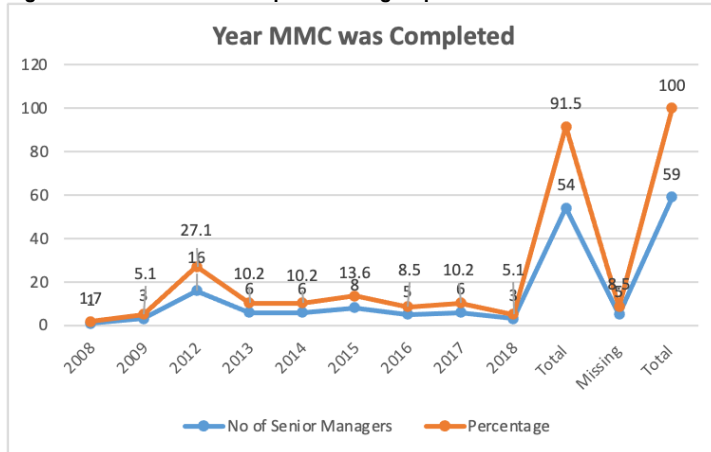
Phase in regulation timelines	Year in which MMC was completed	Frequency – No of senior managers	Percentage
Deadline 1 (2013)	1 2009 – 2013	25	42.4
Deadline 2 (2015)	2 2014 – 2015	15	25.4
Deadline 3 (2017)	3 2016 -2018	13	22.0
	4. 2008	1	1.7
	Total	54	91.5
Missing	System	5	8.5
		59	100

The general distribution of when senior managers completed the MMC was recorded as 24 or 42.4% who completed the qualification at the first deadline set for 2013 after introduction of the compulsory training requirement in 2007. In 2014-2015, a further 15 or 25.4% senior managers completed the MMC and between 2016 and 2018, a further 13 or 22% completed the MMC. This reflects a widespread delay in meeting the legislative compliance requirement. Information was not found for at least, 5 of the senior managers at the time of collecting the data as one municipality had not reported their status of completing the MMC. This pattern suggests that although the MMC was designed to ensure timely competency development, its implementation was protracted and inconsistently enforced.

5.34.1 Trend of Completion rate of MMC

Figure 5.13 represents the trend at of senior managers completed the MMC training, the slowness at which the competency declaration of individuals occurred across the expanse of years extending well beyond what National Treasury scoped, a completion rate of 5 years since its inception. This was deemed necessary to be competent to occupy these senior management position and to be declared a professional resulting in the Certificate in Municipal Financial Management and municipal minimum competency for all positions irrespective of the core job content requirement.

Figure 5.13: Year MMS. Completed – Ungrouped



Source: Author

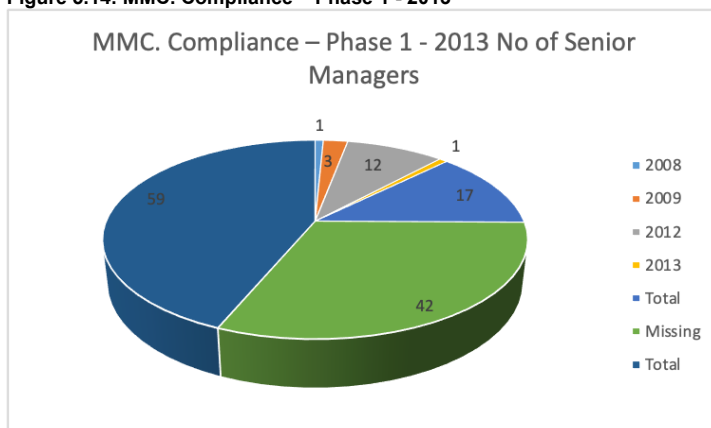
Based on the frequency distribution, only 16 or 27% of senior managers complied with the first deadline date of 2014 set by National Treasury. The resultant response was deadline extension and different exceptions, or merits, were afforded in recognition that it was not practical to impose the regulation as it would result in too many job losses simultaneously in the local government sphere. The discord between regulatory intent and municipal capacity highlights the tensions between enforcing professional standards and maintaining stability in local government sphere with strict compliance. It also illustrates how policy implementation was shaped not only by legislative design but also by pragmatic considerations of institutional capacity and continuity Table 5.12 provides the level of compliance with the Treasury's mandatory compliance date for completion of the training programme during phase 1.

5.34.2 MMC Compliance Phase 1

In the first phase, only 17 or 28% of senior managers completed the 18-month training programme and meet the deadline set by National Treasury for 2013. In the recorded information, despite being given five years to complete the MMC training programme, 42 or

71.2% of senior managers had not complied with the legislated requirements for various work demands.

Figure 5.14: MMC. Compliance – Phase 1 - 2013



Source: Author

The training was for 18 months only and in 2008, 1 or 1.7% completed the programme, but this was an intern at the time, not senior manager, and the respondent became a senior manager later. In 2009, a further 3 or 5.1% completed the training. No senior managers completed the training in 2010 and 2011. In 2012, there were 12 or 20.3% of managers that completed just before the deadline date. The completion pattern between 2008 and 2012 indicates limited uptake of the MMC programme in its early years, with only 6.8% completing by 2009. The absence of completions in 2010 and 2011 suggests either institutional delays in rolling out the programme or reluctance among senior managers to prioritise it. The sharp increase in 2012, with 20.3% completing just before the deadline, points to a compliance-driven approach in which managers delayed participation until external pressure was imminent. This reflects a broader trend of regulatory compliance motivated more by deadlines than by proactive capacity development

5.34.3 MMC Compliance Phase 2

Senior Managers continued to battle to obtain the MMC qualification and taking much longer than the set dates for completion, according to National Treasury. Table 5.31 accounts for those who have completed with special exception notices.

Table 5.31: MMC. Compliance Phase 2 - 2014

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	2014	4	6.8
	2015	6	10.2
	Total	10	16.9
Missing	System	49	83.1
Total		59	100.0

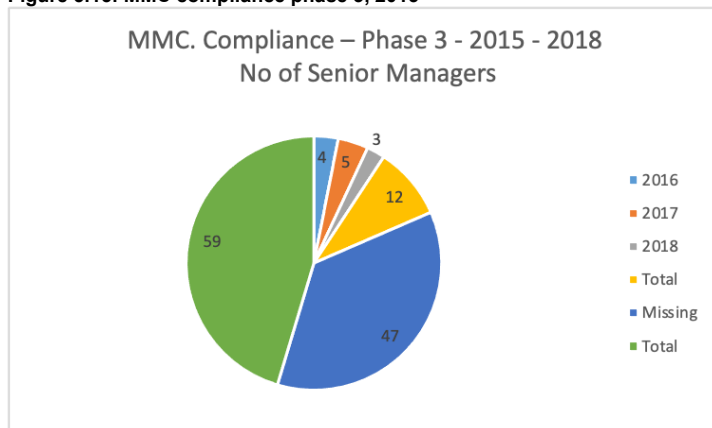
Source: Author

In phase two, a further 10 or 16.9% of senior managers completed the MMC training and this was possible only after extensions were granted, highlighting that compliance was dependent on regulatory leniency rather than proactive adherence to the original deadlines

5.34.4 Compliance Phase 3

Municipalities had to apply to National Treasury for further extensions and senior managers continued to strive to complete the compulsory training requirement along with the expectation of delivering performance Figure 5.15.

Figure 5.15: MMC compliance phase 3, 2015



Source: Author

In phase 3, completion rates remain modest with 12 or 20% of senior managers finishing by 2016 followed by 4 or 6.8%, in 2017, 5 or 8.5% and in 2018 a further 3 or 5.1%. Despite managers being appointed since the inception of the legislation in 2007. The gradual trickle of completions, even after multiple extensions, highlights persistent difficulties in meeting the MMC requirements within the intended five-year cycle. This suggests that institutional and managerial capacity constraints continued to undermine compliance, reinforcing the view that deadline extensions did not resolve the systemic challenges associated with implementing the training programme

5.34.4 Summary of the Total number of Senior Managers completion rate of the MMC

Toward the end of 2017 most senior manager completed the MMC training and declared competent to practice in local government as indicated in Table 5.32.

Table 5.32: Total number of SM completed the MMC by 2013, 2015 & 2017

Senior Managers Completed the MMC		Frequency	Percent
Valid	0 No	2	3.4
	1 Yes	56	94.9
	Total	58	98.3
Missing	System	1	1.7
Total		59	100.0

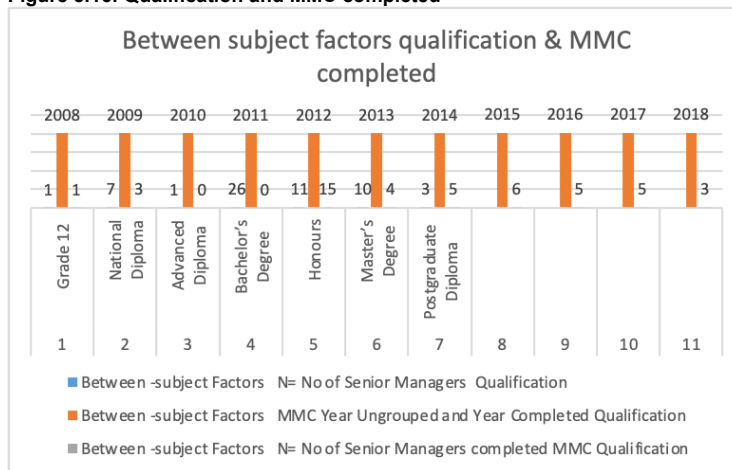
Source: Author

The overall compliance with the MMC shows that 94.9% of senior managers have completed the qualification, leaving 3.4% non-compliant. Table 5.32 illustrates the qualifications of senior managers who meet the entry requirements, demonstrating their compliance with job requirements. It also highlights the impact of the new professional standards for senior local government managers, who are required to balance the demands of the modular training (16-24 modules) with their substantial responsibilities posed significant challenges. The timeline set by National Treasury may have underestimated the challenges this posed, as many managers were effectively part-time students, while also working to address critical developmental issues in their roles. This highlighting systemic pressures in implementing professional competency standards under these conditions.

5.35 Qualification and the MMC

The variable of qualification which has different level such as undergraduate, postgraduate, diploma and matric level was compared to the number of senior managers who completed the MMC training. The focus is on analysing how these two factors (qualification and Minimum Competency Training) relate to each other or how they interact to influence an outcome variable. and to explore whether the level of qualification affects the likelihood of undergoing Minimum Competency Training or how both factors together impact performance. The comparison was to see the group differences or relationships between factors to understand the pattern and the impact of the variables in Figure 5.16.

Figure 5.16: Qualification and MMC completed



Source: Author

The Guideline for Municipal competency levels (2007) of other senior managers indicates that by 2012 all managers should have had an NQF level 6 or NQF level 7 qualification depending on the capacity of the municipality. Of the 59 managers in the study, except for one senior manager, who only had a Grade 12 certificate and was a CFO, all other managers already exceeded the minimum requirement, with 15 having honours and 8 with master's qualifications, well above the national diploma and degree required.

5.35.1 The interaction effect of the highest level of education and the MMC year completed

The Multivariate test was used to consider more than one factor in the dataset. It looks at various independent variables, which is the highest education level that influences the dependent variable, the year MMC training was completed, to measure accuracy and association between the variables. The more important association would be to determine if the outcome of the training intervention improved the efficiency of senior managers as indicated in Table 5:33.

Table 5.33: Interactive effect in multivariant test

Multivariate Tests ^a						
Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	1.000	516025.993 ^b	12.00	12.000	.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.000	516025.993 ^b	12.00	12.00	.000
	Hotelling's Trace	516025.993	516025.993 ^b	12.00	12.00	.000
	Roy's Largest Root	516025.993	516025.993 ^b	12.00	12.00	.000
Highest Qualification	Pillai's Trace	2.394	.940	72.000	102.000	.606
	Wilks' Lambda	.000	4.827	72.000	71.091	.000
	Hotelling's Trace	2570.161	368.866	72.000	62.000	.000
	Roy's Largest Root	2567.742	3637.635 ^c	12.000	17.000	.000
MMC Year Ungrouped	Pillai's Trace	3.553	1.265	96.000	152.000	.097
	Wilks' Lambda	.000	4.955	96.000	91.097	.0003.553
	Hotelling's Trace	5399.556	576.515	96.000	82.000	.000
	Roy's Largest Root	5393.526	8539.750 ^c	12.000	180.000	.951
Highest Qualification *MMC Year Ungrouped	Pillai's Trace	2.786	.747	108.000	99.882	.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.000	3.311	108.000	92.000	.000
	Hotelling's Trace	5575.428	527.715	108.000	92.000	.000
	Roy's Largest Root	5571.687	9286.146 ^c	12.000	20.000	.000
a. Design: Intercept + Highest Qualification + MMC Year Ungrouped + Highest Qualification * MMC Year Ungrouped						
b. Exact statistic						
c. The statistic is an upper bound of F that yielded a lower bound on the significance level.						

Source: Author

The result of the test indicated that there was no statistically significant interaction effect between the highest level of education and the year the MMC training was completed on the

combined variable $F(108,180) = 0.747$, $p = 0.747$, $p = .957$; Pillai's Trace = 2.786). Pillai's trace was selected as the multivariate test because some assumptions in the test statistics were violated:

- The residuals follow a multivariate normal probability distribution with means equal to zero.
- The variance-covariance matrices of each group of residuals are equal.

5.36 The Chi-square test – MMC and the Audit Performance Year

The law on MMC was promulgated on 1 July 2007 (start of the municipal financial year) and the completion time for the qualification was 18 months from then to four years or longer. The Chi-square test was used to test if there was an association between the variables of MMC year completed and the audit performance results of the municipality. While the MMC years were coded as 2008/2009; 2009/2010; 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 and included in the testing irrespective of the results, significant or not significant, the first possible year of completing the MMC, which was an 18-month programme, was possibly 2009. There were many issues in terms of implementation and certification that the first credible result was only visible in the year 2012/2013.

To this end, the findings in variables of the MMC year coded and the variable AF1 2012/2013 the test statistic was 17.149. The standard deviation was 8 and an asymptotic significance in a two-sided test was 0.029 and observation was $0.029 < \alpha = 0.1$, indicating that the decision was significant. Therefore, one must reject the null hypothesis that there is an association (suggesting no independence). The occurrence of significant findings can be related simply to the high prevalence of senior managers as indicated in Table 5.34, indicating that, at least, 16 managers completed the MMC, representing only 27% of managers who complied slightly after the first deadline date of January 2013 for completion of the MMC. The years that followed clearly indicate that there was no significant effect as explained in the next paragraph.

The statement 'not significant' means that the results of the statistical analysis suggest the observed difference or relationship between the variables is significant enough to reject the null hypothesis. In other words, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that there is a true

association or dependence between the variables being studied. Therefore, it is reasonable to reject the null hypothesis and assume that the variables are not independent or unrelated. The significance level of 0.1 means that there is only a 10% chance that the observed result is due to random chance or error, which is relatively low. Therefore, the findings are considered reliable and can be used to make conclusions about the population being studied. It is important to note that statistical significance does not necessarily imply practical significance, and that further investigation may be needed to fully understand the implications of the observed association.

Table 5.34: Variables and test statistics

Variables	Test statistics	Degree of Freedom Df.	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Observation	Decision
Inception of the reskilling legislation of MMC Training - 1 July 2007 for financial reforms – projected time for completion of the 16-24 modules is 18 months per senior manager. (AF -Audit Financial)					
MMC Year Coded * AF1 2008/2009	20.434	16	0.201	0.201 > alpha = 0.1	Not significant. Accept Null hypothesis. No association (there is Independence)
MMC Year Coded * AF1 2009/2010	38.543	24	0.03	0.03 < alpha = 0.1	Significant Reject null hypothesis. There is Association (no independence)
MMC Year Coded * AF1 2010/2011	22.789	16	0.119	0.119 > alpha = 0.1	Not significant. Accept Null hypothesis. No association (there is Independence)
MMC Year Coded * AF1 2011/2012	21.281	24	0.622	0.622 > alpha = 0.1	Not significant. Accept Null hypothesis. No association (there is Independence)
Deadline Exemption extension No 1 - For MMC Training completion					
MMC Year Coded * AF1 2012/2013	17.149	8	0.029	0.029 < alpha = 0.1	Significant Reject null hypothesis. There is Association (no independence)
Legislated deadline for MMC training completion and declaration of competence – 1 January 2013					

MMC Year Coded * AF1 2013/2014	6.560	8	0.585	0.585 > alpha = 0.1	Not significant. Accept Null hypothesis. No association (there is Independence)
Deadline Extension No 2 - For MMC Training Completion					
MMC Year Coded * AF1 2014/2015	18.591	16	0.29	0.29 > alpha = 0.1	Not significant. Accept Null hypothesis. No association (there is Independence)
MMC Year Coded * AF1 2015/2016	9.329	8	0.315	0.315 > alpha = 0.1	Not significant. Accept Null hypothesis. No association (there is Independence)
MMC Year Coded * AF1 2016/2017	8.772	8	0.362	0.362 > alpha = 0.1	Not significant. Accept Null hypothesis. No association (there is Independence)
Deadline extended No 3 For MMC training completion					
MMC Year Coded * AF1 2017/2018	12.143	8	0.145	0.145 > alpha = 0.1	Not significant. Accept Null hypothesis. No association (there is Independence)
MMC Year Coded * AF1 2018/2019	7.34	8	0.5	0.5 > alpha = 0.1	Not significant. Accept Null hypothesis. No association (there is Independence)
MMC Year Coded * AF1 2019/2020	21.359	16	0.165	0.165 > alpha = 0.1	Not significant. Accept Null hypothesis. No association (there is Independence)

The results of the statistical analysis for the MMC year completed and audited financial statement (AF1) from 2013/2014 to 2019/2020 indicate that there is no significant association between the variables for each of the years under consideration. A detailed breakdown of the results is a follow:

For the year - 2013/2014 analysis

The test statistic is 6.560; the standard deviation is 8; the asymptotic significance (2-sided) is 0.585 and the alpha level is 0.1. Since the p-value (0.585) is greater than the alpha level (0.1), the result is not statistically significant. This means we accept the null hypothesis, suggesting that there is no significant association between the MMC year completed and the audited financial statement for the relevant year. The subsequent remaining years for each year from 2014/2015 to 2019/2020, the p-values are as follows: In the years 2014/2015: $0.29 > 0.1$, 2015/2016: $0.315 > 0.1$, 2016/2017: $0.362 > 0.1$, 2017/2018: $0.145 > 0.1$; 2018/2019: $0.5 > 0.1$ and 2019/2020: $0.165 > 0.1$. In each case, the p-value exceeds the alpha level of 0.1, indicating that the results are not statistically significant. Therefore, for all these years, we accept the null hypothesis. This implies that there is no significant association between the year the MMC training was completed, and the performance of a municipality as reflected in the audited financial statements and audit outcomes.

The colours depiction in Table 5.35 is aligned with the phases of the performance of the municipality. The colour green is an indication of the superior performance that the municipality reached in its delivery of the management of the municipality for financial and institutional purposes. It also indicates the compulsory training period with the first deadline dates of January 2013 when all managers had to have complied with the completion of the MMC training programme. The picture during the three phases suggests that municipalities in the Western Cape were making steady progress towards achieving unqualified audits with findings and the superior performance rating of unqualified audits with no findings. They could be attributed to good governance, financial management and governance, service delivery performance, compliance with legislation with the aim to enhance accountability, transparency, overall effectiveness of municipal operations and helping to ensure that public resources are used effectively and efficiently for the benefit of communities. The phases sketch a picture in the green and white colouring of progression towards the clean audit requirements and as can be seen in Table 5.35, the process has been slow to where the picture for the research population starting to emerge as capable within the complexity of local government management. The picture that emerges from Table 5.35 between the years 2005/6 – 2011/12 indicates that since the MFMA implementation 2003 have coasted toward improving the financial performance outcomes as reported by the A-G. LM 12, LM 10, LM3 and LM 5 were first municipalities after 10years of MFMA implementation to reach a clean audit status.

Table 5.35: Provides a Consolidated picture of audit performance of all municipalities

MFMA Introduction 2003			MMC Introduction 2007				
Audits released	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Municipality	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012
LM 15	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Qualified Opinion	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings
LM 14	Qualified Opinion	Qualified Opinion	Disclaimer of Opinion	unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Qualified with findings
LM 13	Qualified Opinion	Qualified Opinion	Disclaimer of Opinion	Disclaimer with findings	Qualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings
LM 12	Qualified Opinion	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings
LM 11	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings
LM 10	Qualified Opinion	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings
LM 9	Qualified Opinion	Qualified Opinion	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	unqualified with findings	Disclaimer with findings	Disclaimer with findings	Disclaimer with findings
LM 7	Qualified Opinion	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings
LM 8	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Disclaimer with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings
Audit released	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Municipality	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012
LM 4	Qualified Opinion	Qualified Opinion	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Disclaimer with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings
LM 6	Qualified Opinion	Qualified Opinion	Qualified Opinion	unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings
LM 3	Adverse	Qualified Opinion	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Qualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings
LM 5	Qualified Opinion	Qualified Opinion	Qualified Opinion	Disclaimer with findings	Adverse with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings
LM 2	Qualified Opinion	Qualified Opinion	No report submitted	unqualified with findings	Qualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings
LM 1	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Qualified Opinion	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings
Colour Key	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Qualified Opinion	no report	Adverse with findings	Disclaimer

Table: 5.35: A summary of findings of all municipalities indicating the picture of audit performance: MMC - Compulsory Deadline 2013									
2014	Audit reports released	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
2012/13	Municipality	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
Unqualified with findings	LM 15	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	no report	Unqualified with no findings
Unqualified with findings	LM 14	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings
Unqualified with findings	LM 13	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings
Unqualified with no findings	LM 12	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings
Unqualified with findings	LM 11	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings
Unqualified with no findings	LM 10	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings
Unqualified with findings	LM 9	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings
Unqualified with no findings	LM7	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings
Unqualified with findings	LM 8	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings
2014	Audit reports released	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
2012/13	Municipality	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
Unqualified with findings	LM 4	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings
Unqualified with findings	LM 6	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	no report	Unqualified with no findings
Unqualified with no findings	LM 3	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings
Unqualified with no findings	LM 5	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings
Unqualified with findings	LM 2	Unqualified with findings	Adverse with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings

Unqualified with no findings	LM 1	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings
	Colour Key	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Qualified Opinion	no report	Adverse with findings	Disclaimer	

Source: Author from AG Performance Reports

The Consolidated audit results reveal a positive picture of the performance of the municipalities in the study with two (LM 7 & LM) municipalities who have excelled in maintaining a clean audit over a 9-year period the second top performers maintained clean audit for seven years all of which has not been continuous. Most municipalities have come in at the second highest rating of some issues. While it is good to maintain a positive audit outcome, some of the long-standing superior performers have delivered noncompliance (LM6 and LM15) by not submitting any financial or non-financial reports in the case of two municipalities. It indicates that this is a performance area that must be worked at consistently to receive favourable reports, and the status of superior performance can change dependant on the issues that may befall a municipality. L6 completed the MMC between 2015-2018 the audit position of the municipality remained unqualified with findings for five years leading up to 2013 as from 2013 the municipality maintained a clean audit position until 2019/20. Most senior officials completed the MMC programme in 2017-2018. According to the AG the definition a “financially unqualified opinion with findings means the auditee was able to produce quality financial statements but struggled to produce quality performance reports and/or to comply with all key legislation”. Even though this is regarded as the second-best position to be in after the audit, most municipal audits in phase 2 – 2008/9-2012/13 for the five-year period were unqualified with findings. In the case of L5 it obtained its first clean audit in 2011/2012 and maintained this status quo till 2016/2017, and the senior managers completed the MMC from 2015-2020. Overall, there is no clear link between senior managers achieving the MMC qualification and the performance of the municipality.

The next section outlines the qualitative data collected expressing the views of senior managers who had to comply with the deadline dates to complete the MMC training programme.

5.37 Qualitative data presentation - focus group discussion

“The views of senior managers were obtained through focus group discussions and are presented under Objective 3, which explores the relevance of the MMC for local government and its role in human resource development practice. The analysis highlights the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the discussions. Theme one focuses on attitudes towards the training intervention; Theme two examines the effectiveness of training for professionalisation; and Theme three addresses the human resource processes used for capacitation. Within each thematic area, sub-themes are also presented.”

5.38 Objective 3: To explore the relevance of the MMC for local government and its human resource development practice

The views of participants the relevance of the MMC for local government and individuals concerned are presented in a summarised tabular form with statements presented as positive or negative attitudes.

5.38.1 Theme One: Attitude towards the training Intervention

The attitude of participants provided insights into the relevance of the MMC training for senior managers with the following sub-themes:

Sub-theme: One: Explanation and understanding of the MMC.

Sub-theme Two: Issues with MMC

5.38.2 Sub-theme One: explanation and understanding of the MMC.

To test the understanding of participants on the purpose and intent of the MMC training and its compulsory nature, the following question was posed: what is the MMC all about? The discussion sparked reaction within senior managers and their perception and understanding of the purpose and intent of the MMC training for their individual development to perform the managerial function within the municipality.

Table 5.36: Attitude sub-theme: explanation and understanding

Regional Municipality	Relevance Group View	Positive	Negative
L1	"It was for frustrating for Senior"	"It is a refresher course".	"Universities made money" "It was for Juniors"
L2	"MMC is discrimination against your skills"	It was an attempt to plug a gap in the market for MFMA"	"Councillors have no skills, yet they decide if you skilled"
L3	"It was to regulate to learn about budgeting".	"MFMA regulation for sustainability"	"Practitioners are scarce".
L4	"It should have been customised for more stimulation".	"If the criteria were for newly employed for 1-5 years, then the course is beautiful".	"a different criterion should be used for 5-10 years in a municipality".
L5	"It is strategic finance"	"It gives you a different approach".	"It is domination and exploitation by Treasury".
L 6	"It was a crash course into local government".	"Valuable to newcomers"	"Modules were unnecessary for experience senior managers".
L7	"Creating awareness about financial compliance".	"It created awareness in some areas"	"Compliance become the dominant force".
L 8	"Needed training to strengthen MFMA"	It is an alternative to MFMA training	"MFMA training had more value"
L 9	"It came to local government as compulsory".	"Some modules were useful".	"If not, compulsory I would not have done it". "Lack of practical relevance". "It ended up being too financial".
L10	"It was to Strengthen senior's gaps"		I would have preferred it was about strategy"
L 11	"Good Course tailor made" "It targets those who have experience in the job".	"I can understand why"	"It's Theory".
L 12	"It is asset and finance management"		"It is used for conditions of appointment". "It was costly" "Need Soft Skills" "Set up is unfortunate"
L 13	"It is supposed to improve financial skills"		"Very few modules had relevance"

L 14	"Does not meet the objective of developmental local government".	"It is good course to see how finance operate".	"I grew up in local government I would not have chosen to do this course".
L 15	"It was a legislative regulatory mandate".	"The potential value if content is fixed and executed better".	It lacked value for experience managers". "It was inadequate".

Source: Author

"The attitude under the sub-theme explanation and understanding of the MMC reveals a sharp divide in perceptions of the MMC. While some managers acknowledged its value as a refresher, a tool for financial compliance, and an opportunity to address skills gaps for newcomers. Most senior managers viewed it as poorly tailored, overly theoretical, financially exploitative, and irrelevant to experienced practitioners. This highlights the tension between the MMC's regulatory intent and its limited practical resonance for senior managers, suggesting a misalignment between training design and the developmental needs of local government leadership."

5.38.3 Sub-theme Two: Issues with MMC

To gain an understanding of what exactly the source of unhappiness was for senior managers undergoing the MMC training, they were asked to answer the following question: What are the issues with the MMC?

Table 5.37: Issues with MMC

Participants Group L	Issue	Positive	Negative
L1	"National Treasury promulgate it, did not take responsibility. for consequences".	"The topics not covered in degree other than finance was useful."	"The complete waste of time as they were dealing with large scale projects".
L2	"Managers had experience they would have made it without MMC"	"To fix issues some competence was necessary"	Nothing in the plans prepares a person's individual weakness"
L3	"MMC did not cover technical fields".	"Some elements could be used".	"It did not meet the expectations of senior managers".
L4	"It is a time waster and basic".	"The Sharing of practices from other municipalities was more useful".	"It did not add to knowledge".
L5	"It was compulsory".	"The interaction with other municipalities was good".	"It did not cover the spectrum of technical service".
L6	It is only suitable for newcomers". "Limited in new information and learning".	"Learning is continuous, and content can change".	"It takes too much time out of your working schedule".
L7	"We have extensive experience course was irrelevant".	"The benefit is for middle management".	"Our experience was disregarded". We have solid understanding of financial matters and legislation not necessary".
L8	"Why is there a legal requirement for MMC"	"It was meant for the CFO or supply chain"	"You cannot appoint a person with only an MMC without qualification"
L9	"If you do not have this training, you lose your job".		"Waste of time" "It took you to Wits for two years away from work". "You will lose institutional memory with the high turnover rate."
L10	"It lacked practical focus". "Must develop skills, this was money making".	"Some of the reading material was useful relating to the Acts"	"Not an instrument for succession planning"" It was to assist those without qualification and experience" Training for MFMA"
L11	MMC program has legislative authority and meaning.	"Legislative status"	"Program irrelevant, does not link to the environment".
L12	"It took you away from your	No positive comment	"We received a circular to say its compulsory with a timeline"" There is

	work for 18 months your work mounted over a 4-year period it has an impact".		much that need to be developed for the legal complexity of a municipality".
L13	It has limited the interest of people and therefore you will not get new skills	No positive comment	"Officials can compress the training to 6 months". What is the point of MMC"
L14 L15	"Not easy to study it when you in the job". "You need to enhance it to make it valuable". "We need training in management MMC was not that"" We must keep training relevant and determine what that is"	Discussion was good to look at strategic future project". No positive comment	"You are not at work for two years". While it was on Finance there are already new accounting frameworks which need training."

On the theme Issues with MMC

"The participant perspectives reveal that while the MMC was recognised for its legislative authority, limited exposure to new topics, and opportunities for peer interaction, the dominant view was highly critical, characterising the programme as compulsory, overly time-consuming, financially exploitative, and irrelevant to the technical and experiential needs of senior managers. The findings suggest that the MMC's design prioritised regulatory compliance over practical knowledge transfer, resulting in limited perceived value and even resentment among experienced practitioners."

5.39 Theme Two: To determine if the MMC training was effective to improve professionalism and performance.

Sub-theme Three: Professionalisation

Sub-them Four: Performance Management and service

5.39.1 Sub-theme Three: Professionalisation

This was the issue in terms of what the training hoped to achieve to establish a unique training that could be regarded as local government professionalisation. Participants were asked to answer the question: can the MMC be regarded as professionalisation? Participants' views are shown in Table 5.38.

Table 5.38: MMC as professionalisation

Participants Group	Issue	Positive	Negative
L1	"There is a gap in professionalising the industry"	None	"The course was pitched at a basic level below our qualifications"
L2	"The credibility of the MMC is in question".	None	"It's done for compliance, and it not rated highly but you must do it".
L3	"People are negative as it is forced".	"It can be seen as a basis".	"It only covers finance and no other field".
L4	"I have my professional registration with my field of occupation".	None	"MMC should have been at a higher level to appreciate value".
L5	MMC was dominated by Treasury Exploitation it must be an opportunity to empower and not forced".	'If you come from private sector then perhaps, we can have some course to support professionalisation".	"The training should have been given when local government was formed."
L6	I have a profession as a Town Planner and registered. Your progress through levels. MMC does not do this".	None	"The NQF level was not appropriate".
L7	"Policy: we never had any problem for the past 30 years with competency".		"If they think this competency is the way it doesn't make sense as we never have any performance problem".
L8	"It is malicious compliance" "Our profession has not been taken seriously for this to be made compulsory".	"Formal qualification is more rewarding". "Its focus is only on strengthening supply chain and finance with a few other sections in local government."	"No, it cannot be regarded as professionalisation".
L9	"No link to professionalisation".	None	"It has no regard for your profession".
L10	"The training cannot account for professionalisation".	"You need a university qualification, a degree or diploma".	Professional institutions should have been established for Municipal Managers".

L11	No, as an accountant I am certified with a professional body".	None	"No accreditation was granted to me as a certified professional accountant." If not legislated and no enrichment for the IDP and Local Government".
L12	"Coming from our occupational field we regard that as professionalisation not MMC".	"Municipalities are dynamic senior managers need degrees".	

"The professionalisation sub-theme highlights that participants largely dismissed the MMC as a credible pathway to professionalisation, arguing instead that their existing professional qualifications and registrations already fulfilled this role. While a few noted that the MMC could provide a basic foundation or support for entrants from the private sector, the dominant perception was that the programme was pitched below their qualification levels, narrowly focused on finance, lacked accreditation, and amounted to compulsory compliance rather than genuine professional development. This indicates a fundamental misalignment between the MMC's regulatory framing of professionalisation and the established professional identities of senior managers in local government."

5.39.2 Sub-theme Four: Performance management

To understand the performance management system used in a municipality and to link service delivery and audit performance the question asked was: what is the performance management system in the municipality? Responses are depicted in Table 5.39.

Table 5.39: Opinion of performance management

Location	Participant	Key Points on Performance Management
L5	Participant 7	"It is an integrated system to monitor the quality of service delivered; have standards to evaluate. Quarterly appraisals are done."
	Participant 11	"Yes, PMS integrated system monitors the quality-of-service delivery and has standards to evaluate individually. Individual reasoning guided well, and we have quarterly appraisals."
	Participant 9	"Individual performance has so much emphasis on measurement and proving it. It is sometimes difficult to prove as it is to measure."
	Participant 8	"Yes, and no; frustrated by performance need it for sure. Measurement too many things running thin with staff over. Fully implemented KPIs fully functional but lagging."
L2	Participant 4	"Performance is mandatory. The compliance is the bad thing, no difference in performance results. Can see links. It is a contradiction. The weighting of compliance

Location	Participant	Key Points on Performance Management
		is bigger than any criteria. Will detail the rating structure."
L8	Participant 28	"Performance management is important but only Mossel Bay has a reward system linked to their performance system. It is too expensive to implement. In general, the performance management system is just a paper-based exercise."
	Participant 24	"Municipality attempts to manage performance. It is monitored by Treasury, the AG reports so you are always under the spotlight."
	Participant 24	"Performance Management is basically used for senior management. There are still gaps in the system. It's still evolving for lower levels. Performance of individuals in section 57 is done in September against targets of the organization. It must align to capital spending which is specific. Good governance performance against REGULATION. Turnaround is pulled into performance."
	Participant 27	"Individual section 57 in September against target of organization aligned capital spending good governance. There is specific monitoring. Performance regulation the turnaround is pulled into performance of top-level and the next level management is aligned."
	Participant 31	"Small paragraph called SDBIP it must be compliant. The intention of the drafter was not to spend so much time on SDBIP. All about compliance."
	Participant 32	"Cannot get to performance contract can be measured. You must make it according to compliance first, Infrastructure, Sewerage. If you look right, it is not truly development. In Roodepoort no performance contract just to do a job. Must focus on basic service delivery."
	Participant 30	"The more you can confuse the scorer the better you are. The performance system gives you a poor picture of your performance as you follow regulations. The entire system gives a skewed picture. The PMS is not objective at all. Wrong impressions created; you need only to be a 3. It is impossible for you to do any less as your years of experience and knowledge cannot be replaced by this system of performance management. Your evaluation is competent or incompetent. Regulation says 110 percent is competent. They do not judge on qualification; it just creates a wrong impression."
L4	Participant 54	"Operation clean audit in 2014 was a drive. Capacity must be upscaled. MMC the road map. Understand to retain officials. MSCOA has had no exposure to MMC. Supply Chain Process in LG needs to be understood."
L12	Participant 43	"We did not use our performance system to identify gaps."
	Participant 47	"Only Senior Managers are on a performance system not all staff link into the system yet. If you want to stay relevant in the field, you need to do a short course to address gaps or stay up to date with practice. You could work on a system where these

Location	Participant	Key Points on Performance Management
		courses count for you staying up to date like Health is doing currently to award CPD points."
	Participant 46	"Our PMS system is only going to three levels. Only gaps in the organization for succession planning."
L13	Participant 51	"It will improve over time; clean audits will come over time."
	Participant 53	"Performance is a problem. It was an added value putting through the cycle of performance. One can see the bigger picture of the organization."
L-14	Participant 55	"This is compliance-driven and therefore difficult to implement any other performance criteria when the tick box is so extensive."
	Participant 56	"I have been here for 8 months and had one performance evaluation. I had one review; I will send staff on training. There were no gaps identified for me. Performance management was reserved for top level. Not lower, even if they have comprehension, it was not a requirement. My colleagues have years and years of experience so they can do the job. In finance, there are many areas where you can go wrong. My work is evaluated yearly, so it does not fit into the quarterly review."
	Participant 58	"If you are a senior manager, you must have a specific performance plan."
L8	Participant 26	"Performance management is important but only Mossel Bay has a reward system."
	Participant 25	"Municipality attempts to manage performance. It is monitored by Treasury."
	Participant 31	"Small paragraph called SDBIP it must be compliant for performance."

Source: Author

This table captures the key points from each participant, offering a clear summary of their views on performance management within various municipalities. Municipal performance follows the guide in terms of the legislation as to what should be delivered and when. It is mandatory to complete the IDP, Budget and SDBIP the KPI are linked to meeting these requirements.

5.40 Theme Three: To establish the human resource process used in organisation for capacitation

The following sub-themes are discussed in relation to the human resource process used in the municipalities:

Sub-theme Five: Training needs analysis conducted.

Sub-them Six: Usefulness of training.

5.40.1 Sub-theme Five: Training needs analysis conducted

The general probing question in the focus group discussion was asked around the conducting of training needs assessment. Participants were asked to answer the following question: was a training needs analysis done? Specific comments by participants are captured in Table 5.40.

Table 5.40: Needs assessment for MMC programme

Municipality	Participant	Needs Assessment Done	Comments
(L1), (L2) (L3), (L5), (L6)(L7)(L8), (L9), (L10),(L12),(L13) (L14)	Participants: 2, 3,4,5, 8, 7,8,9,11,12, 13, 14, 15,16,17,18,19,20,21,22,23,24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30,33,34,35 49, 43, 47, 48, 46,50,51,52,53,54 55, 56)	No	Confirmed that no needs analysis was done. "None at all"
(L7)	Participant 24	Not Sure	Indicated uncertainty regarding needs assessment
(L1)	Participant 1	No	"The regulatory framework we are being led to the slaughterhouse; they don't understand our industry. Something is regulated; they did not consult with the industry where it was relevant. It took five years to complete, and it did not add value to me."
(L4)	Participant 6	No	"This should be a top up to needs analysis of self-identified courses
(L9)	Participant 29	No	"No, Treasury and COGTA decided on making it compulsory."
(L9)	Participant 31 and 32	No	"If needs assessment was done, it would have made more sense."
(L11)	Participant 39, 40, 41, 42	No	"It played no role"
(L14)	Participant 55	No	"We were not interviewed or consulted".
(L15)	Participant 56	No	"No formal process: not recognized, they are focused on unit standard training regardless of years of service or higher qualifications."
(L15)	Participant 58	No	"It is supposed to be an individual process to determine specific requirements versus making it all compulsory."
(L15)	Participant 57	No	"There was a need for training CFOs who needed qualifications, particularly for GRAP standards. The challenge was mainly in finance; other portfolios were less prone to

Municipality	Participant	Needs Assessment Done	Comments
			performance issues."

Source: Author

Participants generally indicated that there we no needs assessments conducted before the training was implemented suggesting that there was no consideration for their individual needs or alignment with the competency assessments done as part of the job application process which should identify training needs assessment

5.40.2 Sub-theme Six: Usefulness of the course

Views of the groups under the themes **"Usefulness of the Course"** and **"Benefits."** Participants from each location was asked: how beneficial and useful was the training programme? Their key positive and negative points are presented in (Table 5.41).

Table 5.41: Usefulness of training

Location	Positive Points	Negative Points
L11	Highlighted need for <i>"tailored training"</i> . Some perceived value in research and legislation	High <i>"cost of training"</i> . <i>"Limited relevance"</i> to job roles. Perceived as a formal requirement without direct benefits
L4	Improved service delivery for some. <i>"Eye-opener on financial aspects"</i> . Value in learning financial management	<i>"Not beneficial for experienced managers"</i> . Limited scope focused on finance. Compulsory nature seen as a drawback
L6	<i>"Beneficial for newcomers"</i> . Real-time insights appreciated. Continuous learning environment	<i>"Lack of recognition of prior learning"</i> . Overemphasis on MMC qualifications Limited relevance for experienced professionals
L1	Value in strategic management topics. <i>"Helped with budget management"</i> . Understanding of MFMA	Lack of traditional classroom environment. <i>"Repetition of known content"</i> . Limited <i>"relevance for certain roles"</i>
L3	Useful elements in courses. Broad scope for managing portfolios. <i>"Beneficial for skill enhancement"</i>	<i>"Limited coverage of occupational fields"</i> . Challenges faced by engineers. Compulsory nature perceived negatively
L2	Some useful elements in <i>"asset management and</i>	MMC not seen as <i>"improving practical</i>

Location	Positive Points	Negative Points
	<i>ethics</i> ". Potential for refreshing knowledge	<i>performance</i> ". Experienced staff felt it was unnecessary
L8	Relevant for senior managers Improved understanding of financial principles. " <i>Learning from case studies and peers</i> "	Many financial modules seen as irrelevant. Perception of " <i>forced training</i> ". Varying degrees of usefulness
L7	" <i>Created awareness about compliance</i> ". Beneficial for newcomers Practical and included current debates	" <i>Overemphasis on compliance</i> " Lack of specialization. Limited adaptability and structure
L9	" <i>Some modules found useful</i> ". Strengthened financial capacity	General lack of usefulness. " <i>Lack of relevance to work</i> ". Perception of training as compliance-driven
L14	" <i>Value in asset management</i> ". Practical learning and discussions beneficial " <i>Interaction and group work valued</i> "	Courses " <i>not meeting development objectives</i> ". Reluctance to volunteer for training
L12	Some value for junior officials. Partial " <i>value for finance staff</i> ".	Limited relevance to job roles Perception of being compulsory. Low value and " <i>time-consuming</i> "
L13	Value in specific modules Benefit of " <i>understanding across fields</i> "	Redundant content for experienced staff- " <i>Limited relevance to technical fields</i> " Compliance-focused
L15	Compliance with "legislative requirements".	Lack of value for experienced managers Perceived as a "money-making exercise". Focus on compliance over practical skills

These tables reflect the common themes and sentiments expressed by participants in each location regarding the usefulness and benefits of MMC (Management and Leadership training) programs. They highlight a mixture of positive feedback on certain course elements and significant concerns about cost, relevance, and compulsory nature across different municipalities.

5.41 Objective 4: To explain content relevance, delivery mode, time spent and assessment of MMC in relation to the senior managers' position and their performance in this role

Sub-theme Seven: Content relevance

Sub-theme Eight: Time to complete training.

5.41.1 Sub-theme Seven: Content relevance

The competencies that were to be developed in the MMC training, stated as a minimum requirement, were organised under eight areas, namely. Strategic leadership and management, strategic financial management, operational financial management, governance, ethics and values in financial management, financial and performance reporting, risk and change management, legislation, policy and implementation, stakeholder relations supply chain. These competencies were built into the 16-24-unit standard forming the certificate qualification in Financial Management. Participants were asked the question: how relevant was the course content? Table 5.42 shows their comments.

Table 5.42: Course Content relevance

Table: Rating of MMC Course Importance and Usefulness

Municipality	Participant	Course/Element	Rating (1-5)	Comments
(L1)	Participant 3	Strategic Management	4	"Only a few courses were useful: Strategic Management, Management were not covered in my degree."
(L1)	Participant 3	Legislation and Policy in Finance Management	4	"Legislation and Policy in Finance Management,
(L1)	Participant 3	Ethics and Performance Management	4	"Ethics and Performance Management were not covered in my degree."
(L1)	Participant 1	Asset Management, Service to the People, Ethics	4	"There were a few useful elements, namely asset management, service to the people, ethics was interesting,
(L1)	Participant 1	Risk Management	3	"Risk management a course refresher."
(L1)	Participant 2	Financial Legislation	3	"MMC should cover technical fields and be structured more as a 3-year degree specific to municipalities. Covers financial legislation but has gaps in technical fields."
(L4)	Participant 6	Asset Management	4	"There were a few useful elements, namely asset management, service to the people, ethics was interesting, risk management is a

				course refresher."
(L4)	Participant 6	Service to the People, Ethics	4	"It is better for junior officials"
(L4)	Participant 6	Risk Management	3	"This was quite relevant we were just introduced to risk management practice"
(L6)	Participant 12	Recognition of Prior Learning	3	"At senior level, there should have been recognition of prior learning, so some of the modules you don't have to do."
(L6)	Participant 15	Finance Modules	3	"For us not working within the financial department, we gained a lot from certain sections, but there was no consideration for persons with extensive experience."
(L7)	Participant 19	IMFO Training	4	"IMFO provides up-to-date training relevant to what is offered by universities, sufficient for doing our jobs."
(L7)	Participant 24	Legislative Modules	4	"Certain modules were important. The frustration was in calculating ratios. The modules had added value and a good impact on capacity."
(L5)	Participant 9	Legislation, Rules, and Regulations	4	"The legislation, rules, and regulation lectures were useful. The program provided practical differences and problem-solving insights."
(L5)	Participant 9	Interaction with Other Municipalities	4	"We could learn from other municipalities' practices. It also improved relationships and understanding from a financial point of view."
(L5)	Participant 11	Legislation, Rules, and Regulations	4	"The legislation, rules, and regulation lectures were useful, providing practical differences and problem-solving insights."
(L5)	Participant 11	Service Delivery Training	5	"Best training for better service delivery, done with Witz and Stellenbosch. Improved strategies and was an eye-opener."
(L9)	Participant 29	Project Management	4	"Loved project management. Hated Ethics and Performance Management module despite the great presenter."
(12)	Participant 48	Internal Audit	3	"Internal audit and budgeting process were fine; however, project management needs more emphasis for future needs."

Participants noted that only certain courses were beneficial, highlighting the aspects they found relevant while also identifying gaps in the training that they felt should have been included in the programme. Participants in the discussion assigned rating to their opinions in expressing the relevant content of the training to their development or acquisition of knowledge in this manner and only six of the fifteen municipalities opted to give expression as such.

5.41.2 Time demand to complete the MMC

Senior managers expressed their views on the length of time it took to complete the MMC and the amount of time it took them away from work in a performance-based environment. Section 5.26 outlines senior members' views to attend the training programme and the following:

- The senior managers indicated the significant time commitment that was required to complete the MMC programme had a disruptive impact on municipal operations as the programme took 18 months to complete.
- Participant 52 said that the municipality should "scale down the programme because you cannot give delegation to someone in the municipality without MMC it is clouded the participation in the MMC as *"costs were R35 000"*, where is the financial official's cost like travel accommodation and S&T?"
- Participant (33) stated that: *"It resulted in burn out of senior managers who were supposed to do the work to be in class for 18 months"*.
- Participant 33 said: *"It just cost a lot of money and 18 months away from the job"*.
- Participant 34 added: *"It costed a fortune to train people and 18 months was long to be away from the office. While you job stood still"*.
- A similar view was aired by Participant 36: *"Many senior managers who had to actually do the work on five-year contracts were away for the 18 months"*.

A participant from one municipality noted that officials attempted to compress the programme into 6 months, acknowledging that this compromised service delivery because it took people out of their jobs for extended periods. According to Participant 27, *"Officials compress it into six months, and it compromise service delivery as it takes people out of the job"*. Is it still

relevant? Is it achieving its purpose? *"There should be a review done to test its relevance". "It is money making. it has been limiting in terms of bringing in new skills".*

Another official reported being recalled from training multiple times due to work-related crises, illustrating how the programme's time demands clashed with the pressing needs of their municipality. Participant 37 said: *"I cannot even sit through the training, if anything happens in the engineering line I am recalled from training".*

Focus group participants emphasised the extensive workload associated with the programme, citing time-consuming assignments and group activities that added to their existing responsibilities. Participant 21 had this to say: *"It is too much group activity, too individual efforts the assignments are time consuming"*, while Participants 21 reiterated the time demand: *"It is hectic to do it in a short space of time. If you were away for 18 months it was hectic your work mounted, it went on for four years it has this impact"*.

The time spent away from work was framed as a significant cost to municipalities, contributing to lost productivity and hampered the ability of officials to fulfil their duties effectively. Participant 33 expressed the following sentiment: *"It just cost a lot of money and 18 months away from the job"* and Participant 34 echoed the same: *"It costed a fortune to train people and 18 months was long to be away from the office. While your job stood still"*. Participant 36 and Participant 52 said the MMC training was expensive as lots of hidden costs like S&T. Participant 37 *"It has limited the interest of people and therefore you will not get new skills coming into local government."*

Participant 41 emphasised the time demand issue: *"It has been costly to local government, and it impacted on service delivery as you had to spend so much time in the class"*, which was further highlighted by Participant 27, who said: *"No, I was called back could not complete training had to come back to work there was crisis. They could have given money to municipalities for capacitating engineers working with consultants to develop the field. "They do not have a strategic management plan."*

These comments emphasise the significant burden placed on both individual officials and municipalities by the MMC programme time requirements. The 18-month duration is a

recurring point of concern and attempts to shorten this timeframe further highlights the disruptive nature of the programme.

5.42 Summary

This chapter presents a data analysis of senior managers in Western Cape municipalities. Quantitative data, from questionnaires and reports, examines managers' qualifications, experience, age, and gender, alongside their compliance with appointment criteria. Qualitative data, from focus groups and interviews, explores the impact of a municipal management training program (MMC). The study reveals demographic trends and assesses the effectiveness of the MMC, considering factors like professional body membership and appointment type (permanent vs. contract). The analysis covers various regional districts within the Western Cape and uses statistical methods to interpret findings.

This chapter analyzes the impact of the Municipal Minimum Competency (MMC) training program on senior managers in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. The study examines the qualifications and work experience of senior managers, explores the Auditor-General's reports on financial statements and municipal performance, and investigates the relevance of the MMC training for the field of local government. The key findings of the chapter can be summarized as follows: Most senior managers in the study possessed qualifications that exceeded the minimum requirements for their positions. This finding suggests that the MMC training program may not have been necessary for all senior managers. Despite the implementation of the MMC training program, many municipalities continued to struggle with achieving clean audit outcomes. This suggests that the training may not have been effective in improving financial management and governance practices.

The MMC training program was met with mixed reactions from senior managers. Some participants found the training to be beneficial, while others considered it to be a waste of time and resources. The time commitment required for the MMC training program was a significant concern for many senior managers. The 18-month duration of the program took managers away from their work responsibilities, which had a negative impact on service delivery. The chapter concludes that the MMC training program had a limited impact on improving service delivery to communities.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

In Chapter five, the data were interpreted and analysed to arrive at what the data was saying and meaning to allow for interpretation. This was achieved by analysing demographic information using SPSS to calculate percentages, frequency tables, standard deviation, chi square test and focus group discussion along with the key themes which emerged from the discussion by participants. In this chapter, the findings will be discussed in relation to the key research objectives. The literature in Chapter Two will be linked and interacted with the results to explain the research objectives and the outcomes. The relationship between variables and characteristics examined on competency, compulsory training and professionalisation in local government will be discussed against the performance standards set.

6.2 Discussion of results

The main objective of the study was to determine if the compulsory training intervention, irrespective of the level of qualification and experience of senior managers, was effective in bringing about effective service delivery to communities. The objectives of the study were as follows:

6.3 Objective 1: To ascertain the qualification, position, and work-related experience of senior managers appointed to the position

The results from responses to the questionnaire explored demographic information provided by senior managers and categorised it into characteristics describing the inherent attributes such as position, occupation, professional association considering the variables of number of managers, highest qualification, working experience, age, gender, appointment status, and training completed.

The position of senior managers appointed was specific to the qualification they had as reflected in Table 5.1 illustrating the various occupational categories of appointments. This is further supported in Table 5.3 identifying the occupational categories such as engineering, accounting, law public administration and environmental health, etc.

The occupation of senior managers, Table 5.3. reflects the various career expertise that senior managers presented. When considering the scope of expertise in terms of occupational categories there is standard legislation that forms an important part of competency and knowledge for these positions. What is a uniform standard is the knowledge of the MFMA; The Municipal Systems Act and The Municipal Structures Act to operate within the municipal environment as illustrated in Table: 5.3. Occupational knowledge is what the individual possesses because of qualification, industry specification and experience in practice. The degree to which the financial knowledge is elevated assumes that there is more value in financial competency than in occupational competence, especially if there is an occupational category of specialism for finance in the form of the CFO position, whose responsibility is municipal accounting with its own professional standard and professional registration. Arguably, there is a need for managing a budget, resourcing a programme located in the strategic objectives of the occupational functions and the departments managed according to the IDP priorities to aid development. The MMC prescript for financial competency should not be credited with this amount of legislative armour as one-size-fits-all competencies and used as a measure to determine if a senior manager can retain the position. It is the role of the CFO occupationally to ensure that a municipality is operated within the context of financial norms, standards and practices whose core responsibility is to ensure that all financial regulation is always followed when engaging in finance and supply chain management between the various budget votes of a municipality (MFMA. 2003:83). Steytler and Stevens (22:5), in their submission to the NCOP, highlight the ongoing conflict between COGTA and the National Treasury, which has led to overlapping legislation and uncertainty regarding jurisdiction over the local government sphere. COGTA's Performance Regulations of 2004 introduced competency requirements, which were further reinforced by its 2014 Appointment Conditions of Service. Meanwhile, the National Treasury established competency requirements through the 2013 Municipal Minimum Competency (MMC) deadlines. Additionally, the DPSA and the Public Management Act impose further competency standards. Reports from COGTA (PMG 2023) indicate that less than half of Municipal Managers, Chief Financial Officers (CFOs), and Supply Chain Management (SCM) managers meet these competency requirements.

The qualification of senior managers reflected in Table 5.2 in the various positions ranged from national diplomas and undergraduate degrees to master's degrees, except for one chief financial officer who only had a basic entry level matriculation certificate, whose appointment was permanent and represented a transfer from the old system of Town Clerk (1988) appointees. The law would need to be followed should a termination of service be forced, the employee would be protected in terms of the Labour Relations Act.66 of 1995, legislation usually accepts employees appointed under older regulations from the applicability of new staff regulation (South Africa. COGTA, 2022). At times conditions and time are granted to meet the new upskilling requirement. The senior manager acquired the Certificate in Financial Management using this window of acceptability to be declared competent, without the stringent requirements set for those entering local government more recently.

The data (Table 5.2) indicated that, in line with the guideline on competency requirement stated in Section 3.6.2 on cluster one competency requirement of a higher education qualification, this was present in the research population (South Africa, 2007:1). For authors such as McClelland (1973), qualification and IQ have a lessor value than competencies, one could argue that the importance of qualification (MMC, 2007) asserts entry to any job position at the senior level as a starting point or at recruitment and selection phase, as an inherent requirement to navigate entry into the organisation, and indicate whether a person can lead an organisation to superior performance.

In Boyatzis's (1982) research the characteristic of an individual is related to effective performance in a position as senior manager. The work-related experience for managers ranged from 10 to 30 years at various levels in the municipality. At middle management levels in the organisation, reflected in Table 5.4. managers had more than five years working experience to occupy the position. The Appointment Conditions for Senior Managers was five years at middle management level for the section 57 position and five years at senior management level, Fig. 5.3, for the position as MM (COGTA: MSA:2021:). Mitra's model (2008) states that competencies should be established within a level of proficiency; this would be established at the appointment procedure level where the MMC (2007) criteria would be applied through the proficiency scoring levels during the recruitment phase before appointment. There are various levels prescribed for performance during the assessment and interview process – the five-point scale where one represents - basic, two - intermediate,

three- competent, four-advanced and five-expert level as superior performer and the proficiency sought.

6.3.1 Experience

Competencies obtained from working experience and environments in an organisation as specific as local government, producing superior specific knowledge and competencies. A compulsory prescript such as the stringent MMC, which regulates for a specific training programme, ignores the value of competencies acquired through work experience in formal and informal environments. McLelland (1973) prefaced working knowledge over qualification and IQ. The senior managers according to Figure 5.3 had work experience at various levels of the organisation ranging from senior to middle management. The experience of participants ranged from 1-10 years at least (19), in the group of 11-20 years at least (26), 21-30 years at least (13) and 1 participant had 31-40 years' experience. This would, in terms of working years, already have given an indication that these senior managers were professionals in their respective fields of practice and needed to be regarded as such. Van Ruler (2005:162) emphasises this points in his Knowledge Model theory on professionalism, indicating that specialised training taken by experts in a profession, and the experience gained, results in their recognition as a professional.

6.4 Age

Reddy (2023:34) states that age is indicative of a person having life experience and that learning had taken place informally, which should be valued and appreciated. Figure 5.4 indicates that 50% of municipal staff were between the ages of 41 to 50 and 51 to 60%. A can claim that most of these managers were very experienced in either formal or non-formal working environments. One can argue that many of these managers had extensive experience in both formal and non-formal work environments. Additionally, their occupational qualifications and practical experience deserved recognition. Age also brings about a certainty in terms of how and what exactly an individual knows in the profession, or as a career official. Trotter (2008:8) in Chapter Two refers to the stage experienced staff reach in managing expectations, having a clear understanding and plan for making informed decisions about selecting training to advance their careers and professional development. Age and experience is thus one of the reason why the MMC has been regarded as a time waster as most participants had developed their academic careers and was seeking training

and development to have a set pathway to further post graduate training and not as the MMC who was pitched at the NQF level five a level much lower than what they were interested to attain a qualification.

6.5 Gender

Local government remains an under-represented sphere in terms of women occupying top positions as presented in Figure 5.5, indicating that only 6 women of the 59 participants in the study were women. Appointments are further confirmed by the representation statistic of the Statistics South Africa report (2023) suggesting that the Western Cape has the lowest (30%) across municipalities of female appointees, followed by Limpopo (31%) and Mpumalanga (32%). The Free State had 57%, the highest recorded level of gender representation in 2021, with Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality recorded as the highest representation of this statistic. Gauteng registered the second highest level of representation (42%), followed by Eastern Cape (40%). It thus appears that the recruitment strategy does not specifically indicate the equality principle in appointments, and neither is the legislation followed indicating the equality values of South Africa.

6.6 Appointment Status

One of the contentious issues within local government was the appointment status of senior managers appointed on a five-year contract basis. In the participant group 30 managers were on these contracts. This added to the challenges of having to manage the training compliance of completing the MMC in the 18-month period and producing satisfactory results in terms of individual performance. This is reflected in Table 5.7. The Municipal Appointment conditions were legislated in Section 57(A) of the MSA:2000 for managers “...*be for a fixed term of employment up to a maximum of five years, not exceeding a period ending one year after the election of the next council of the municipality*”. The municipality and the municipal manager must enter two separate contracts, being the contract of employment and a performance agreement. This is regulated through the Local Government: Municipal Performance Regulations for Municipal Managers and Managers, directly accountable to Municipal Managers, 2006. The condition of service is provided for in The Regulations on the Appointment of, and Conditions of Service for, Senior Managers published by the Minister of COGTA in 2014. This forms an important basis in the employee relationship with council, the appointment, the actual recruitment process for municipal managers and senior managers.

What followed was The Municipal Regulations on Minimum Competency Levels, 2007, issued in terms of Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act 2003, which provides the minimum competency requirements in four categories: 1. Financial and supply chain management competencies; 2. Core managerial and occupational competencies, as described in the Municipal Performance Regulations issued in terms of the Municipal Systems Act; 3. Higher education qualification at NQF Level 6 or a Certificate in Municipal Financial Management; 4. Minimum five years' work experience at a senior management level. All the unit standards prescribed must have been completed, failing which the incumbent will be deemed not to be qualified for appointment to the position of municipal manager. This regulation conflicted with what was set out in terms of the Appointments regulation of CoGTA it brought about confusion in local government as to which regulation had to be followed. It also allowed councils to choose which regulation it would follow as it suited their purpose for appointments of senior manager candidates. The essence was that it provided for a differentiating system of qualification and experience in terms of the capacity and municipal categorisation. Steytler and Stevens (2022:6) confirm the contradictory provisions in terms of qualification where COGTA's Performance Regulation prescribes a bachelor's degree for senior managers. National Treasury's MMC differentiates municipalities according to budget size where a lower qualification is stated. The MMC requires the certificate in municipal financial management while COGTA's Appointment Regulations does not require the certificate. This was also the major source of unhappiness amongst participants in the interviews concerning the compulsory regulation to complete the certificate in municipal financial management training (MMC). Participants believed that it would account for stronger municipalities when jobs are secure, as is the case in terms of performance in L12 whose staff were appointed permanently before the appointment condition in the Performance Regulation of 2006. Equally many of these senior managers had already been in the employ of the municipality on a permanent basis, based on the length of time employed at the municipality (Table 5.5).

6.7 Objective 2: To explore the Auditor General Reports on the financial statements, municipal performance, financial management, integrated development programmes and service delivery.

The discussion will focus on the results of the analysis from the audits and performance of the municipality to present an understanding of what the data reveals. The data is consolidated to provide a better understanding of the key outcomes.

The variables considered in the Chi- square test to determine if a relationship existed between the year the MMC qualification was completed as compared to the annual financial audits of the municipality. The year considered to test for the relationship was selected from audited financial (AF) 2008/2009 as the Municipal Regulations on Minimum Competency levels, Gazette 29967, was only published in June 2007 with an estimated time to complete the qualification in five years and thereafter in an 18-month period. This implies the first candidates to qualify would only potentially have been around December 2008. The first three candidates amongst the senior managers completed in 2009, whilst one senior manager completed in 2008 as an intern.

The statistical test analysed the relationship between the year the Municipal Minimum Competency (MMC) training was completed and the outcome variable "AF1." The results showed that for the financial year 2012/2013, the test value was 17.149 with 8 degrees of freedom, and the p-value was 0.029, which is less than the significance level of 0.1.

This means that the p-value (0.029) is lower than the set threshold for significance ($\alpha = 0.1$), indicating a statistically significant association between the year of MMC training and the variable "AF1." As a result, the null hypothesis, which assumed no association or independence between these variables, was rejected.

In simpler terms, the year in which the MMC training was completed appears to have a significant impact on the outcome variable, suggesting that there is a relationship between the timing of the training and "AF1", that is, 2012/2013. Therefore, the two variables are not independent of each other. The analysis looked at the relationship between the year the Municipal Minimum Competency (MMC) training was completed and the outcome variable "AF1" for several years. The results are as follows:

- 2013/2014: The test value was 6.560 with 8 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.585, which is greater than $\alpha = 0.1$. This indicates no statistically significant association, and the null hypothesis (no association) was accepted. The conclusion is that there is independence between the year of MMC training and "AF1" for 2013/2014.
- 2014/2015: The test value was 18.591 with 16 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.29, which is also greater than $\alpha = 0.1$. This result shows no significant association, and the null hypothesis was again accepted, indicating independence between the variables for 2014/2015.
- 2015/2016: The test value was 9.329 with 8 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.315, which is greater than $\alpha = 0.1$. As a result, the test found no significant association, and the null hypothesis was accepted, meaning independence between MMC year and "AF1" for 2015/2016.
- 2016/2017: The test value was 8.772 with 8 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.362, which is also greater than $\alpha = 0.1$. This shows no significant association, so the null hypothesis was accepted, confirming independence between the MMC year and "AF1" for 2016/2017.
- 2017/2018: The test value was 12.143 with 8 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.145, which is greater than $\alpha = 0.1$. This means there was no significant association, and the null hypothesis was accepted, indicating independence between MMC year and "AF1" for 2017/2018.
- 2018/2019: The test value was 7.34 with 8 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.5, which is greater than $\alpha = 0.1$. Therefore, there was no significant association, and the null hypothesis was accepted, indicating independence between the variables for 2018/2019.
- 2019/2020: The test value was 21.359 with 16 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.165, which is greater than $\alpha = 0.1$. The test found no significant association, and the null hypothesis was accepted, meaning there is independence between MMC year and "AF1" for 2019/2020.

To summarise these findings for all the years from 2013 to 2020, the results consistently showed no statistically significant association between the year MMC training was completed and the outcome variable "AF1." In each case, the p-value was greater than the significance

level ($\alpha = 0.1$), leading to the conclusion that the variables are independent, meaning the year of MMC training completion did not significantly influence "AF1" across these years. A case in point L6 maintained an "unqualified with findings" rating meaning the financial statements were substantiated but performance reporting and compliance with legislation was not consistent, this was the second-best rating in terms of audits for 5 years since its weak performance from 2005-2008 as from 2013 it maintained a clean audit position for 6 years following. It is noted that the CFO only had the MMC qualification attained in 2017 along with 5 of the senior managers. This further supports the test result when no significance was found between the MMC year completed and the audit performance of the municipality. This idea is further echoed by the MM of L2 *"In practical sense senior managers would have made a success without MMC because they had experience"*. In his opinion experience should be valued and accounts of success in managing a municipality and should be considered very important. .

6.8 Consolidation of secondary data - quantitative analysis

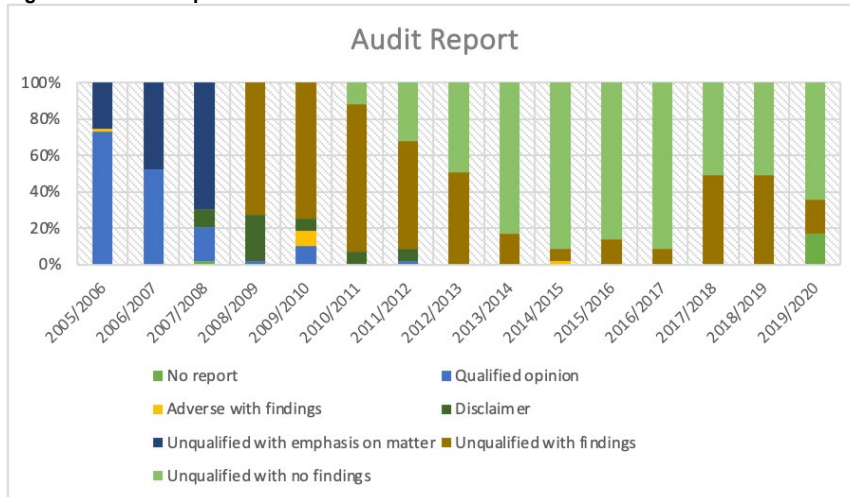
It is clear from the presented data that municipalities have struggled to maintain financial and legislative compliance and performance management standards as viewed through the lens of the Auditor-General. The struggle seems to have been in the introductory phases of the implementation of the MFMA of 2003 as a rigid requirement for implementation of financial management reforms. COGTA (2021:41) stated that the financial year 2005/2006 as depicted in (Table 5.6 AF1) was the first year when councils and mayors received the first sets of financial reports to exercise oversight over. Most municipalities battled for at least a five-year period from 2005/6 to 2009/10. This can be seen in (Tables 5.7-5.9). The stronger municipalities seem to have battled for at least three years into this period while weaker municipalities seemed to have carried this trajectory for seven years. The municipal elections of 2000, 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021 had something to do with vacancies and turnover of senior management staff, as the retention pattern of senior managers was for five years or less (LGSETA: 2019), with contract terminations and council turnover. The next local government elections, scheduled for 2026, is when a turnover of staff will clearly happen yet again as new councils are elected. In terms of classifying the first local government period from 2000 to 2006, this was considered as the settling in phase where some municipalities were amalgamated into one, along with the introduction of various local government legislation and the MFMA in 2003. The second period (2007 to 2011) may be classified as the

compliance phase with the introduction of the regulation from Treasury on MMC, performance contract from COGTA and other measures. The third period (2012-2015) may be called the consolidation phase in terms of capacity demands and appointment regulations. The fourth phase (2016-onwards) may be called the era of demand for superior performance, but also the season for national contestation around conflicting legislation between the mandate of COGTA and Treasury on the Human Resources function of municipalities and which legislations were superior and more applicable to appointments of senior managers. The various growth phases provides an indication of the experiences of the senior managers within the complexity of the democratic developmental state as it finds it feet to provide services to the community in a fair and equitable manner moving from the past discriminatory practices to delivery better performance. The collective audit performance of the municipalities over the period of 2005/6 to 2019/2020 is as follows:

6.9 Analysis of Audit Reports from 2005/2006 to 2019/2020

Figure 6.1 depicts municipalities' performance in relation to audits conducted by the A-G for compliance by municipalities in the areas of institutional performance. The summary assessment relates to the quality of financial statements, assets and liability management, audit committee and internal audit units, budget management, expenditure management, and unauthorised, irregular, fruitless, and wasteful expenditure. It relates the performance to consequent management, revenue management, strategic planning and performance management, financial statements and annual reports, transfer of funds and conditional grants, procurement, and contract management, that is, supply chain management and human resource management and compliance.

Figure 6.1: Audit Reports 2005-2020



Source: Author

These comments on the A-G audit reports shed light on challenges faced by local government officials when dealing with A-G audit reports. The complexity of local government operations makes it challenging to achieve full compliance across various areas, leading to irregular expenditure and other issues. The call for standardised supply chain certificates and training indicates a need for better procurement practices to avoid irregularities and ensure transparency in local government operations. The emphasis on management reports and their impact on workload suggests that the volume and quality of these reports need to be carefully evaluated to ensure they add value and lead to meaningful improvements. Additionally, the concern raised about the use of compliance-based metrics in performance evaluations highlights a potential gap in evaluating overall performance and effectiveness. While compliance is crucial, it should not be the sole factor in assessing competence and skills.

Overall, these comments indicate that there is room for improvement in the A-G audit process (Table 5.28) and how local governments handle compliance and management reports. It suggests the need for a newer approach to performance evaluation, a streamlined compliance framework, and targeted training to address the specific challenges faced by

local government entities (AG, 2020/21: 58-59). It is evident that municipalities in the Western Cape have worked hard to improve performance and hence the overarching analysis indicated that performance improved over time. The factors could not be directly attributed to the training interventions since difference existed in the employment status of permanent and contract staff, the revenue collection ability and the stability of the municipality based on council stability, which are all contributing factors to performance on a municipality.

The statistical interpretations' findings suggest that the consistent lack of statistical significance across all years implies that there is no evidence to conclude a true association, or dependence exists between the MMC year completed and the audited financial statement (AF1). Each p-value being greater than the alpha level (0.1) means that the observed differences or relationships could more likely be due to random chance, rather than a real effect. The analysis suggests that for each year from 2013/2014 to 2019/2020, there is no significant association between the variables 'MMC year completed' and the audited financial statement (AF1), indicating independence between these variables.

6.10 Objective 3: To explore the relevance of the MMC for the field of local Government and its human resource development

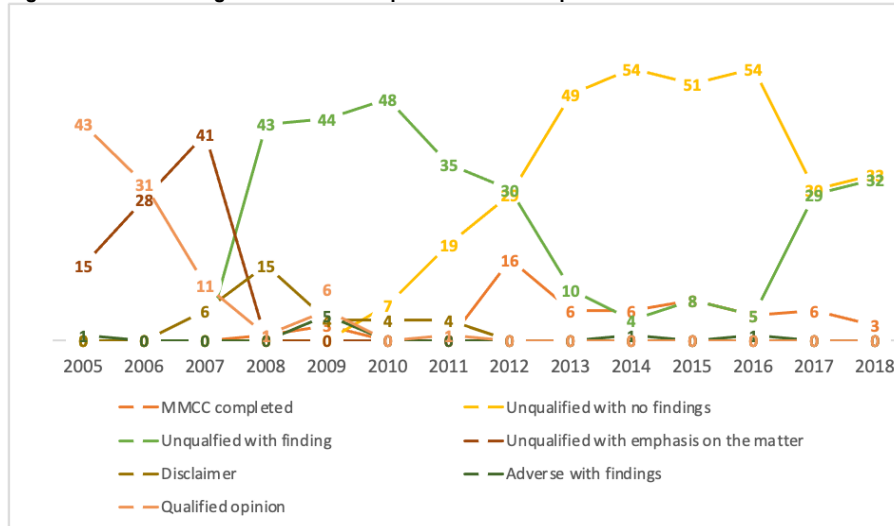
The MMC training brought about huge debate in the focus group discussion – many participants questioned its relevance and validity. It was clearly a gun pointed at each senior manager to comply. It was supposed to be a tool that had value, aided development and improved the response and performance of a municipality. The core function of a municipality is to deliver services to the community such as running water, refuse collection, environmental management, health protection and waste disposal – it is about ensuring that society is looked after and cared for. The relevance will be looked at from the perspective of participants to whom this regulatory requirement had the most personal impact.

6.11 Completion rate of municipal senior manager of the MMC from 2013 to 2020

The scatter diagram (Figure 6.2) indicates the time it took for managers to complete the MMC training, which was scheduled for 18 months. Most managers' completion records of this compulsory training programme took more than five years as illustrated in Table 5.8.

One cannot but question its relevance, the demand matched with the expectation that senior managers need to perform in line with the myriads of compliance regulations in practice. What should come first? Service delivery to communities or commitment to develop oneself for delivering perceived better services to communities. The purpose of a training intervention is to address a shortcoming in what a person can or cannot do or to advance the implementation of practice changes. It could also serve as induction of new managers to obtain an overarching foundation in a career domain. This is evident from the length of time senior managers took to complete and their narrative comments on the impact the training programme had on their lives during the training period of the five years, as initially legislated for the acquisition of this qualification because of its compulsory imposition in local government. One participant stated that *"It took him away from work for 18 months, your work mounted over a four-year period, it has an impact"*. A MM commented that *"It is not easy to study it when you in the job"*. As this was a National Treasury requirement in term of the MMC, little room existed to object even though the first period of the legislation was objected to with the many legal opinions sought by municipalities. The contestation even played itself out between the various legislation relating to the capacitation and appointment conditions of senior officials. (COGTA. 2018). The conclusion drawn from this contestation asserts that senior managers had specific ideas in terms of what they considered development which lead to the education pathway to sharpening their skills in the best interest of themselves for the benefit of job performance.

Figure 6.2: Scatter diagram on MMC completed and audit opinions



Source: Author

6.12 National Treasury MMC compliance Phase 3 2015-2018

Based on the time demands of work on practitioners, the first deadline to complete this qualification was 2013, the first notice was given of this compulsory requirement to retain positions as professionals in the local government sphere was given in 2007. The extension beyond periods of five years later (2017, 2018), were necessary to mitigate the vacancy impact of dismissing 79.7% or 47 of managers in the municipality selected for the study and as indicated in the Figure (5.14) on the compliance metric. The National Treasury released its report in 2017 on the level of compliance with its compulsory requirement to complete the municipal financial training as stated in the MMC regulation, the national metric of 1557 senior managers were 27,5% who completed the training. The Western Cape metric of 142 managers was 26%. While the National Treasury was attempting to enforce its regulation, the timely nature of introducing an additional qualification while individuals already possessed the prerequisite occupational degree or diploma to occupy the position as senior manager (MSA, 32:2000) is questionable. Very little alternative was left to the regulator but to

extend its unrealistic regulations and usher in more favourable conditions to retain staff already in practice who did not meet the competency requirements. The impractical regulation of dismissing all officials who did not achieve the functional financial and supply chain competency in the set time of 2013 and later 2017 and beyond cannot be a mandatory requirement because it is unsustainable to most working managers. Neither could it be the standard in a one fit all size approach. Yet distinctions were made in the MMC of qualifications based on the capacity of the municipality. Ntliziywana (2014:42) refers to the differentiation within the same framework for higher capacity municipalities needing higher qualification than lower capacity municipalities but the CFO requirement is the same for both municipal types. Attainment of a practice standard should be fair and reasonable with a relative measure of success especially for a category of management deemed as superior performers based on the rigour exercised to find these individuals at the recruitment and selection phases. These measures have been tested in court to assert the competency legislated for this position through the MMC framework developed for senior managers. (Paulse v Oudtshoorn Municipality CCT 54/2016)

Capacity building is designed to ensure that developmental local government continues as new reforms are introduced in the workplace. Financial management training was necessary to strengthen the implementation of the MFMA. Equally based on the national metric indicative index and completion rates of the MMC, it should have indicated to Treasury that all was not well in their attempts to drive legislative compliance for training that should rather have been a 'value add' and not an encumbrance which still, after 20 years of implementation, has not delivered the desired results. The need for the legislative extensions to prescripts is outlined in Table 6.1. to illustrate the difficulty of balancing work time demand to legislative regulations, rendering it impractical for the fulltime part-time working students.

Table 6.1: Prescripts set for the MMC attainment

Guideline for Municipal Competency Levels: Senior Managers Municipal Regulations on Minimum Competency Levels. 1 July 2007 National Treasury The Regulations require senior managers to meet minimum competency requirements in the four categories below and each discussed further in this guideline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial and supply chain management, competencies, as prescribed in the Regulations and described in these guidelines (see table) • Core managerial and occupational competencies, as described in the Municipal Performance Regulations issued in terms of the Municipal Systems Act • Higher education qualification – a first degree or diploma on NQF level 6 • Work-related experience 	
Implementation of the Regulations to existing staff	
Prescript 1	"When the regulations become effective, there will be existing senior managers in municipalities and municipal entities that do not meet the prescribed competencies"
Prescript 2	"The municipality or entity must ensure that the competencies of existing officials are assessed promptly in order to identify and address gaps".
Prescript 3	Where an existing official does not meet the prescribed higher education qualification and/ or required minimum competency level in the required unit standards, he/ she should enrol for appropriate SAQA recognised qualifications and address all other gaps on or before 1 January 2013.
Implementation of the Regulations to New staff	
Prescript 4	"The municipality and municipal entity may only recruit new senior managers that meet the prescribed financial and supply chain management competencies, higher education and prior experience requirements".
Prescript 5	"During the implementation period however, new officials that do not meet the prescribed competency levels may be recruited provided the official's continued employment is subject to a condition that the official attains the requirements no later than 1 January 2013".
Prescript 6	"This will require the official to attain the higher education qualification and the required minimum competency level in the required Unit Standards for each competency area on or before 1 January 2013".
Prescript 7: "After 1 January 2013 no person may be employed that does not meet the requirements of the Regulations."	
Work related experience	
Prescript 8	"Officials must be able to demonstrate previous work-related experience. This can be at senior management level or middle management level depending on the position, the municipality's capacity and/or budget size. Regulation 1 contains a definition of middle and senior management levels".
Prescript 9	"Where an official claim previous work-related experience outside the local government spheres the municipality or municipal entity will need to evaluate past work experience to ensure it is indeed substantially similar to the local government sphere".
Prescript 10	"Experience should be verified by contacting past employers, obtaining copies of job descriptions, and viewing examples of past work where appropriate."

Source: Adapted from Treasury Circulars

Table 6.2 presents the picture to the number of times that National Treasury had to change its regulations to accommodate the process of existing officials with huge workloads who could not complete the training according to Treasury. In 2017 the amendment to the minimum competency prescript seven, includes the provision to recruit senior managers from spheres and sectors other

than local government largely due to the lack of financial management capacity, allowing the new employees to obtain the MMC qualification in an 18-month period. The years of experience in attempting to enforce this regulation could not even make Treasury realise that if it was impractical and time consuming for this cohort the similar scenario would be prevalent in the future under this regulation. The transference or acknowledgement that Treasury is not indeed responsible for human resource capacity within a municipality with a statement of saying it should be included in a performance contract shifting responsibility to council to manage the consequence of a candidate that cannot complete the training for several reasons. A participant expressed that *“council uses it as a yard stick”, “It is used for conditions of appointments”*. This left participants in the study feeling vulnerable should they not complete the MMC training for any reason. Ntiziwana (2014:44) sites De Visser and Steytler in the uncertainty that the various conflicting regulations which does not serve the purpose to appropriate guide a practice.

Table 6.2: Response from Practice to Prescripts

How Did the Practice Respond in terms of Legal consequence for non-compliance?
<p>Prescript 7 Requirement After 1 January 2013 no person may be employed that does not meet the requirements of the Regulations. "This was a 5-year period given to obtain the qualification 2007-2013.</p> <p>Prescript 7 Extension 1 National Treasury Circular 60, of 2012:2 states that the primary aim of the MMC regulations, initiatives is to ensure greater accountability to the citizenry and improve sustained financial management practices as envisaged through the Constitution, the MFMA and other related legislation.</p> <p>Response: Officials did not comply hence an extension was granted exemption notice date March 2014</p> <p>Prescript 7 Extension 2: Due date 1 April 2014 to 2015 extension for qualification Extended to 30 September 2015 then granted 18 months to obtain it. A covering letter outlining plan of action, signed by the Municipal Manager, committing the Council to fast-track requirements for officials to complete their competency training within eighteen months of the deadline of 1 January 2013. Progress on SMC must be reported on a quarterly basis using Annexure B to map progress in achieving full compliance with the regulations. This will also be used for audit purposes. Municipalities have four months to prepare and submit requests for SMC, received by National Treasury on 7 September 2012 to allow for time to review, process and MFMA Circular 60 – 2012 feedback.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to delay enforcement of the deadline period by up to eighteen months; to 1 July 2014, provided the municipality has submitted a strong motivation in terms of the SMC above.</p> <p>Prescript 7 Extension 3 New Financial and Supply chain management Officials is strictly prohibited.</p> <p>Prescript 7 Norm New appointee granted 18 months to obtain MMC.</p> <p>Circular 91 Published 2017 Exemption notice from Regulation 15 and 18 will immediately apply. extended for existing officials.</p> <p>Provision for a new appointee to get qualification within 18months of appointment.</p>
Three Categories of appointments

1	Officials appointed before the regulation. The regulation did not affect them if they obtained the MMC by 30 Sept. 2015
2	Officials appointed after 1 July 2007 but before 30 Sept. 2015. The employment contract should stipulate must obtain by 15 Sept. 201. If they don't, they in breach of the employment contract
3	Officials appointed after 30 September 2015. Have 18 months to complete.

Source: Adapted from Treasury Circulars

6.13 Discussion of the relevance of the group view attitude

The attitude of an individual plays an important role in their success in a job. Boyatzis, (1982:14) relates personal characteristics, motives, and traits as important drivers of superior performance. The SMS Handbook (2003:7) also contains this in the competency framework for senior managers to ensure good management practice in provincial and national government. The competency development frameworks for local government place attitudinal competencies such as integrity and honesty (SA, 2014:12) to support the need for the orientation to customer focus and communication, as highly important. Yet throughout the MMC attitudinal competency ranks very low in considering the needs and requirements of the individual. The next section reflects on such views.

6.14 Sub-theme One: Explanation and understanding

The MMC training programme aims to equip local government officials with necessary financial and administrative skills. The group's responses reflect in (Table 5.36) a mix of positive and negative perceptions of the MMC training programme. The programme was appreciated for its contribution to filling essential skill gaps, particularly for less experienced staff. The emphasis on financial and asset management aligned with the MFMA regulations and was seen as crucial for ensuring compliance and promoting sustainable municipal practices. This suggests that the MMC training is beneficial when aligned with strategic objectives for local government. However, seasoned managers found the programme frustrating and irrelevant to their advanced level of expertise, viewing it as a regulatory hoop, rather than a meaningful developmental tool. The view from L1- Participant 2 expresses the sentiment, "*It was frustrating for seniors*".

The strong focus on compliance, without adequate customisation or recognition of prior experience, led to dissatisfaction, "*It did not value our experience, nor did it recognise our*

prior learning". Additionally, the perception that the programme benefited universities more than participants further undermined its credibility, *"It was costly and only benefited the university"* as expressed by participant 48. The call for more practical, strategy-focused content, particularly for senior officials like participant 33 and 53, *"Lack practical relevance"*, *"I would have preferred if it was about strategy"* highlights the need for reform of the MMC. Ultimately, while the training intent was to enhance municipal competency is acknowledged, its execution appears to fall short for experienced professionals, who demand a more distinct approach. It failed to address skill gaps effectively and did not alleviate the scarcity of qualified practitioners. The training was largely irrelevant and impractical for seasoned managers. Different criteria should be applied for those with substantial experience in local government.

The programme was viewed as a means for Treasury to exert control over local government officials, *"It is domination and exploitation by Treasury"* as stated by L5 participant 9. The training was dominated by compliance requirements, and many participated only because it was mandatory, *"If not compulsory I would not have done it"* as stated by Participant 55 of L14. The MFMA training was deemed more beneficial and relevant for junior employees *"It was for Juniors"*. The programme was considered inadequate in fulfilling the developmental and practical needs of participants. These points highlight significant areas of concern and dissatisfaction with the MMC training programme. Boyatzis (1982) emphasises that competencies are associated with a body of knowledge an individual uses as part of skills to perform in a job. While Charlton (1993:35) refers to the exhibition of attitude and behaviour, Mitra (2008:198) talks about intellectual qualities the views that the training was not offered at an appropriate level support the views of senior managers who viewed the training as either a repeat of the knowledge they already had and advocated that the training came too late for them, *"a different criteria should be used for experienced officials with 5-10 years in a municipality"* Participant 6 at L4, while it may be better suited for entry level officials *"If the criteria was employed for officials with 1-5 years, then the course is beautiful"* as pointed out by participant 6 at L4. The next section will discuss the issues with the MMC.

6.15 Sub-Theme Two: Issues with MMC

The discussion of the relevance of the group view listed in Table 5.37 presented common negative points including concerns about the relevance and practicality of MMC training, *"the*

focus on finance at the expense of management, new accounting frameworks which needs training” as expressed by L15 participant 57, while it was on finance there are already an issue related to the experience and expertise of lecturers. On the positive side, there is acknowledgment of the programme's formal legislative requirement and potential value *“it has legislative authority and meaning”* as mentioned in L11 participant 39, if improvements are made. This largely because the MFMA makes it a requirement for support to municipalities to be capacitated with training to implement the MFMA section 168 and this resulted in the competency regulation intended for financial officials (Ntliziywana, 2016:40)

The MMC programme was criticised for *“limiting the interest of individuals in joining local government”* as mentioned in L6 and for failing to attract new skills to the sector. Some participants questioned the programme's relevance in achieving its intended purpose and raised concerns about it being more focused on generating revenue. The compressed nature of the MMC programme, which takes people away from their jobs for extended periods, was seen as *“compromising service delivery”*. Some participants questioned whether the programme was still *“relevant”* and recommended a review to assess its continued usefulness

There was a concern about the permanence of the Chief Financial Officer's (CFO's) appointment, particularly in new areas. There are a few participants recommended making MMC a requirement for the CFO role *“It was meant for the CFO or supply chain”* as stated by participant in L8 and emphasised that it should be pursued and make MMC a requirement for relevant roles to enhance its impact and relevance.

There are concerns about the content accuracy and practicality of the MMC course, along with suggestions *“to include soft skills training, improve empathy”*, There is a common sentiment of dissatisfaction and a perception of the MMC as a burdensome compliance requirement with little practical benefit. Participants suggested that improvements could be made by *“integrating MMC into university curricula”* and aligning the course with specific practical needs to enhance its relevance and effectiveness in a degree or a postgraduate degree programme based on the volume of unit standards or courses associated to the MMC. For some, especially middle managers, and those lacking prior exposure to financial and legislative knowledge, it proved beneficial. However, experienced professionals found

the programme overly “*repetitive and time-consuming*” We have extensive experience course is irrelevant” as stated in L7.

Participant 4 stated that “*Overall assessment application of theory is what makes the individual competent. We need to find a marriage between base degree practical and on-the-job experience*”. There are a common sentiment of dissatisfaction and a perception of the MMC as “*a burdensome compliance requirement with little practical benefit*”. If it is not of practical relevance, then the programme has not met the intended outcomes. The common negative points include confusion during training, issues with the training process, a lack of succession planning, difficulties in attracting skilled personnel, and doubts about the effectiveness of the MMC course. The common positive point is that understanding public administration is considered beneficial, while a lack of succession planning, difficulties in attracting skilled personnel, and doubts about the effectiveness of the MMC course are drawbacks.

The MMC is a programme that aims to improve the financial management skills of municipal employees in South Africa. Senior Managers feel that the programme is irrelevant, difficult, not valuable, and unfair. They also feel that the program does not address their service delivery needs and challenges. The only positive aspect of the programme is that it is required by law and has some significance. The senior managers only appreciate its legislative status as it is linked to job retention – an unfair leverage, while senior managers see it as an add on of limited relevance.

The programme's legislative requirement ensures that it holds significance within the local government framework, and, for less experienced officials, it has proven beneficial by providing essential financial and administrative skills. However, the consensus leans towards the need for an overhaul of the MMC programme, with greater attention to its alignment with service delivery goals and “*more practical outcomes tailored*” to the varying levels of experience of participants.

Louw (2012:30) advocates the importance of soft skills like emotional intelligence, teamwork and self-management in the managerial function at senior management level, (Table 5.36) participants state “*a need for soft skills*” a point expressed in Chapter 1, while Slocum (2008)

speaks of multicultural competences. This flags the importance of other skills requirements, which are not present in the MMC. In table 5.37 participants stated that *“it did not cover technical skills”*. Becker (1996:24) states that the value in teaching is very important, hence concerns raised around the quality of lecturing staff participant 55 stated, *“lecturers had the content wrong”* remains important to stress the value of training intervention and that when new reforms are introduced the expertise is required from the teacher to transfer to the student. Van Dijk (2014: 328) and Harrison (1993:300) stresses that training and development must meet the job needs. Based on the participants concerns the training did not meet the needs of participants. Significant in that participants were interested in training but not the MMC which was compulsory. Relating to the issues of participants the AMO Theory expresses the sentiments of senior managers in that the ability, motivation and opportunity were not viewed through the compulsory participation in the MMC. At this level in the senior manager career cycle the importance of selecting added value training is specific and clear as this level of employee who were well settled and vested in their careers. Van der Waltdt, Fourie, van Dijk (2021:23) recommend that competency training programs' content must be updated to make provision of changing local conditions and the differentiation based on individual needs across the spectrum of competencies matching what the individual needs out of the training experience.

6.16 Recognition of Prior Learning

Based on responses of senior managers, the system of recognition of prior knowledge and skill was underutilised to assess the capacity needs of senior managers and support their career journey in a positive way, acknowledging skill, knowledge, and experience. The differentiation Knowles (1984) makes in the learning journey of adults is their experience, which acts as a resource and knowledge applied is based on actual experiences of working in a municipality for many years. Participant 40 indicated that many courses could have been left: *“we knew and had existing knowledge, and it was frustrating to attend”*. Participant 24 said: *“We should have been credited for our formal qualification as a preferred option and could simply add any of the certificate courses we needed ... it was a waste of our time”*. The policy allowed for recognition of prior learning to accelerate those who had knowledge and even formal modules that could have been exempted, the system for assessing RPL was underutilised to act as an advantage for those who could have benefited from it. Ralphs (2012) mentions that RPL is underutilised and could go a long way to providing support and

recognition for candidates who have gained knowledge through life, formal and informal and experience pitched at the correct level matching skill, knowledge, and experience.

6.17 Theme Two: To Determine the Effectiveness of MMC Training

The discussion will focus on professionalism, the perception linked to the MMC training, and what participants felt toward the compulsory nature of the MMC linking them to professionalism because of the competence declaration for finance. It will also look at the performance of the municipality and individuals.

6.17.1 Sub-theme Three: MMC professionalisation

Can the MMC be regarded as Professionalisation?

In answering the question, the discussion, and findings on the professionalisation of the MMC programme was presented in Table 5.38. Participants acknowledged the importance of accreditation and professional status in their respective occupations, *"I have my professional registration with my field of occupation"*. They did not consider the MMC as professionalising municipal management *"The training cannot account for professionalism"*. There was a suggestion that the MMC programme be structured to provide continuing professional development (CPD) points, like other professional bodies, to encourage ongoing learning and development. Many participants expressed dissatisfaction with the compulsory nature of the MMC programme, believing that it should not be a mandatory requirement for senior management positions. Some participants felt that the MMC programme did not recognise their prior education, experience, or professional qualifications, leading to redundancy for experienced professionals *"The training cannot account for professionalisation"*. Several participants highlighted that the MMC programme, as it stands, may not be sufficient for professionals in technical fields, such as engineering and environmental management, where specialised qualifications are necessary, *"I have a profession I am a Town Planner and registered"*. Participants raised concerns that the MMC programme may devalue the experience and qualifications of senior professionals as it was perceived as a quick fix rather than a comprehensive professionalisation effort. On financial modules, some participants indicated that the MMC programme appeared to be primarily focused on financial modules, which may not be relevant or necessary for all senior management roles in local government. The mismatched NQF level some participants believed that the MMC programme's NQF level (Level 5- 6) was too low for senior management positions and that it should be pitched

at a higher level (for example, Level 8) to hold more value and to be a career path and qualification improvement step. *“The course was pitched at a basic level below our qualification.”* Lack of credibility – participants were concerned about the credibility of the MMC programme compared to established professional bodies like SAICA (South African Institute of Chartered Accountants) and ECSA (Engineering Council of South Africa), *“The credibility of the MMC is in question”*.

The professionalisation through the MMC programme received mixed reviews. While some participants recognised its potential benefits in terms of accreditation and skills enhancement, others criticised its compulsory nature, lack of recognition for prior learning, and insufficient relevance for certain roles within local government. There were also concerns about the programme's NQF level and its credibility compared to established professional bodies and the leading practice developments and advances in knowledge. Professional bodies would alert and invite members to gain training which is specific and relevant. Chetty, Mokwele and Starr (2023:60) stressed the value of professional bodies and the role it can play in ensuring that members stick to a professional code of conduct.

6.18 Sub-theme Four: performance management

What is the performance management system in the municipality?

The key positive points on performance management as indicated by senior managers, were that a regular appraisals process occurs as indicated in Table 5.39 and participants in LM 5 mentioned that they have a quarterly appraisal system in place *“... we have standards to evaluate”*, which allows for continuous monitoring and evaluation of performance. When it comes to individual evaluation many participants stressed the importance of evaluating individual performance against specific standards, which helps guide their work effectively. This is also the point at which identification of training specific to the individual could be identified, should a person indicate, or an evaluator find, that there are areas of need in work performance that could be strengthened. Some participants emphasised the importance of performance management for compliance with regulations and standards, especially in areas such as good governance and financial management. In reference to upscaling capacity, several participants recognised the need to upscale the capacity of officials and managers to improve performance, *“... if you want to stay relevant you need a short course”*. The senior

management focus was on performance in some municipalities like LM 13 and LM14, where performance management was primarily implemented for senior managers.

The key negative points on performance management indicated that there was difficulty in measurement. Some participants found it challenging to measure and prove individual performance, which can be particularly challenging when dealing with complex tasks and responsibilities *"It will improve over time, clean audits come over time"*. Participants indicated incomplete implementation of PMS system in several municipalities, there was a sense that performance management systems were not fully implemented, and gaps still existed, especially at lower levels within the organization *"... not all staff is linked to performance system"*. The lack of objectivity some participants expressed frustration with performance management systems, believing they provided a skewed or inaccurate picture of their actual performance. They felt that qualifications and experience were not adequately considered. Citing that the compliance-driven approach, participants in LM 15 noted that their performance management system was compliance-driven, making it difficult to consider other performance criteria beyond extensive checklists *"it gives a poor picture of performance if you follow regulation"*. The inadequate evaluation for some positions some participants, especially in financial positions, felt that their work was evaluated yearly, which did not align with the quarterly review process and may not accurately capture their performance, *"I have been here for eight months my performance has not been evaluated"*. There is a lack of inclusivity and in some municipalities only senior managers were included in the performance management system, leaving out lower-level staff who may also benefit from such evaluations.

6.19 Theme Three: Human resource process used in local government

The human resources management in local government are governed by legislation and regulations in terms of its operation and COGTA is the accountable department for the drafting of such legislation. The main legislative documents that will have an influence on employment and the conditions are:

- Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act No. 117 of 1998)
- Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000)
- Public Administration Management Act, 2014 (Act No. 11 of 2014)

The follow-through on defining meaning to various sections of the legislation can be found in regulations such as the regulations on appointment and conditions of employment of senior managers (Government Gazette 37245 No.21 – 2014), and Municipal staff regulations (Government Gazette 40293 No. 1074 – 2016). The overarching frameworks such as the National Competency Development Framework provides the conceptualisation for what competence is required for local government as the success measure in this sphere.

6.20 The National Competency Development Framework for Local Government

Appointment in accordance the National Competency Development Framework for Local Government Success Profile specifies core attributes: experience (30%) – competencies (30%), knowledge (30%) and personal attributes (10%). The detailed understanding of experience is stated as “what I have done”; competencies as knowledge – academic qualification as “what I am capable of” and personal attributes – “who I am”.

The interpretation of this requirement contained in Municipal Regulation on Minimum **Competency** Levels for Senior Managers (2003) as a standard. These are:

Core Managerial and Occupational competencies - 30%

Municipal Performance Regulations – in terms of the Municipal Systems Act, 2003 – obtained through qualification prior to appointment.

Core Managerial Competencies are listed as: Strategic Capability and Leadership, Programme and Project Management. **Financial Management**, Change Management, Knowledge Management, Service Delivery Innovation, Problem Solving and Analysis, People Management and Empowerment, Client Orientation and Customer Focus, Communication, Honesty, and Integrity.

Higher Education – 30%

NQF level 6 for low-capacity municipality with budget below R500 million. Pre-entry requirement obtained before appointment with distinctions in municipal capacity.

NQF level 7 for High to Medium capacity with a budget of over R 500 million. (Higher Degrees such as Honours, Postgraduate Diploma) - Pre-entry requirement obtained before appointment with distinctions in municipal capacity.

Work related experience – 30%

Five years of minimum middle management level for low to medium capacity with budget R500 million. Seven years of middle management level of which 2 years should be at senior management level in high-capacity municipalities with budgets over R500 million.

Financial and supply chain management competencies - what I am capable of functional category.

Municipal Financial Management Act, 2003 – obtained through the MMC during the appointment of a senior manager.

For the local government senior manager there seems to be an additional layer built in which requires a two-layer system of competencies. In the knowledge and qualification area this an academic qualification (NQF Level 7) and lower-level Certificate in Finance – (NQF Level 5). This is largely due to the MFMA requirement which allows for National Treasury to support Local Government in the implementation of the MFMA and to offer capacity support. It is under this guise that the regulation on Municipal Minimum Competencies was developed. The financial competency requirement through the MMC addresses one of the core minimum competencies within the four categories as specified in the MMC regulation. The pillar of four relates to financial and supply chain management, core managerial competency, higher education and working experience. The system of MMC fails to provide competencies as compulsory in any of the various occupational fields required for performance of a senior manager in a specified position. This compulsory training sees the professional standard in a one size fits all strategy. The training failed to yield the results of firstly producing more financial capacity or to supply more capacity to a critical scarce occupational field for local government. A new framework will be proposed to meet the needs and expectations of senior managers, and this proposal delink the MMC as a compulsory training requirement framework.

The Appointment Regulation for these senior managers requires occupational competencies in various fields such as social science, public administration, law, engineering, environmental health, and accounting at the national qualification Level 7. The experience level of the job seeks advanced or good knowledge in policy, legislation, institutional governance systems, performance management, council operation, delegation powers, good governance, audit risk budget and finance in addition to belonging to a professional body (MMC, 2007:4).

6.20.1 The Quantitative Analysis on Work Related Experience of Senior Managers

The quantitative data analysis supported objective one and ascertained the qualification and work-related experience of senior managers appointed to the position. It, furthermore, supports the argument that managers were appointed with the pre-requisite qualification, meeting the requirements of the job. The first layer to determine a superior performer or a predictor of success is established at the recruitment and selection process as the requirements are outlined in the Table 6.2. In interpreting the requirement and comparing it to the MMC it contradicts as it gives preference to one functional category in the knowledge area where the occupational and disciplinary knowledge resides. It also devalues the other competency categories and gives credit to the weakness expressed in the MMC training by participants as it does not include what they require as capacity development. This is expressed in statements such as *“modules were unnecessary”*, *“It was inadequate”* and *“it does not cover our occupation”* because *“it was meant for the CFO or supply chain”* (Table 5.37). The reference to what has been decided for LG in terms of success profiling can be understood as represented in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: LG: Core Attribute Success Profile

	NCDFLG core attributes	Local Government Appointment Competency Conditions
What am I subjected to?		Appointment Evaluation Assessment Requirements Qualification, Assessment Test, Interviews Rating Scale: Basic, Intermediate, Competent, Advanced, Superior
What have I done?	Experience (30%)	Experience: 5 years in senior management (MM) middle management (S57)
What I am capable of?	Competencies (30%)	Competencies: Advanced or Good Knowledge in Policy; Legislation; Institutional Governance Systems, Performance Management, Council Operations, Delegation of Powers, Good Governance, Audit risk Budget & Finance
What I Know	Knowledge (30%)	Knowledge: Occupational competencies: Social Science: Public Administration, Law, Engineering, Environmental Health, Accounting, Project Management etc. NQF level 6,7. MMC consisting of 24 Modules for AO, 16 Senior Managers (S57). 18 Months to complete
Who I am?	Personal Attributes 10%)	Professional Body Registration, Attitude, Personality, Team Player

Source: Adapted from NCDF

The model proposed by Slocum and Mitra (2008) as stated in chapter one discusses the levels of competencies that are used in the assessment process to determine suitability of the senior management position to predict the success of a superior performer. The NCDFLG assigns categories and percentages to the entry requirement for a position taking into consideration experience, competencies, knowledge and personal attributes through the appointment and evaluation assessment process before appointment. Local Government uses the levels to declare a candidate competent on a five-scale system viz. basic, intermediate, competent and advanced and expert. It is also the criteria that any candidate who fails in the appointment process uses to challenge appointment in court. This also becomes the same measure that the MEC uses to address councils' decision on candidates who were appointed but does not rate as the best for the position on the rating scale. Local Government has experienced many such cases going to court in the recent past. This will be elaborated on under objective four. (COGTA: 2014 Municipal Performance Regulation. Annexure B). Significant in the knowledge area for competencies a distinction is made in the

amount of knowledge to be gained between a Municipal Manager and CFO requiring the 24 modules, yet the CFO in terms of position in the organisation is at the same level as a senior manager. This differentiation had brought local government challenges in using senior managers in an acting role when a vacancy exists.

6.21 Appointed officials and MMC training completed

Local Government Regulations on Appointment and Conditions of Employment of Senior Managers (2014) set out proficiency levels for the appointment of senior managerial staff in the local government sphere. The regulations set out proficiency level statements ranging as follows for qualification for senior staff: Level 5 – Expert who has a postgraduate qualification at NQF level 8 with 15 years of experience, six in local government and registered with a professional association. Level 4 – Advanced with postgraduate qualification at NQF Level 7 with 10 -12 years of experience, five years at local government level with professional registration. Level three – Competent a first degree or a BTech qualification at NQF 6 with 8-10 years working experience 2-3 at senior to middle management level experience in local government. Level 2 - Intermediate a relevant or equivalent graduate higher national diploma and specialisation at NQF 6 with 5-7 years of experience and professional registration. Level 1 - Basic less an equivalent graduate qualification at NQF 5 (National Diploma) with 4 years' experience with 3 at middle management level (LG, Annexure B 2013:34).

The formal requirement for senior managers employed in a low-to-medium-capacity municipality with an annual budget of below R500 million is a higher education qualification at an NQF level 6 or a Certificate in Municipal Financial Management, with a credit value of 166. This certificate is rated at the same level as a formal degree, yet it does not meet the required course credit value of 240 for a formal degree qualification. The contradiction in practice conflicts with the entry requirement of the appointment conditions for senior managers and the acceptability of the MMC only for appointment in local government. The most contentious point to practitioners who have formal university qualification has to do with having to comply with the compulsory requirement to complete the MMC, even though they have years of experience at local government management levels. This Certificate in Municipal Financial Management if a municipal official completes the MMC modules of 21 courses, which essentially is the compulsory requirement of an Accounting Officer; Chief Financial Officer, while a Senior Manager required completing 16 of the 21 courses to gain

the competency to retain their position. The contradiction in the legislation implies that should a vacancy exist for a municipal manager, no senior manager will be able to act in that position because they have not completed 21 modules, as the senior manager's compulsory module requirement is 16 modules. (SA, 2007:13-17). It is highly likely that at any given time a senior manager would be required to act as a municipal manager for one reason or another. This also bring about a problem in terms of funding the training should the senior managers opt to complete the five additional modules in the training basket. The section below focuses on the appointment situation of senior managerial personnel in various focus group discussions.

The candidate would need to, according to the competency framework, undergo an assessment test which is assessed for fitness of appointment and rated in categories of basic, competent, advanced, and superior. These criteria have been tested in the various court cases around appointments and assessment for suitability of the positions. The first declaratory order were issues around 2016 in the following cases *Paulse v Oudtshoorn Municipality* - Mnyabi was appointed by council as MM without meeting the prescribed requirements of the *Performance Regulations*. [85] ... the decision of the council and any contract concluded between the council and Mr Mnyabi in consequence of that decision, are null and void. In the case of *MEC KZN Dept of COGTA v IFP Abaqulusi municipality* (Case No: 10304/13) (appointed Mthembu as MM despite suggestions of misrepresenting his credentials in applying for the post. The MEC applied for and was granted an order interdicting the appointment pending a final ruling on the decision. The case of *Penxa v Central Karoo District and Others* (4913/24) [2024] ZAWCHC 151 (5 June 2024) details the choice of a municipal council on the appointed candidate for municipal manager. The choice of candidate was contested by an applicant who did not get the position on the grounds that he had scored better in the entry assessment test benchmarked against the regulation on minimum competency. The Declaratory Order that the Minister of Local Government submitted in support of setting aside the appointment of the Central Karoo Council was granted based on the appointed municipal manager not having the prerequisite competencies set out in section 54A (2) and 3(a) of the Local Government Municipal Systems (Act 32, of 2000) along with the Local Government: Regulations on Appointment and Conditions of Employment of Senior Managers of 2014. It was referred to council to appoint a candidate who meet the minimum competency level, as contained in Section 5 of

Annexure A, detailing the specific achievement levels of competent and higher to the levels of advanced and superior ratings in the assessment phase of recruitment and selection process. The judgement drew a distinction in terms of the meaning of terminology in that competence, in line with Regulation 9, means the total sum of parts (MFMA) (finance, core occupation, qualification, and work experience) meaning in the 4 areas and competencies, which cut across all levels of the work in a municipality. According to the Minister of COGTA it had issued a response to the Parliamentary Monitoring group around the vacancy rate in the country as of 7 June 2023 there were 257 Senior Managers with 194 Municipal Manager and only 62 was appointed, in the CFO category 178 post exist and only 78 was occupied. This is the status and the most likely the critical skills gap in these two levels of position in local government, (COGTA 2023).

6.22 Subtheme Five: Training needs analysis

Many participants from various municipalities indicated that there were no needs assessment conducted as L1 stated it *“lacked focus”* training, indicating a failure to assess the specific training requirements of their respective roles and areas. Regarding the regulatory framework, participant 1 from L1 municipality expressed *“frustration and a perception that it did not align with industry needs”*. This lack of alignment with industry requirements was seen as a key issue. In some cases, like in L9, the decision to make the training compulsory was not well received by participants who believed that individualised needs assessments would have been more effective. Goude et.al 2004, stated the this is the part of the cycle of training identification for organizational need. The lack of strategic planning as stated by participants, particularly from L9, raised concerns about the absence of a strategic human resource management plan and a lack of dedication within municipalities to follow such plans. This resulted in reliance on consultants for planning and a lack of ownership by municipalities for critical initiatives. The recognition of experience and qualifications the training programme seemed to prioritise unit standards and specific qualifications over years of experience and higher academic qualifications, causing frustration and perceived unfairness among participants. Many participants across different municipalities felt that they were not adequately consulted or interviewed regarding their training needs and preferences. Botha and Coetzee (2007) speak about proactive or reactive training. If Treasury assumed the position that this would be the future requirements in a municipality it should then be stated that the training programme was proactive to meet what might be a predictive gap.

The response of participants assumes a reactive stance as they would have preferred to be consulted on training needs. One can then assume that senior managers favoured a proactive approach as they would have wanted to identify skills gaps themselves. Proactive training identification works best if the organizational thinking is aligned with a future strategic plan which all employees have opted to adopt in sharing the same vision. Trainer (2001) postulates that competency-based training needs analysis should be aligned with competencies required for the various roles. This is relevant as senior managers played various roles in the municipality.

Many participants indicated that a needs assessment was not conducted before implementing MMC training. Some participants acknowledged the need for specific qualifications, like GRAP standards, to address financial management issues in their municipalities. There was recognition of the importance of training for evaluation panels to assess performance and scoring effectively. Participants expressed frustration and disappointment over the lack of a needs assessment, indicating that this oversight may have resulted in a mismatch between the training content and the actual needs and preferences of individuals and municipalities. There was also frustration with the compulsory nature of the training programme as some believed it should have been tailored to individual requirements. Some participants highlighted the arbitrary nature of MMC requirements, where individuals with varying levels of education and experience were subjected to the same training, even when their needs may have differed. The absence of a needs assessment raises concerns about the efficiency and effectiveness of MMC training as it may not address the specific gaps or challenges faced by employees in the local government sector.

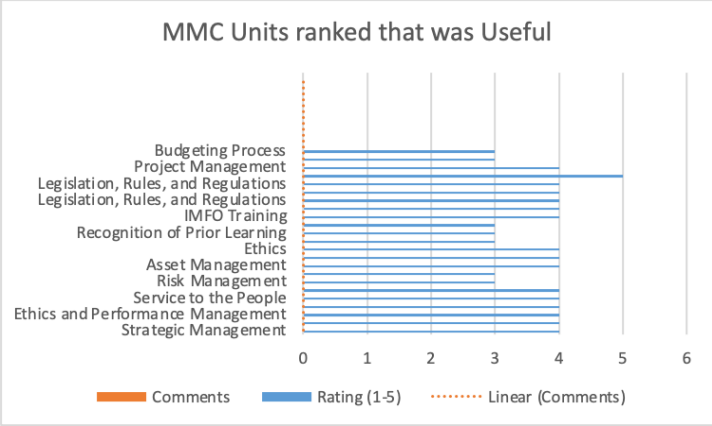
In 2008, the national cabinet initiated a nationwide skills audit to assess local government capacity and identify critical competency gaps. In the Western Cape, out of 178 senior management positions, 33 managers participated in the audit. Results showed 63.7% performed at a basic level in financial management, 69.7% at an intermediate level in diversity management, and 60.6% at a basic level in strategic leadership. Overall, 24.2% of managers scored at an advanced level, while 45.2% performed at a basic level. Despite these findings, low participation indicated a need for national standardised interventions, particularly in financial and strategic management. The audit followed the introduction of

MMC training in 2007, highlighting the need for more comprehensive needs assessments to address skill gaps and turnover rates at the senior management level. The audit was not the valid basis on which the MMC was decided. This implies that the Treasury was intentional in deciding that it would not consider work experience and qualifications in its strategic agenda to ensure implementation for the decided strategy. COGTA in its appointment condition makes provision for gaps identified and this should be taken through to performance agreements and the senior managers should attempt to address what was identified by Participant 56 in (Table 5.39). This participant indicated “*there were no gaps identified*”.

6.23 Sub-Theme Six: Usefulness of the Course

Participants expressed diverse sentiments regarding the value of the course as specified in Table 5.41. While it was beneficial for those lacking financial and compliance knowledge, experienced individuals found the duration excessive and the content repetitive and time-consuming ‘*Courses were basic, and many of us had done them in our degree*’. The opinion regarding usefulness of the course varied widely, indicating a lack of tailored content for different experience levels. It is evident that the approach to the course, its duration, and content did not cater effectively for the needs of experienced senior staff.

Figure 6.3: Ranking order for modules of interest.



Source: Author

Participants found some modules relevant as indicated in (Table 6.4). Several participants found certain course modules useful, such as those related to asset management, ethics, service to the people, and risk management. The training programme helped participants broaden their understanding of municipal budget management and government legislation, addressing gaps in their prior education. Participants appreciated interaction in the classroom and the opportunity to learn from experiences shared and practices of other municipalities *“The info system was good for learning from other municipalities.”*, which improved their relationships and understanding, especially from a financial perspective. Some participants acknowledged that the course provided practical knowledge and insights into problem-solving issues, enhancing their capabilities in local government. Some participants believed that the training had improved their strategies and provided an eye-opener in terms of service delivery. Participants recognised the value of such training for newcomers entering the municipal environment, providing them with a crash course in real-time operations.

The participants felt that there was no recognition of prior learning, which led to redundancy in some modules for individuals with extensive experience. Many participants expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that the training was compulsory and considered it to be at a relatively low NQF level (Level 6), which they believed was more suitable for certificate programmes rather than comprehensive training for senior managers. Some participants felt there was no consideration for individuals with years of experience, and they were not given the option to skip certain modules based on their prior knowledge. The identification of the gap in the training to address technical fields was highlighted as the absence of technical fields like spatial planning, water and sanitation regulation, and electricity in the course content, which they believed was essential for senior managers in local government. The different fields emphasised the diverse nature and content that senior managers were skilled within the varied occupational categories. Participants found that certain ideas and materials were repetitive across multiple modules, potentially making the course less efficient. They also felt that the MMC training did not adequately cover technical aspects relevant to specific roles within local government. Some participants expressed the view that there was a limited emphasis on project management in the course content, considering that it is a crucial skill for local government practitioners. While some participants found value in specific modules

and interactions with peers, there was a notable dissatisfaction with the level of the course, its compulsory nature, and the lack of recognition for prior learning and role-specific content.

There was a consensus among some participants that the course could be improved to better meet the needs of senior managers in local government. Coetzee (2002) postulates that after training, which had to be included in the delivery of the MMC as a unit standard, was improvement of knowledge, skills, attitude, and values that could be demonstrated after the training and that not addressing the skills needs of managers would not succeed in enhancing this intention.

While senior managers acknowledge that they wanted to be capacitated in areas they deemed necessary, the legislative requirement did not deliver that which they recognised within their needs as capacity to be nurtured and developed. To emphasise some called it a “refresher course”, “duplication of prior courses attended”, some indicated that “RPL should have been used to avoid duplication”. Others indicated that the course on Risk and Asset management was useful, they appreciated the ethics modules, and a few indicated law and governance for those who did not have a public management background. To locate the courses identified, participants found the two modules within the strategic management grouping useful, two in municipal accounting and risk management and two in the governance and legislation useful. What they particularly emphasised was the experience or case studies or scenarios discussed from peer municipalities. They equally placed a large emphasis on the need to prepare them as leaders in the soft skill domain. Based on the data collected a proposed framework for the soft skill development shall be presented and secondly to recommend the potential design of model for training.

6.24 Objective Four: To explore the Content Relevance, delivery mode, time spent and assessment of the MMC in relation to the senior managers’ position and the performance in this role.

This section explains the content relevance delivery mode, time spent and assessment of the MMC in relation to the senior manager’s position and their performance in this role.

McClelland and Boyatzis’ work on competency-based training emphasises the importance of aligning training programmes with actual job competencies. The responses indicate that

while the MMC training was designed to improve competencies in financial management, some felt *“it did not align well with their existing skills”* and did not meet the developmental local government needs. Botha and Coetzee (2007:48) as discussed in chapter two underscore this point in outlining the purpose of formal training as a facilitator of competencies and knowledge. The argument that, the MMC has failed to be fit-for-purpose as a one-fit-all strategy at the level of senior management surveyed was not valued but completed as this was legislated to discern a senior manager as a competent professional in local government. Warnich et al. (2015:585) define competence as a particular skilled employee possesses. The dissatisfaction of participants emerged largely because senior managers already possessed skills that were disregarded when deciding their level of the training and needs.

6.25 Impact of competency regulation on human resource management

The overregulation of competency requirements may contradict established principles of human resource management and question the effectiveness of training in addressing job performance or skills gaps. The misalignment in terms of career pathing and the requirement of completing a full qualification at the NQF Level 5 through specific unit standards was seen by senior managers as misplaced, an insult to professionalisation, and a step back for a competency that was not essentially a priority for occupational fitness for purpose. Participants contended that it was a misuse of legislative authority by the financial sphere for the problems experienced within the poorly constructed reform process for financial officials and supply chain management. Participants contended that they were never opposed to training as part of development but should have a choice in terms of what they value as necessary for individual capacity improvement needs based on their specific training gaps. They mentioned that the old system of MFMA training was beneficial in advising on new requirements in financial reforms. Senior Managers furthermore questioned the impact of rigorous training reform and compulsory requirement. Despite the MMC training, municipalities continue to face poor audit outcomes, including financial irregularities, maladministration, corruption, and mismanagement. The persistence of management issues and poor audit outcomes raises concerns about the effectiveness of the MMC professionalisation practice in achieving its objectives and improving service delivery. This view is strongly supported by COGTA in the State of Local Government Report (2021:76) which questions the impact the MMC training had on senior managers stating the following:

- “Whilst minimum competency frameworks have been introduced for senior management it is questionable whether or not they have made any impact, particularly given that these are NQF level 5 qualifications for people who usually have at least an NQF6 qualification”.

Further provides statistics in as follows:

- “As of 31 January 2020, only 1 565 out of 2 747 municipal officials meet the minimum competency levels. Out of 248 CFOs, only 128 (51.6 per cent) have achieved minimum competency levels. 53.7 per cent of senior managers have achieved minimum competency levels”. “The existence of MMC regulation and enforcement has been around since 2007. 14 years later the achievement of MMC is still lagging behind” (COGTA: State of Municipalities: 2021).

COGTA: Ministers responded to the PMG in 2023 and indicated that there are 194 municipal managers position in the country and only 62 positions were occupied, in municipalities there are 178 chief financial offers positions and only 78 positions were occupied. Based on the picture presented by the oversight department one can deduce that there is a fair number of challenges in the area of financial personal.

6.26 Theme Five: The time demand spent on MMC training

It cannot be that an intended training programme to fix perceived issues becomes more time demanding and intensive equating to the length of time to complete a formal three-year degree. What would the purpose be, and would it even realise the idea of ensuring improvement in the functional competence of finance in a municipality? It is noble to attempt to ensure the future outputs of an organisation, but before this happens it is pertinent to recognise competence that is driven rigorously at the appointment stage The MMC should be evaluated for its impact in terms of the time, volume of content and relevance to be regarded as the professionalising element attached to job retentions. The MMC was implemented in 2007, 20 years later the local government sphere still battles to ensure that under the competency framework banner to attract, educate and produce competent senior managers. The statistic published by the Department of COGTA.

6.27 Issues with training

Participants expressed the following views specifically: “I am not a financial specialist; I am a policy specialist, and I find this intervention boring. In a nutshell it did not add value to my business, we did the course 3 years ago and did not receive results immediately”.

In Becker’s view (1996:23), the time to train has a direct impact on the productivity outputs of an individual. The economic position of senior managers mentioned in terms of time spent in the classroom further illuminates Becker’s thinking. This view is supported by the misalignment of the MMC training stating what the actual needs as expressed by Participant 41 and stated as: “the MMC overlooks the infrastructure masterplan. There is no dedication in municipalities for these plans as consultants do it. So, no ownership by municipalities, which are not internalised that would predict and forecast for example water needs”. This view further advances the suggestion that the training would have to focus on senior managers’ areas of occupational interest and not the one fit all MMC approach.

Municipalities in South Africa face persistent challenges such as service delivery failures and inadequate revenue collection. These issues lead to varied performance outcomes, ranging from clean audits to regressing audits with significant findings. The performance disparities are often influenced by the location and economic context of the municipalities. In response, the Department of Cooperative Governance, in collaboration with provincial authorities, has developed the Results Management Office (RMO) strategy. This strategy aims to support, capacitate, and resource municipalities to fulfil their mandates effectively.

Participants in the study expressed a need for training that is consultative rather than compulsory. They felt that the dogmatic approach to training undermined the democratic value of choice, which is crucial in a sector that must embody democratic principles due to South Africa’s historical context. Participants emphasized the importance of having a say in their own development, particularly in a sector that promotes community participation in development processes.

Key points raised by participants include:

- The need for new approaches to capacity development in local government, rather than repeating the Municipal Minimum Competency (MMC) training.

- The Treasury's focus on strengthening the capacity of Chief Financial Officers (CFOs) and supply chain management officials should have been more targeted towards those whose roles would benefit most from the training.
- Broader consultation with senior managers should have been a priority to ensure the training met the needs of all relevant officials.
- More emphasis should be placed within further training on occupational fields.
- Soft skills training is so important to navigate the range of difficult situation and conflict to navigate.
-

6.28 Soft Skill Mediation Competency

Based on the needs expressed and the various types of issues experience by participants to navigate various conflicting situation during the position it has given rise to the development of a concept called Soft Skill Mediation Competency. (Whitaker, A.2025)

Soft Skill Mediation Competency is defined as the integrated use of interpersonal, emotional, and communication abilities that enable a mediator to facilitate constructive dialogue and manage conflicts effectively. This competency emphasizes the human element in mediation, focusing on emotional intelligence, active listening, empathy, adaptability, and cultural sensitivity to foster mutual understanding and collaborative problem-solving between disputing parties especially protest. (Whitaker, 2025)

6.29 Future outputs

Becker (1996:30) also views skills as property rights, which are automatically vested. A skill cannot be used without permission of the person possessing it. The property right of the worker in his skills is the source of his incentive to invest in training (Becker, 1996:30). Looking at skills senior managers already possessed, namely, formal qualification, explains why they felt undervalued when the MMC training was forced on them. After the training, senior managers own the property rights that serve as value only in the context of brokerage to a position in local government. They do not see the MMC as professionalisation, but rather as a period during which legislation held a gun to their heads for malicious compliance, making the approach to professionalisation less self-driven for the benefit of desirability and actualisation.

The specific nature of MMC training intent was to realise future outputs of municipalities in managing public funds better. The contention of senior managers was that they already possessed this knowledge, thus nothing was acquired in this form of specific training albeit time spent because it did not improve their competence to manage municipalities and be more productivity in their roles. Becker (1996:31) contends that while specialised knowledge is useful for one sector it may have no usefulness for others, especially if it is not well timed or valued as a means of wanted acquisition and property skills. Noting that the MFMA was in its infancy stage of implementation when the training was legislated after a mere four years of financial reforms, the preference of managers was to receive training that was much more specific to implement the processes, procedures and systems as legislated in the MFMA.

According to Becker 1996:37), training that is specific to an industry/occupation is less likely to have a high turnover based on the skilling. The turnover within the municipal environment was very high even though people were forced to undertake the MMC because councils used the MMC to discriminate in the appointment process. This had a profound impact on senior managers who valued colleagues with higher qualifications. Leaders in their field were dismissed from municipal managers' position who did not value the MMC as necessary since their qualifications were much higher than what this practice and professionalisation was. The legislation used by councillors had the effect of getting rid of highly regarded industry practitioners in local government, hence the promulgation of legislation (MSA, 2022) to create senior management retention.

Workers with training "specific" to an industry, occupation, or country are less likely to leave that industry, occupation, or country than other workers, so their industrial, occupational, or country "turnover" would be less than average. The same result is obtained for specific training, except that a firm, rather than an industry, occupation, or country is used as the unit of observation in measuring turnover.

The Occupational Competency Framework rates the requirements in order of importance with knowledge as the top priority (here competency levels are management of major projects, lead and make decision in unpredictable environment etc.), followed by years of experience (meaning 8 years or more), and qualification (a relevant tertiary qualification). It

further regards functional competencies, public service orientation, personal competencies, management, and leadership.

Using the unit standard approach of MMC, the university has capitalised on two systems, that is RPL and used it to develop the honours programme in public accountability, allowing for progression and recognition of the 16 to 24 modules. It further requires the candidate to add modules that are written into the qualification to be awarded the Honours degree. It would have been the preference of senior managers to rather have a postgraduate qualification linked to professionalisation than the unit standard option. While the revamp has appeared in the local government Municipal Systems Act of 2021, it still has not addressed the issue of the requirement of a qualification linked to professionalisation that requires time pressure of 18 months if one is a new employee and expected to do the honours degree as recognition for professionalisation. Due to the specificity of the requirement, it could be used at the occupational level for younger employees in the finance and supply office, but building a career path could lead to the acquisition of an honours degree provided that municipal staff have a first degree or diploma, which would then be the entry requirement to the honours programme.

Referring to the time assigned to the MMC, it is very time intensive according to Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964). The time demand on training must be balanced with the anticipated return on investment. Longer or more intensive programmes may deter individuals who face high opportunity costs, leading to a preference for shorter, more flexible skills development programmes that yield quick returns. In terms of the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991:190), time constraints may influence an individual's perceived behavioural control - if they feel they lack the time, they may be less likely to commit to longer or more intensive programmes. Training programmes must accommodate these perceptions by offering flexible time schedules.

Vroom's (1964) Expectancy-Value Theory as mentioned in chapter two suggests the relevance of time demand when selecting skills development programmes; individuals weigh the time required against the perceived value or benefit of the outcome. Programmes with a high expected benefit, but a low time demand will likely be more attractive. In the 70-20-10 Model of Learning and Development, 70% of learning comes from on-the-job experiences,

20% from social interactions, and 10% from formal training. Since only 10% of learning is attributed to formal training, this model implies that skills development programmes should focus on time-efficient, practical applications, leveraging real-world experiences to reduce the time burden on learners. This was mentioned by some of the participants who said they learned more from hearing the practices at other municipalities. Cost-Benefit Analysis in training involves weighing the costs (including time) of a training programme against the benefits, such as skills acquisition and career advancement. Individuals or organisations conducting a CBA will consider the time demand as a key factor. Programmes that take too long or do not align with work schedules may be deprioritised in favour of those that offer rapid or more flexible learning paths. Time-Based Learning Theory explores the impact of time constraints on learning efficacy, particularly in adult education. It acknowledges that adults have varied time availability due to work, family, and other commitments. Consequently, programmes must be designed with adult learners in mind, providing flexible scheduling, modular learning, or self-paced options to reduce the burden of time.

Summary

The long-standing challenges municipalities encounter, such as service delivery failures and lack of revenue collection, will always result in varied performance from clean audits to regressing audits with findings or weaker, largely due to the location and economic context of residence and business in the current economic climatic conditions in South Africa. The Department of Cooperative Governance developed its latest Results Management Office (RMO) strategy along with provinces to support, capacitate and resource municipalities to deliver on their mandate. The following points serve as an understanding of participants' needs and what should transpire:

- Participants had a need for training; it would have served the situation well if they were consulted and not whipped into participating in training because it was compulsory.
- The approach was dogmatic, and the democratic value of choice was removed in a sector where participants must realise democracy based on historical past.
- Participants should have a say in selecting for their own development, especially in a sector that affords participation of communities its development,
- The MMC should not be repeated as part of capacity development and new approaches should be developed for local government.

- While the intention of Treasury was primarily to strengthen the capacity of CFO and officials in supply chain management, it should have first nurtured the focus of the training for those officials whose occupations were best served.
- Consultation could have included the rest of Senior Managers, but this should have been the desired intent on the part of officials.
- Boyatzis (2008) states that desired, sustainable change maintains a desired state, relationship, or habit and may bring about better service orientation such as empathy, discovery of mindfulness. The development state of local government requires officials who behave in the best interest of communities.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

Boyatzis (2008) highlights that sustainable change requires maintaining desired states, relationships, or habits, which can lead to better service orientation, including empathy and mindfulness. For local government to develop effectively, officials must act in the best interests of the communities they serve.

This chapter will present the attainment of research objectives, provide a framework for an alternative system, and make recommendations based on these insights gained to enhance the effectiveness and responsiveness of local government in South Africa.

7.2 Main research question

How has the compulsory Municipal Minimum Competency (MMC) training for local government impacted the effectiveness, efficiency, and performance of service delivery?

7.3 Research aim

The research aim was to explore the implications and effectiveness of the MMC professionalisation practice in addressing the challenges faced by municipalities in South Africa. These issues highlight the complexity of implementing competency regulations in local government and the need for a deeper examination of their impact on management performance and service delivery.

7.4 Key issues

The key issues highlighted in the problem statement relate to the authoritative training approach and its implementation for training and development in municipalities across South Africa, specifically through the MMC training requirement, that posed significant challenges for effective service delivery. The compulsory nature of the MMC training has sparked controversy due to its impact on job retention within local government, leading to potential employment termination for non-compliance, especially since it is viewed by senior managers as unnecessary for many occupational categories at senior level in a municipality.

The main aspect of this controversy centred around the compulsory nature of this regulation. The attainment of the research objectives is summarised below:

7.5 Objective 1: To ascertain the qualification and work-related experience of Senior Managers appointed to the position (S56 and 57 of the MSA)

- Senior Managers met the appointment conditions and had appropriate occupational qualifications and work experience of five years or more.
- There is a lack of gender representation at senior management levels.
- The limited use of RPL to attain the Certificate in Municipal Finance was noted.
- Training needs analysis was not conducted to inform the training intervention.
- Not all senior managers belonged to professional bodies.
- Senior Managers did not regard the MMC as professionalisation.

7.6 Objective 2: To explore the Auditor-General's Reports on Financial Statements, Municipal Performance, Financial Management, Integrated Development Programs and Service Delivery

- There was no statistically valid relationship between the MMC completion and the audit findings in municipalities.
- Many municipalities incrementally increased the quality of their audit outcomes to reach the top rating of 'clean audits', while some still resided in the space of 'unqualified with findings' still indicating flagging performance and noncompliance with the law. Regression of findings was seen in some of the municipalities across the study but on average the Western Cape has done well incrementally to move towards positive audit outcomes.

7.7 Objective 3: To explore the Relevance of the MMC for the field of Local Government and Human Resource Development Practice

- It was found to be impractical to attain the MMC qualification in an 18-month period.
- The MMC has limited benefits for senior managers experienced in local government.
- The over regulation was cumbersome to managers who only completed the MMC because of the regulatory compliance associated with it.

- It was not seen as a sought-after qualification to regulate local government professionalism.
- Participants were not assessed to establish their training needs to inform the implementation of the MMC.
- The overall human resource system for senior managers still resides outside the organisation.
- Soft skills training was not included to enhance competency.

7.8 Objective 4 To explain the Content Relevance, Delivery Mode, Time Spent and Assessment of the MMC in Relation to the Senior Manager's Position and their Performance in the Role

- Not all content was relevant
- The MMC was impractical
- Participants felt that they spent too much time away from their jobs.
- Best practice sharing amongst municipalities was appreciated as being of greater value than other aspects.

7.9 Objective 5 To Proposed a Training Framework for Local Government Training Management Competency

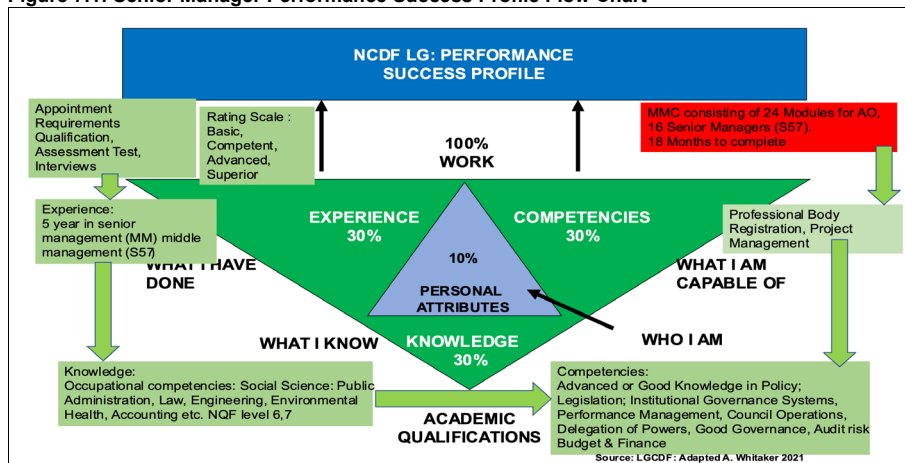
A proposed training framework was proposed to offer an alternative to add value to the practice in local government.

7.9.1 The performance success profile of a senior manager flow chart

Area one of the studies found that the human resource systems employed in the recruitment and selection phase and appointment procedure were sufficient in regard to the recruitment of senior managers as professionals working in local government in most respects. However, the researcher proposed an adapted schematic diagram of the appointment process, and its requirements, as adapted from the Local Government National Competency Development Success Profile.

In interpreting the appointment process of senior managers according to the performance success profile a further entry requirement for senior managers was noted. Figure 6.3 was studied to provide a practical application of the requirements during the appointment process in local government.

Figure 7.1: Senior Manager Performance Success Profile Flow Chart



The process for performance success starts as a pre-requirement phase in the strategic sourcing procedure by setting the requirements for the senior management vacancy. It first advertised the knowledge field as a 30% weighting which links the occupation an individual has with a formal qualification. It further elaborates on the candidate's specific experience as a weighting of 30%. This translates into five years at middle to senior management levels. Competencies are weighted at 30%, requiring practice in law, policy, or engineering. It furthermore asks for an appropriate attitude. This will be the personal attributes of the candidate weighted at 10% for personality and professional body registration. These requirements should ensure that the right people are selected for the job. Once these selections have been made through shortlisting, an interview is set for the employer to select, verify credentials, and invite participants to a competency assessment. The final selection will be the sum of all the parts when a candidate succeeds in obtaining appropriate competency levels and is inducted into the organisation. Under the banner of 'the successful candidate' the person in possession of the MMC qualification will have an advantage over a

candidate that does not or, if selected, s/he will be allowed 18 months to acquire the MMC and will be regarded as new talent recruited to serve in local government.

By virtue of the appointment rigour, it is concluded that the adapted Senior Manager Success Profile is sufficient to assert a senior manager as a professional to work in local government. There should be no further certificate in financial management legislation to confirm this competence to set it as a measure of proficiency for senior managers. This should already prove adequate in terms of competency theories and the level of superior performance sourced to predict success. This does not imply that no training identified by the individual should be engaged in. As an assurance test, the requirement for professional registration should validate that the person appointed has maintained a standard for their profession and hence should be seen as fit and proper for the appointment. While there are issues in terms of skills shortages in finance and technical professions, an alternative means should be sourced to ensure skills and competence. Since the MMC has emphasized functional competencies in finance, it is proposed that other occupational fields, such as technical categories, follow a similar route by introducing compulsory training, particularly given the critical skills gap in these areas.

7.10 The Municipal Minimum Competence Training Requirement

Professor Nico Steytler (2022), a renowned local government law expert, in collaboration with Curtly Stevens, delivered a presentation to the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) on the topic of laws and regulations affecting local government. The key argument was that an overabundance of regulations exists, which fails to address the issue of professionalization within local government. The emphasis was placed on the NCOP's oversight role in accordance with Section 101(4) of the Constitution requesting the NCOP to assess the impact of the laws and regulation in bringing about a balanced approach to laws and regulations for local government. (Steytler and Stevens, 2022).

The findings from the study on the Municipal Minimum Competency (MMC) program suggest the deregulation of the Municipal Finance Management (MFM) certificate as a requirement for competency in local government.

The study revealed that the MMC training has not significantly contributed to the development of financial managers or the improvement of audit outcomes in municipalities. Interestingly, the population examined in the study already demonstrated improved audit outcomes without this certification and has become a model for clean audits across the country.

The MMC program, developed and owned by the National Treasury, has been tightly regulated to ensure compliance. However, its implementation has been met with resistance from senior managers who were expected to embrace the programme as sought after for their development and to take ownership of the program.

7.11 Adaptation of the Louw Model of 2012 on Managerial Competency Models

The proposed revised competency model incorporates insights from senior managers who have undergone the training and faced challenges in balancing the program's demands with their professional job responsibilities taking much longer than the stipulated 18-month timeframe.

The primary purpose of competency frameworks is to provide clear direction and measurable benchmarks to distinguish organizations capable of delivering the desired outcomes. This revised approach aims to address the shortcomings of the current MMC framework while ensuring that competency development aligns more effectively with practical needs and outcomes in local government.

Senior Manager have expressed what they see as a shortcoming in terms of the training component and what are regarded as competencies. The working environment is ever changing, so that managers face ever more challenges in a diverse work environment and need many more competencies to cope in their management roles, including industrial psychological approaches. This involves humancentric approaches to cope with various situations of discontent and therefore indicates that the evolution of a new competency framework is needed. The competency called Soft Skills Mediation has been developed to address this need as mentioned on page 197 as a need. The inclusion of this nurturing skill will support leadership management and development when encountering complex workplace dynamics, while it focuses on improved productivity.

South Africa embraces the Batho Pele principles which put people first. By implication it includes the staff, the community you serve, and the various groups in your working environments. Very few senior managers felt that they had skills to manage a protest or even deal with conflict from councillors, work teams or strikes. It therefore seems imperative to introduce this competence to support and assist senior managers to acquire these requisite skills to function within their working environments. Table 7.1 offers a description and explanation of this competency which is a hands-on applied competence to meet management challenges.

Figure 7.2: Adapted Competency Model from Louw 2012

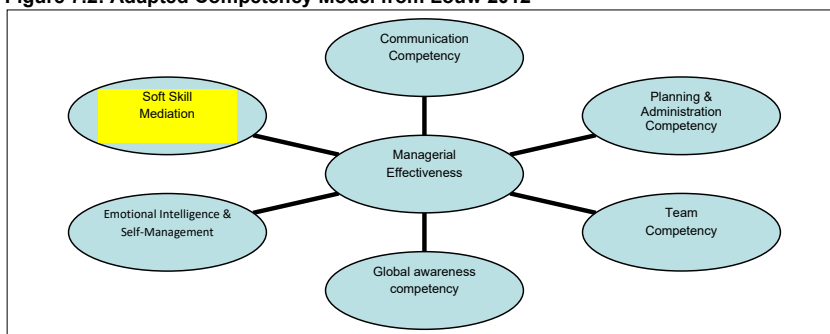


Table 7.1 The Expansion of the Louw Model for Managerial Effectiveness explained

Competency	Description of the competency
Communication	Informal, Formal Communication, Negotiation
Planning and Administration	Information gathering, analysis and problem solving. Planning and organising projects Time Management Budget and finance management
Teamwork	Design teams Creating a supportive environment Managing team Dynamics
Strategic Action	Understanding the industry Understanding the organisation

	Taking Strategic Action
Global Awareness	Cultural knowledge and understanding Cultural openness and sensitivity
Emotional Intelligence and Self-Management	Integrity and ethical conduct Personal drive and resilience Balance work and life issues Self-awareness and development Spiritual intelligence
Soft Skill Mediation Specific attribute is to understand the individual in a career cycle.	Relational Management " <i>Batho Pele</i> " Mental Wellness Protest Management Career Management Service Delivery Optimism Artificial Intelligence

Source: Adapted from Louw Model (2012:30)

While the Soft Skill Mediation Competency is proposed it will be expanded on to be included in the proposed training framework of local government.

7.12 The Proposed Training Framework

The training could be obtained over a two-year period and structured into no more than 5 modules at an NQF Level 8, as full Honours, or Post Graduate Diploma Programme. It should be worth 120 credits. The credit value categories can then be outlined as Municipal Finance 40%; Municipal Strategic Management 30% and the People and Soft Skill Management 30%.

An alternative is also proposed in that training could be obtained through a Continuous Point Development System (CPD) while Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) should be applied for credit recognition, thus improving the speed of assessment and support candidates favourably in obtaining qualifications.

7.13 The Course Content

Competencies as a characteristic of an individual which can be developed or improved.

The renewed and improved Senior Management Competency Training Model for Local Government consists of three pillars, namely:

- Municipal Finance
- Municipal Strategic Management
- HRM - People Soft Skills Mediation Management

Table 7.2 Training Framework

Municipal Finance	Occupational Strategic Management	Human Resource Soft Skills Mediation Management
Budget Cycle Management & Reporting	Business Unit Planning	Emotional Intelligence & Mental Wellness Management
Cash Flow Projects and Forecasting	Artificial Intelligence & Security Management	Career Management
Supply Chain Management & Decision Making	Project & Disaster Management	Stakeholder Management
Supply chain Sourcing & Committee Management	Risk & Contingency Management	Protest Management
Local Government Law	Monitoring Evaluation & Reporting	Conflict, Negotiation and Mediation Management

Source: Author

The revised training framework has included the recommendation by senior managers in terms of what they view as missing in the training which did not meet their specific occupational requirements. It offers recommendation for training which would meet the needs of senior managers in broadening their ability to manage various difficult situations. The MMC training was void of the necessary capacitation of senior managers to be equipped with soft skills mediation techniques needed to navigate the areas where differences and conflict may arise. The framework is therefore recommended as necessary in terms of the needs expressed by senior managers which could add value to their role and function.

7.14 Contribution of the study to the body of Knowledge

A multitude of characteristics were explored in this study of the competency of senior management within local government. The key contributions of the study are summarised below:

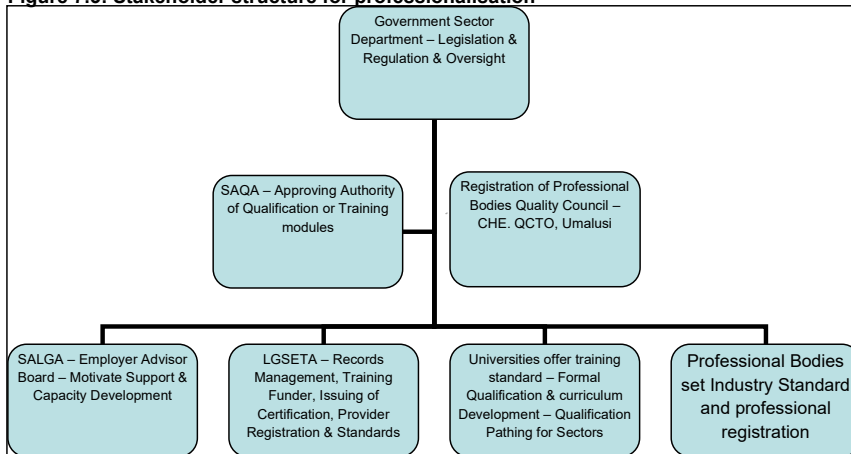
- It contributes to understanding how local government has evolved and which systems of implementation were successful.
- It explores the stakeholder roles and functions of National Treasury and COGTA.
- It presents a schematic representation of the appointments process in local government.
- It highlights the fragmented professional bodies system in local government.
- It expands the Managerial Effectiveness Model of Louw.
- It proposes an alternative training framework, inclusive of all occupational capacity needs and soft skill training, for local government.
- It makes recommendations for further research, concludes the study and expresses the limitations in the study.

7.15 Structure of Role Players in Qualifications

- Government Sector Departments would form the oversight Body for Legal Compliance
- The three quality controllers (QCs) would be: The Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training (Umalusi) for general and further education and training qualifications; The Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) for work-based qualifications; and The Council on Higher Education (CHE) for higher education.
- Advisory Board – SALGA would form the BOARD.
- Sectoral Regulator - LGSETA would remain the funder and the Learner Record Management custodian. Universities would offer and develop the programme as a regular certificate programme.
- SAQA would continue to play the role of approving all qualifications and registering Professional Bodies.

- Membership of Professional Bodies would be required to ensure that industry standards are maintained and advances made in new knowledge and practice. These would also recommend training courses or programmes.

Figure 7.3: Stakeholder structure for professionalisation



7.16 Professionalisation

Professionalisation is seen as a very important practice requirement, hence many senior managers belong to one to three associations aligned to what they value in their specific occupational categories. However, many in practice do not belong to a professional body (Table 5.6) meaning that they have not seen value as the MMC framework is the direction and accepted practice for local government. In a sense the formal competency requirement has in fact diminished the interest in a sense of a community of practice (CoP) directly led by a professional association. The structure of all role players in the development of professionalisation listed. All Trades and occupations have been regulated for local government in the respective occupational fields to bring about norms and standards for each field. The MMC will have to find its way to the Quality Council of Trade and Occupations as the MMC is largely a financial qualification intended for financial and supply chain management officials. The change to delink it as compulsory for senior managers will

require the organisational process in the local government space for the intended occupational categorisation.

7.17 Recommendation for Professionalisation

Universities will have a key role to play in the process alongside Professional Associations. Accounting associations such as SAICA and others should absorb the MMC into its pool of recognition system in its profession to perhaps plot the way forward on its existence. Since there are a few professional associations including IMFO/SALGA, a collaborative approach should be embarked on to regulate and decide on a way forward for the MMC and National Treasury bearing the responsibility for ensuring the implementation of the MFMA. The framework proposed structures the process flow to offer a structured pathway for the future development of professionalisation. Ownership would reside amongst actors who collaborate with each other as proposed in Figure 7.3.

By the same standard, universities should ensure that their training personnel hold the same kind of practice standard as the professionals and strong emphasis should be placed on knowledge and qualification of lecturers to teach industry specific programmes. Universities should collaborate more realistically with industry making use of knowledge and practice exchanges.

7.18 Recommendation RPL

RPL under the current system, should be reviewed. In the Western Cape, while the single university provider has used the 16 to 24 modules to create a pathway into a formal University Honours Programmes, only 50% of the modules are utilised for this recognition, entailing further costs to the student, when RPL should have been structured into a post-graduate qualification in the first instance. Had different criteria been applied then the substantial experience of senior managers would be recognised and would have assisted in experienced candidates obtaining the MMC requirement more quickly.

7.19 Recommendations MMC

The MMC should be delinked from the requirement for competency for senior managers since too few people in the field can acquire this qualification in the set period of 18 months

and meaning that it prefaces a protracted exposure to financial management for non-financial managers.

The MMC could be retained with amendments as a voluntary option for entry-level financial officials wishing to attain a financial qualification, since the MMC links to the NQF level 5 Certificate in Financial Management. It should be a substitute for a first-year university-aligned module of the national diploma or degree for credit recognition but, more importantly, it could form a building block to produce more financially qualified personnel in local government to avoid the many kinds of financial fault-finding the A-G reports on. This may be an important pathway for a practitioner to build financial competency resulting in a more formal NQF level 6 qualification, progressing to NQF level 7 and above, and linked to layers for professionalisation. The university has an important role to play in qualifications to maintain an appropriate standard for qualifications. Officials from the senior management echelon, such as Directors Corporate Services, Engineering Service, Community Service, Director Management Services, Directors Strategy and Social Developments should be excluded from having the MMC as a compulsory requirement, while it could serve as valuable for those officials as a career path to financial management at lower levels within the organisation based on the many suggestions from senior managers.

It is recommended that the approach be individualised using the performance management system, which would potentially realise greater value to the individuals and assist in better performance and competence which could meet the needs of better performance in municipalities.

7.20 Human resource management in local government

Human resource management in local government is fragmented and should find its locus in one central department that could oversee components of HR practice. The accounting system for employees in local government has a two-tier system in place: one where all staffing matters are managed organisationally and internally, and a senior management structure where senior management must account externally to the various ministries, provincial and national. In real terms senior management staff account to the municipal council which is subjected to ministerial oversight to ensure compliance in terms of appointment conditions and performance processes, laws and regulations. The importance

of HR management lies in the fact that it ensures the right skills and competences are used to attract and manage talent to serve the needs of the organisation to deliver services to the communities. Any weakness, in terms of training needs, must serve to improve development, followed by time spent in training which is reasonable and attainable, and finally a system of monitoring and evaluation of the success of the programme. The senior managers have been accountable to the laws and regulations prescribed for local government. The proposed changes should offer a system to ensure the wellness needs of senior managers in local government, this largely emphasises the need for the development of the Soft Skill Mediation Competence to manage the many areas of needs expressed for development of competency skills.

7.21 Recommendation Training needs and Time Demand

The absence of a needs assessment before implementing MMC training was a major point of concern, since such an assessment would have led to more effective and relevant training, better suited to the diverse needs of individuals and municipalities in the local government sphere. The starting point should always be to conduct needs assessment before embarking on intervention programmes that have such profound impacts on an occupational field. The alternative is for an individual to express needs their own specific needs to improve superior performance.

Balancing time demands with the need for effective and practical learning outcomes when selecting or designing skills development programmes remains an important consideration when designing learning programmes – consideration of work-related time and the intensity of the programme should be balanced. It is recommended that individualized training plans, based on a proper needs' assessment, would be more beneficial and cost-effective, allowing employees to focus on areas where they lack expertise or experience. Participants in training programmes should be consulted to ensure inclusion in the decision-making process. It is essential to consult with industry experts and local government professionals in conducting needs assessment to tailor-make training for the unique requirements of the sector. Concerns about the focus on unit standards and not qualifications or years of experience and higher academic qualifications should gain status in selecting or asserting competence.

The one-size-fits-all approach of the MMC training is not effective for all officials, especially those with significant experience and existing competencies. A more tailored approach, considering the specific needs and contexts of different municipalities and officials, could enhance the relevance and impact of training. Integration of MMC with practical needs training programmes should be closely aligned with the practical needs and challenges faced by municipal officials. Incorporating real-world scenarios, hands-on training, and problem-solving exercises structuring the specific needs and experience of various levels of participants could make the training more effective and applicable.

7.22 Recommendation Continuous professional development

Emphasising continuous professional development (CPD), rather than a one-time compulsory training programme could foster a culture of life-long learning. CPD allows for ongoing skills' enhancement and adaptation to evolving challenges, which will be more beneficial than a static training requirement.

The researcher's principal recommendation is to delink the MMC as a required professional training in local government. The alternative system for local government should be the accumulation of appropriate course (s), conference(s), best practice sharing, and practice workshops as led by key stakeholder such as National Treasury and recognised in a system of Continuous Practice Development (CPD). The accumulation system must align with the level requirements of professional associations and must inform the candidate based on knowledge and qualifications where the person will rate as a practitioner or professional etc. aligning with the designation used in the association. This will avoid the current confusion of which association holds more value and requiring managers to be registered with three or for professional bodies as indicated in Table 5.6.

7.23 Recommendations regarding Professionalisation Associations

It is strongly recommended that one body form the umbrella body for professionalisation. This would collaborate with all the different professional bodies in the various occupational fields, to advance the needs of senior managers, and strengthen local government practices, as a means of implementing the requirement to delivery better services to communities.

The establishment of a new body or the use of SALGA as one umbrella association to which all local government practitioners should belong is strongly recommended. Its important function would be to regulate the human resource practices for municipalities and truly listen and assist local government in its execution of professionalisation. As local government already interacts with SALGA in several ways, it will strengthen SALGA's function but, more importantly, it could ensure that developmental needs are understood, acted on and delivered much more collaboratively from a holistic knowledge perspective. This would mean that SALGA, SETAs and practitioners forge closer alignment and that the separation lines for human resource practices can find a home in one location working with stakeholders with vested interests. This will require SALGA to reorganise a function on its organogram indicating that it is the organisation with the most vested interest in local government capacities and functions.

7.24 Recommendation on Monitoring and evaluation

Establishing robust mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the impact of training programmes can help in continuously improving their effectiveness. Feedback from participants and performance metrics should be regularly analyzed to adjust and refine training content and delivery methods.

7.25 Summary of Recommendations

The study therefore recommends several changes, including:

- Delinking the MMC from the competency requirements for senior managers.
- Retaining the MMC with amendments as a voluntary option for entry-level financial officials with individualized training plans based on needs assessments.
- Continuous professional development should be implemented (CPD) to foster lifelong learning.
- Establishing an umbrella body for professionalization, potentially utilizing the South African Local Government Association (SALGA).
- Universities should become important partners to ensure that there is a pathway for formal qualification to produce the graduates to feed into the sphere.

7.26 Limitations of the study

A limitation of the study was the geographical location of participants at the time when focus groups had been pre-arranged, and participants had to excuse themselves as a crisis in the area demanded their time. The period before election had an impact as to whether the participants would be still employed or if the contracts were to be terminated, also making some participants unavailable for the focus group discussions. At some sessions acting personnel made themselves available, but the research could not go ahead as participants were purposively selected who had completed the MMC training and were at senior management level. The researcher had to be flexible and had to adapt to conduct an interview based on the availability of a municipal manager who was the accounting officer of the institution, and an important participant.

While the recommendation is that the MMC should not be a compulsory requirement as part of competency for local government, it nonetheless remains a current industry standard and for this reason further engagement and research would be needed for Treasury to address the ambiguity concerning what the sector lacks in competent CFO's, Supply Chain Managers and financial officials in local government.

It further holds that the study was conducted in the Western Cape Province only. This entails that most municipalities studied have shown superior performance in terms of the A-G's measurement standards. This is a limitation in terms of the scope of the research.

7.27 Recommendations for further research

The author recommends further research to address the ambiguity surrounding the MMC program and the need for competent financial professionals in local government. The appropriate professional bodies associated to local government might be involved in assessing their effectiveness and which modules will be regarded as sufficient to register for those fields that do not have any registration requirements, and equally those which have more than one in their respective occupational fields. The simplification of the many laws and regulations associated with local government human resource practices could be a focus for in-depth research, and the merits of accountability to one corresponding national government department responsible for the sphere in terms of training and development for

professionalisation could be investigated. The reconsideration of the position of the MMC as the most important training programme to regulate to a professional manager in local government also requires further investigation. It would be important for future studies to conduct an in-depth assessment of the impact of the MMC and its effectiveness in delivering better services to communities, looking at the internal environments to do so.

It would also be important for such a study to be conducted in other provinces to determine the qualification and expertise of senior managers and how they navigate the demands of clean audit requirements and the capacity building of senior manager within the conditions that have been set by National Treasury for competency.

7.28 Conclusion

Local Government remains a very important sphere of government offering services and hope for a better life for all in South Africa. Local Government remains an important sphere of the Developmental State offering services directly to communities in a sustained manner. The study is important to policy makers and provides valuable insights to training needs and professionalisation of senior managers. It offers insight into the building of financial capacity so much needed in practice. The study has contributed to the body of knowledge as it sought to provide an understanding of the impact compulsory training programmes have on the senior municipal managers it intended to develop, without conducting any needs analyses. The study emphasises that if South African local government wishes to capacitate the people it employs, it must consider and recognise the value of the competencies new entrants bring in the various professions required in local government before it embarks on adopting standardised approaches. The study clearly identified the many instances where National Treasury, as the overarching regulator, had to weaken its controls to accommodate more flexible rules of a training programme which has been impractical in several ways, and which has failed to achieve the desired impact. Local Government battles to attract professional capacity, and it cannot have double layers on appointment conditions for entry into the senior management position. To build onto competence the practice cannot dismiss the pivotal areas where individuals can self-identify training gaps or involve the performance management review system to address skills gaps which are needed to enable superior performance.

The senior managers' views were unanimous in stating that the MMC did not meet their needs for their specific occupational categories. Important is that the regulation be reviewed so that it does not contradict departmental mandates and that it should be strongly orientated to respect the very participants to whom this regulation applies, and that the stakeholders in the municipality be considered and supported. The efficient use of regulation may improve the attitude towards the MMC, and it may even have the effect of stakeholders considering the MMC as a sought-after certification for practitioners.

The study equally concludes that the MMC's compulsory nature is not justified by its impact on financial performance or the closing of skills gaps. This chapter emphasizes the need for tailored training programs, continuous professional development, practical relevance, and effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

The study's limitations include the geographic location of participants and the impact of pre-election periods on participant availability. A further limitation to the study is that it was conducted in only the Western Cape and with 15 municipalities out of the 30 municipalities in the province.

The human resource and educational theories, in summary, discussed Systems Theory, Contingency Theory, Institutional Theory, AMO Theory, Resource-based Theory, Human Capital Theory, Human Relations Approach, Human Resource Approach, Talent Management, Training and Development and Human Capital Development — collectively emphasize that organisational performance and productivity are influenced by structured systems, adaptable approaches, institutional dynamics, employee abilities and motivation, effective use of human capital, and ongoing development and training. Together, these theories highlight the critical role of people management and capacity building in achieving organisational goals. The MMC does not follow the structure and practice in terms of human resource development recommended by these respected theories. It cannot be emphasised enough how important needs analysis is to inform what training and capacity building would add in developing and supporting the superior employee required to navigate the delivery of service delivery to communities.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Research Ethical Guarantee

Every care will be taken to inform participants that their participation in the questions asked is voluntary and may withdraw at any point or decline to answer any question they feel uncomfortable to answer. All response will be treated as confidential and will not specifically reveal the individual participants response location. All participants will receive feedback on the study if they so desire.

MIMIMUM COMPETENCY LEVELS AO: Accounting Officer - 1; CFO: Chief Financial Officer -2; SM: Senior Manager

Name of Municipality:	AO	CFO	SM	
Demographics:	Male	Female		
Ethnicity	B	C	I	W
Age	30-40	40 -50	50 -60	65-70
How Long are you working in local government?	1-5	5-10	10 -20	20 -30
How long have you occupied your current position?	1-5	5-10	10 -20	20 -30
How many municipalities have you worked at?	1-5	5-10		
Do you have any private sector experience?	Yes	No		
Do you have a degree: Name of Degree	Yes	No		
Do you have a national diploma: Name of Diploma and how long did it take to complete:	3yrs	2yrs	1 yr	
Do you Have a National Certificate And How Long was the programme	3yrs	2yrs	1 yr	
Do you have the Minimum Competency Certificate	1-5	5-10	10 -20	Yes
Complete Yes/ No. How many modules do you still need to complete and by when				
Have You been RPL for the MMC programme?	YES	NO		
Were you given an option for RPL?	YES	NO		
Do you belong to a professional Association	Yes	No		
Which association do you belong to:				

Appendix B: The Evaluation of Local Government MFMA Reforms

The Promulgation of the Municipal Financial Management ACT 56 of 2003	
National Treasury Circulars: MFMA Circular 9, 17, 24, 47 and 60 published on the NT website for ease of reference and support on implementation.	
MFMA Circular 9 October 2004	A unit standard based National Qualification Framework Municipal Financial Management level six qualification approved by the SAQA Executive Committee and it is anticipated this will be registered on 14 October 2004.
MFMA Circular 17 -25 April 2005 Upon further research and, based on the demands of the public sector, a Public Finance Management and Administration diploma, now out for public comment, has been drafted and submitted to SAQA for registration. The diploma is an NQF level 5 unit standard-based qualification intended to provide an important platform for learners wishing to progress from NQF Level 4 to the NQF Level 6 qualification. It is anticipated that this NQF Level 5 qualification will be registered by 31 May 2005. The development of unit-based standards in municipal finance management and supply chain management will form the basis for future competency levels for finance officials of municipalities and municipal entities.	Municipal Finance Management Qualifications The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) registered a unit standard-based certificate in Municipal Financial Management Qualification on 14 October 2004 as a National Qualification Framework (NQF) level six qualification. LGSETA (formerly LGWSETA) has registered the relevant Learnership with the Department of Labour and, in cooperation with one of the donor agencies, has commissioned the development of training material, which should be available by 31 May 2005. Seven of the required training module materials are presently undergoing review and evaluation, as outlined in MFMA circular No. 9 (Training).
MFMA Circular 24 Nov 2005 Provincial Treasuries Provincial Treasuries will coordinate training within their respective provinces. They are required to submit the training material of training providers within their respective provinces to the National Treasury for validation by the Validation Board.	National Treasury National Treasury is responsible to regulate training and competency standards. Training providers are required to apply to have their training material accredited by LGSETA and validated by the National Treasury. The material must be of an acceptable level of quality and consistent with the relevant SCM policy reforms and legislation.
MMC Framework published in 2007 with a Deadline 2013	

<p>MFMA Circular 47 Feb 2009</p> <p>Reporting on the Municipal Regulations on Minimum Competency levels, Gazette 29967, June 2007</p> <p>We recommend that officials affected by the regulations review their existing qualifications and experience through an assessment conducted by appropriately qualified and registered assessors with the LGSETA. Registered assessors can determine the extent to which qualifications and experience meet the prescribed financial and supply chain management competency levels. This assessment should also be used to supply required information as per regulation 14 (2) (a) on reporting and monitoring competency levels using the MFMA Implementation Report (Municipal Regulations on Minimum Competency Levels).</p>	<p>This circular provides updated information, further to the contents of circulars 9, 17 and 24. Municipal officials are again reminded that they have until 2013 to comply with the Municipal Minimum Competency Regulations, Gazette 29967 of June 2007.</p> <p>Compliance with the regulations requires proper planning and resource allocation for officials to successfully complete the programme in improving financial management skills in all municipalities.</p> <p>This report should not only be sent to National and relevant Provincial Treasuries but also published in the annual report of the municipality as per regulation 14 (2) (b).</p>
<p>MFMA Circular 60 – 2012</p> <p>Minimum Competency Level Regulations, Gazette 29967 of 15 June 2007</p> <p>This circular provides an approach to managing the requirements of the above regulations towards the remaining eight-month deadline. MFMA sections 83, 107 and 119 outline the competency levels of financial officials. The Municipal Regulations on Minimum Competency Levels prescribe the required competency levels for uniform and consistent application of the Act.</p> <p>If officials have not met the requirements of the regulations, including the support provided in this Circular by the due date, Regulation 15 and 18 will immediately apply.</p>	<p>A covering letter outlining plan of action, signed by the Municipal Manager, committing the Council to fast-track requirements for officials to complete their competency training within eighteen months of the deadline of 1 January 2013;</p> <p>4. Progress on SMC must be reported on a quarterly basis using Annexure B to map progress in achieving full compliance with the regulations. This will also be used for audit purposes.</p> <p>5. Municipalities have four months to prepare and submit requests for SMC, received by National Treasury on 7 September 2012 to allow for time to review, process and MFMA Circular 60 – 2012 feedback.</p> <p>6. Consideration will be given to delay enforcement of the deadline period by up to eighteen months; to 1 July 2014, provided the municipality has submitted a strong motivation in terms of the SMC above.</p>
<p>Published 14 March 2014 Exemption notice from Regulation 15 and 18 will immediately apply.</p>	<p>Due date 1 April 2014 to 2015 extension for qualification</p>
<p>DCOGTA – 2014</p>	<p>The Municipal Regulations on Appointment and Conditions of Employment of Senior Managers, 2014?</p>

Treasury 2016 conditions of Appointment NT is working towards alignment of these regulations with the DCOG regulations on conditions of appointment of senior managers;	Four areas prescribed for FM positions: HEQ, work experience, Performance Agreement related matters and the FM and SCM competency levels;
Circular 91 Published 2017 Exemption notice from Regulation 15 and 18 will immediately apply. extended for existing officials Provision for a new appointee to get qualification within 18months of appointment.	extended for existing officials. Provision for a new appointee to get qualification within 18months of appointment.

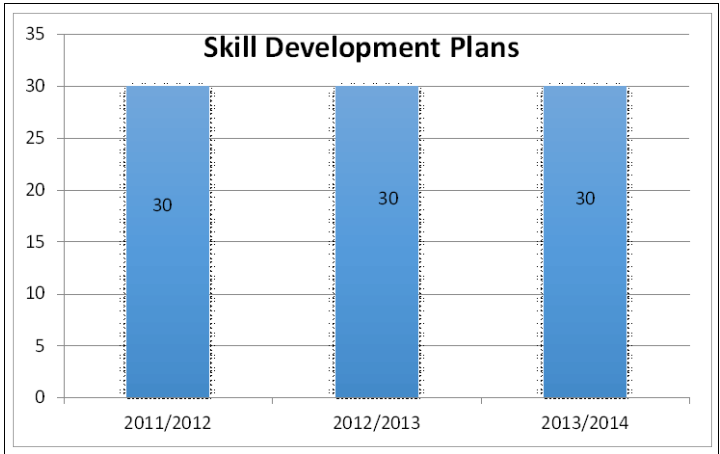
Appendix C: Filling of senior manager post -13/14

Municipality	Senior manager post filled (incl. MM)	Senior manager post vacant (incl. MM)	Performance Agreements signed. (incl. MM)	Performance Agreements not signed (incl. MM)	Female Senior managers (incl. MM)
City of Cape Town	13	0	13	0	5
West Coast DM	4	0	4	0	0
Matzikama	5	1	6	0	1
Cederberg	5	0	5	0	0
Bergivier	4	0	4	0	1
Saldanha bay	4	1	4	1	0
Swartland	7	0	7	0	1
Cape Winelands DM	4	0	4	0	1
Witzenberg	5	0	5	0	1
Drakenstein	6	0	6	0	1
Stellenbosch	6	1	6	1	1
Breede Valley	5	0	5	0	0
Langeberg	5	0	5	0	1
Overberg DM	3	1	2	0	0
Theewaterskloof	6	0	6	0	0
Overstrand	7	0	7	0	2
Cape Agulhas	6	0	6	0	0
Swellendam	4	1	4	0	0
Eden DM	4	0	4	0	2
Kannaland	3	1	3	0	0
Hessequa	6	0	6	0	2
Mossel Bay	6	0	6	0	1
George	6	1	6	1	0
Oudtshoorn	5	0	5	0	1
Bitou	6	0	6	0	1
Knysna	6	0	6	0	1
Central Karoo DM	3	0	3	0	0
Laingsburg	2	0	2	0	1
Prince Albert	4	1	4	0	1
Beaufort West	4	1	4	0	1

Source: Municipal Annual Reports 2013/14

Appendix D: Submission of Workplace Skills Plan

The Western Cape Municipalities generally ensures compliance to stator regulations. The skills development plans may not necessarily take into consideration the training requirements of senior managers when plans are submitted to LGSETA.



Source: Municipal Annual Report 2013/14

Appendix E: Graphic Presentation of One Selected Municipalities Performance and Legislative Timeline

Cape Winelands – 111							
Pre-interim phase 1994-1995 Interim 1995 - 2000	Municipal legislation Inception of MFMA 2003 requirements for performance		Age	Appointment date	Senior positions	Qualification	MMC
Election Period (LGE) Legislative establishment and stabilisation 2003/4	Consolidation phase 2005	LGE	40 to 50 50 to 60	2007-2017	39-MM	ND PUA NQF 7 TD- NQF 6	2017 -MMC NQF 6
Audit Phase 1	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2013 Permanent	40-CFO(F)	B..Comm NQF 7	2015 -MMC NQF 6
Municipal Audit Performance Requirement	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings		2012 Permanent	41- ED. Com Dev. Plan	BA -NQF7;8	MMC – 2017 NQF6 Project NQF 6
Cape Winelands District Actual Performance	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	Unqualified with emphasis on matters	2012 permanent	42 ED Infrastructure	B. Engineering NQF7	2015 -MMC NQF 6
Audit Phase 2	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13		
	Unqualified with emphasis on matter	unqualified with findings	Unqualified with findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings		
Audit Phase 3 1st Deadline date for MMC: year obtained	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings	Unqualified with no findings

Appendix F: The Cross Processing Summary Tabulation of the MMC and Audit Reports and Highest Qualification

Case Processing Summary						
	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Year MMC. Completed Ungrouped * AF1 2005/2006 * Highest Qualification	49	83.1%	10	16.9%	59	100.0%
Year MMC. Completed Ungrouped * AF2 2006/2007 * Highest Qualification	49	83.1%	10	16.9%	59	100.0%
Year MCC Completed Ungrouped * AF3 2007/2008 * Highest Qualification	49	83.1%	10	16.9%	59	100.0%
Year MMC. Completed Ungrouped * AF4 2008/2009 * Highest Qualification	49	83.1%	10	16.9%	59	100.0%
Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF5 2009/2010 * Highest Qualification	49	83.1%	10	16.9%	59	100.0%
Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF6 2010/2011 * Highest Qualification	49	83.1%	10	16.9%	59	100.0%
Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF72011/2012* Highest Qualification	49	83.1%	10	16.9%	59	100.0%
Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF8 2012/13 * Highest Qualification	49	83.1%	10	16.9%	59	100.0%
Year MMC. Completed Ungrouped * AF9 2013/14 * Highest Qualification	49	83.1%	10	16.9%	59	100.0%
Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF10 2014/15 * Highest Qualification	49	83.1%	10	16.9%	59	100.0%
Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF11 2015/16 * Highest Qualification	49	83.1%	10	16.9%	59	100.0%
Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF12 2016/2017 *Highest Qualification	49	83.1%	10	16.9%	59	100.0%
Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF13 2017/2018 * Highest Qualification	49	83.1%	10	16.9%	59	100.0%
Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF14 2018/2019 * Highest Qualification	47	79.7%	12	20.3%	59	100.0%

Year MMC Completed Ungrouped *	49	83.1%	10	16.9%	59	100.0%
AF15 2019/2020 * Highest Qualification						

Appendix G: The Senior Managers Qualification, The Year the MMC was Completed and Audit Findings

Table B1: Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF4 2008/2009 * Highest Qualification on Crosstabulation

MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF4 2008/2009 *Highest Qualification Cross tabulation										
Count										
Highest Qualification Highest Qualification						AF4 2008/2009			Total	
						1 Qualified Opinion	3 Disclaim er	5 Unqualified with findings		
1 Grade 12	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped					2016			1	1
	Total							1	1	
2 National Diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped					2009		1	1	
						2012		1	1	
						2014		1	1	
						2015		1	1	
						2017		1	1	
						2018		2	2	
	Total							7	7	
3 Advanced Diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped					2012		1	1	
	Total							1	1	
4 Bachelor's Degree	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped					2009	0	0	2	2
						2012	1	0	5	6
						2013	0	1	0	1
						2014	0	1	3	4
						2015	0	1	4	5
						2016	0	2	1	3
						2017	0	1	1	2
						2018	0	0	1	1
	Total					1	6	17	24	

5 Honours	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012			2	2
		2016			1	1
		2017			1	1
	Total				4	4
6 Masters Degree	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2008		0	1	1
		2012		0	4	4
		2013		3	1	4
		2014		1	0	1
	Total			4	6	10
7 Postgraduate diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012			1	1
		2017			1	1
	Total				2	2
Total	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2008	0	0	1	1
		2009	0	0	3	3
		2012	1	0	14	15
		2013	0	4	1	5
		2014	0	2	4	6
		2015	0	1	5	6
		2016	0	2	3	5
		2017	0	1	4	5
		2018	0	0	3	3
	Total		1	10	38	49

B2

Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF5 2009/2010 * Highest Qualification Crosstabulation							
Count							
Highest Qualification			AF5 2009/2010				Total
			1 Qualified Opinion	2 Adverse with findings	3 Disclaimer	5 Unqualified with findings	
1 Grade 12	Year MMC Completed	2016				1	1
	Total					1	1
2 National Diploma	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2009			0	1	1
		2012			0	1	1
		2014			1	0	1

		2015			0	1	1
		2017			0	1	1
		2018			1	1	2
	Total				2	5	7
3 Advanced Diploma	Year MMC Completed	2012				1	1
	Total					1	1
4 Bachelor's Degree	Year MCC Completed Ungrouped	2009	0	0	0	2	2
		2012	0	0	0	6	6
		2013	1	0	0	0	1
		2014	0	1	1	2	4
		2015	0	1	1	3	5
		2016	1	2	0	0	3
		2017	0	1	0	1	2
		2018	0	0	0	1	1
	Total		2	5	2	15	24
5 Honours	Year MNC Completed Ungrouped	2012				2	2
		2016				1	1
		2017				1	1
	Total					4	4
6 Master's Degree	Year MM Completed Ungrouped	2008	0			1	1
		2012	0			4	4
		2013	1			3	4
		2014	0			1	1
	Total		1			9	10
7 Postgraduate diploma	Year MMC Completed	2012				1	1
		2017				1	1
	Total					2	2
Total	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2008	0	0	0	1	1
		2009	0	0	0	3	3
		2012	0	0	0	15	15
		2013	2	0	0	3	5

		2014	0	1	2	3	6
		2015	0	1	1	4	6
		2016	1	2	0	2	5
		2017	0	1	0	4	5
		2018	0	0	1	2	3
		Total	3	5	4	37	49

Table : B3

MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF6 2010/2011 * Highest Qualification Highest Qualification Crosstabulation						
Count						
Highest Qualification Highest Qualification			AF6 2010/2011			Total
			3 Disclaimer	5 Unqualified with findings	6 Unqualified with no findings	
1 Grade 12	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2016		1		1
	Total			1		1
2 National Diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2009	0	1	0	1
		2012	0	0	1	1
		2014	1	0	0	1
		2015	0	1	0	1
		2017	0	1	0	1
		2018	1	1	0	2
	Total		2	4	1	7
3 Advanced Diploma	MMC Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012		1		1
	Total			1		1
4 bachelor's degree	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2009	0	2	0	2
		2012	0	3	3	6
		2013	0	1	0	1
		2014	1	2	1	4
		2015	1	4	0	5
		2016	0	3	0	3
		2017	0	2	0	2
		2018	0	1	0	1
	Total		2	18	4	24
5 Honours	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012		2		2
		2016		1		1
		2017		1		1
	Total			4		4
6 Masters Degree	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2008		1	0	1
		2012		3	1	4
		2013		4	0	4
		2014		1	0	1
	Total			9	1	10

7 Postgraduate diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year	2012		1		1
	MMC Completed Ungrouped	2017		1		1
	Total			2		2
Total	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2008	0	1	0	1
		2009	0	3	0	3
		2012	0	10	5	15
		2013	0	5	0	5
		2014	2	3	1	6
		2015	1	5	0	6
		2016	0	5	0	5
		2017	0	5	0	5
		2018	1	2	0	3
	Total		4	39	6	49

B3

MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF7 2011/2012							
* Highest Qualification Highest Qualification Crosstabulation							
Count							
Highest Qualification	Qualification	Highest	AF7 2011/2012				Total
			1 Qualified Opinion	3 Disclaimer	5 Unqualified with findings	6 Unqualified with no findings	
1 Grade 12	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2016			1		1
	Total				1		1
2 National Diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2009		0	0	1	1
		2012		0	0	1	1
		2014		1	0	0	1
		2015		0	1	0	1
		2017		0	1	0	1
		2018		1	1	0	2
	Total			2	3	2	7
3 Advanced Diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012			1		1
	Total				1		1
4 Bachelor's Degree	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2009		0	1	1	2
		2012		0	2	4	6
		2013		0	1	0	1
		2014		1	1	2	4
		2015		1	2	2	5
		2016		0	1	2	3
		2017		0	1	1	2
		2018		0	1	0	1
	Total			2	10	12	24
5 Honours	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012			2		2
		2016			1		1
		2017			1		1
	Total				4		4
6 Master's Degree	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2008	0		0	1	1
		2012	1		2	1	4
		2013	0		3	1	4
		2014	0		1	0	1

	Total		1		6	3	10
7 Postgraduate diploma	MMC Year	2012			1		1
	Ungrouped Year	2017			1		1
	MMC Completed						
	Ungrouped						
	Total				2		2
Total	MMC Year	2008	0	0	0	1	1
	Ungrouped Year	2009	0	0	1	2	3
	MMC Completed	2012	1	0	8	6	15
	Ungrouped	2013	0	0	4	1	5
		2014	0	2	2	2	6
		2015	0	1	3	2	6
		2016	0	0	3	2	5
		2017	0	0	4	1	5
		2018	0	1	2	0	3
	Total		1	4	27	17	49

B4 Phase 3 Consolidation Phase

MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF8 2012/13 * Highest Qualification Highest Qualification Crosstabulation						
Count						
Highest Qualification Highest Qualification				AF8 2012/13		Total
				5 Unqualified with findings	6 Unqualified with no findings	
1 Grade 12	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2016		1		1
	Total			1		1
2 National Diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2009		0	1	1
		2012		0	1	1
		2014		1	0	1
		2015		0	1	1
		2017		1	0	1
		2018		2	0	2
	Total			4	3	7
3 Advanced Diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012			1	1

	Total			1	1
4 Bachelor's Degree	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2009	0	2	2
		2012	2	4	6
		2013	1	0	1
		2014	2	2	4
		2015	2	3	5
		2016	1	2	3
		2017	1	1	2
		2018	1	0	1
	Total		10	14	24
5 Honours	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012	0	2	2
		2016	1	0	1
		2017	1	0	1
	Total		2	2	4
6 Masters Degree	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2008	0	1	1
		2012	1	3	4
		2013	3	1	4
		2014	1	0	1
	Total		5	5	10
7 Postgraduate diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012	0	1	1
		2017	1	0	1
	Total		1	1	2
Total	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2008	0	1	1
		2009	0	3	3
		2012	3	12	15
		2013	4	1	5
		2014	4	2	6
		2015	2	4	6
		2016	3	2	5
		2017	4	1	5
		2018	3	0	3
	Total		23	26	49

B5- Phase 3 Superior Performance

MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF9 2013/14 * Highest Qualification Highest Qualification Crosstabulation						
Count						
Highest Qualification Highest Qualification			AF9 2013/14		Total	
			5 Unqualified with findings	6 Unqualified with no findings		
1 Grade 12	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2016		1	1	
	Total			1	1	
2 National Diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMCC Completed Ungrouped	2009	0	1	1	
		2012	0	1	1	
		2014	1	0	1	
		2015	0	1	1	
		2017	0	1	1	
		2018	1	1	2	
	Total		2	5	7	
3 Advanced Diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012		1	1	
	Total			1	1	
4 Bachelor's Degree	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2009	0	2	2	
		2012	1	5	6	
		2013	0	1	1	
		2014	1	3	4	
		2015	1	4	5	
		2016	1	2	3	
		2017	1	1	2	
		2018	0	1	1	
	Total		5	19	24	
5 Honours	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012	0	2	2	
		2016	1	0	1	
		2017	1	0	1	
	Total		2	2	4	
6 Masters Degree	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2008	0	1	1	
		2012	1	3	4	

		2013	0	4	4
		2014	0	1	1
	Total		1	9	10
7 Postgraduate diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012		1	1
		2017		1	1
	Total			2	2
Total	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2008	0	1	1
		2009	0	3	3
		2012	2	13	15
		2013	0	5	5
		2014	2	4	6
		2015	1	5	6
		2016	2	3	5
		2017	2	3	5
		2018	1	2	3
	Total		10	39	49

B.6 Phase Three Superior Performance

Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF10 2014/15 * Highest Qualification Crosstabulation

Count						
Highest Qualification			AF10 2014/15			Total
			2 Adverse with findings	5 Unqualified with findings	6 Unqualified with no findings	
1 Grade 12	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2016			1	1
	Total				1	1
2 National Diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2009		0	1	1
		2012		0	1	1
		2014		0	1	1
		2015		1	0	1
		2017		0	1	1
		2018		0	2	2
	Total			1	6	7

3 Advanced Diploma	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped			2012			1	1
	Total						1	1
4 Bachelor's Degree	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2009	0	1	1	2		
		2012	0	0	6	6		
		2013	0	0	1	1		
		2014	0	0	4	4		
		2015	0	1	4	5		
		2016	1	0	2	3		
		2017	0	0	2	2		
		2018	0	0	1	1		
	Total				1	2	21	24
5 Honours	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012			2	2		
		2016			1	1		
		2017			1	1		
	Total						4	4
6 Masters Degree	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2008		0	1	1		
		2012		1	3	4		
		2013		0	4	4		
		2014		0	1	1		
	Total					1	9	10
7 Postgraduate diploma	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012			1	1		
		2017			1	1		
	Total						2	2
Total	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2008	0	0	1	1		
		2009	0	1	2	3		
		2012	0	1	14	15		
		2013	0	0	5	5		
		2014	0	0	6	6		
		2015	0	2	4	6		
		2016	1	0	4	5		
		2017	0	0	5	5		
		2018	0	0	3	3		
	Total				1	4	44	49

B 7: Phase 3: Superior Performance

MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF11 2015/16 * Highest Qualification Highest Qualification Crosstabulation						
Count						
Highest Qualification Highest Qualification				AF11 2015/16		Total
				5 Unqualified with findings	6 Unqualified with no findings	
1 Grade 12	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2016			1	1
	Total				1	1
2 National Diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2009	0	1	1	
		2012	0	1	1	
		2014	0	1	1	
		2015	1	0	1	
		2017	0	1	1	
		2018	0	2	2	
	Total		1	6	7	
3 Advanced Diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012		1	1	
	Total			1	1	
4 Bachelor's Degree	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2009	1	1	2	
		2012	1	5	6	
		2013	0	1	1	
		2014	0	4	4	
		2015	1	4	5	
		2016	1	2	3	
		2017	1	1	2	
		2018	0	1	1	
	Total		5	19	24	
5 Honours	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012	0	2	2	
		2016	1	0	1	
		2017	1	0	1	
	Total		2	2	4	
6 Masters Degree	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2008		1	1	
		2012		4	4	
		2013		4	4	
		2014		1	1	
	Total			10	10	

7 Postgraduate diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year	2012		1	1
	MMC Completed	2017		1	1
	Ungrouped				
	Total			2	2
Total	MMC Year Ungrouped Year	2008	0	1	1
	MMC Completed	2009	1	2	3
	Ungrouped	2012	1	14	15
		2013	0	5	5
		2014	0	6	6
		2015	2	4	6
		2016	2	3	5
		2017	2	3	5
		2018	0	3	3
	Total		8	41	49

B8

Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF12 2016/2017 * Highest Qualification Crosstabulation						
Count						
Highest Qualification				AF12 2016/2017		Total
				5 Unqualified with findings	6 Unqualified with no findings	
1 Grade 12	MMC Year Ungrouped Year	MMC	2016		1	1
	Completed Ungrouped					
	Total				1	1
2 National Diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year	MMC	2009	0	1	1
	Completed Ungrouped		2012	0	1	1
			2014	0	1	1
			2015	1	0	1
			2017	0	1	1
			2018	0	2	2
	Total			1	6	7
3 Advanced Diploma	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped		2012		1	1
	Total				1	1
4 Bachelor's Degree	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped		2009	1	1	2
			2012	0	6	6
			2013	0	1	1
			2014	0	4	4

		2015	1	4	5
		2016	1	2	3
		2017	0	2	2
		2018	0	1	1
		Total	3	21	24
5 Honours	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012		2	2
		2016		1	1
		2017		1	1
	Total			4	4
6 Master's Degree	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2008	0	1	1
		2012	0	4	4
		2013	1	3	4
		2014	0	1	1
	Total		1	9	10
7 Postgraduate diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012		1	1
		2017		1	1
	Total			2	2
Total	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2008	0	1	1
		2009	1	2	3
		2012	0	15	15
		2013	1	4	5
		2014	0	6	6
		2015	2	4	6
		2016	1	4	5
		2017	0	5	5
		2018	0	3	3
	Total		5	44	49

B9

Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF13 2017/2018 * Highest Qualification Crosstabulation			
Count			
Highest Qualification	AF13 2017/2018		Total
	5 Unqualified with findings	6 Unqualified with no findings	

1 Grade 12	Year MM Completed Ungrouped	2016		1	1
	Total			1	1
2 National Diploma	Year MCC Completed Ungrouped	2009	1	0	1
		2012	1	0	1
		2014	0	1	1
		2015	1	0	1
		2017	0	1	1
		2018	0	2	2
	Total		3	4	7
3 Advanced Diploma	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012		1	1
	Total			1	1
4 Bachelor's Degree	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2009	2	0	2
		2012	4	2	6
		2013	1	0	1
		2014	2	2	4
		2015	3	2	5
		2016	3	0	3
		2017	1	1	2
		2018	0	1	1
	Total		16	8	24
5 Honours	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012		2	2
		2016		1	1
		2017		1	1
	Total			4	4
6 master's degree	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2008	1	0	1
		2012	1	3	4
		2013	3	1	4
		2014	0	1	1
	Total		5	5	10
7 Postgraduate diploma	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2012		1	1
		2017		1	1
	Total			2	2
Total	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2008	1	0	1
		2009	3	0	3

		2012	6	9	15
		2013	4	1	5
		2014	2	4	6
		2015	4	2	6
		2016	3	2	5
		2017	1	4	5
		2018	0	3	3
		Total	24	25	49

MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF14 2018/2019						
* Highest Qualification Highest Qualification Crosstabulation						
Count						
Highest Qualification Highest Qualification			AF14 2018/2019		Total	
			5 Unqualified with findings	6 Unqualified with no findings		
1 Grade 12	MMC Year Ungrouped	2016		1	1	
	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped					
	Total			1	1	
2 National Diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped	2009	1	0	1	
	Year MMC Completed	2012	1	0	1	
	Ungrouped	2014	1	0	1	
		2015	1	0	1	
		2017	0	1	1	
		2018	1	1	2	
	Total		5	2	7	
3 Advanced Diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped	2012		1	1	
	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped					
	Total			1	1	
4 Bachelor's Degree	MMC Year Ungrouped	2009	2	0	2	
	Year MMC Completed	2012	5	1	6	
	Ungrouped	2013	0	1	1	
		2014	3	1	4	
		2015	4	1	5	
		2016	3	0	3	
		2017	2	0	2	
		2018	0	1	1	
	Total		19	5	24	
5 Honours	Year MMC Completed	2012	0	2	2	
	Ungrouped	2016	1	0	1	
		2017	1	0	1	
	Total		2	2	4	
6 Masters Degree	Year MMC Completed	2008	1	0	1	
	Ungrouped	2012	1	3	4	
		2013	2	1	3	
	Total		4	4	8	
7 Postgraduate diploma	Year MMC Completed	2012		1	1	
	Ungrouped	2017		1	1	
	Total			2	2	

Total	Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2008	1	0	1
		2009	3	0	3
		2012	7	8	15
		2013	2	2	4
		2014	4	1	5
		2015	5	1	6
		2016	4	1	5
		2017	3	2	5
		2018	1	2	3
	Total		30	17	47

B10

B11

MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped * AF15 2019/2020 * Highest Qualification Highest Qualification Crosstabulation						
Count						
Highest Qualification Highest Qualification			AF15 2019/2020			Total
			0 no report	5 Unqualified with findings	6 Unqualified with no findings	
1 Grade 12	MMC Year Ungrouped	2016	1			1
	Year MMC Completed					
	Total		1			1
2 National Diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2009	0	0	1	1
		2012	0	0	1	1
		2014	0	0	1	1
		2015	0	1	0	1
		2017	0	0	1	1
		2018	1	0	1	2
	Total		1	1	5	7
3 Advanced Diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped	2012			1	1
	Year MMC Completed					
	Total				1	1
4 Bachelor's Degree	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped	2009	0	1	1	2
		2012	2	0	4	6
		2013	0	0	1	1
		2014	1	1	2	4

				2015	1	2	2	5
				2016	0	3	0	3
				2017	1	1	0	2
				2018	1	0	0	1
				Total	6	8	10	24
5 Honours	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped			2012	0		2	2
				2016	1		0	1
				2017	1		0	1
				Total	2		2	4
6 Masters Degree	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped			2008		0	1	1
				2012		1	3	4
				2013		1	3	4
				2014		0	1	1
				Total		2	8	10
7 Postgraduate diploma	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped			2012			1	1
				2017			1	1
				Total			2	2
Total	MMC Year Ungrouped Year MMC Completed Ungrouped			2008	0	0	1	1
				2009	0	1	2	3
				2012	2	1	12	15
				2013	0	1	4	5
				2014	1	1	4	6
				2015	1	3	2	6
				2016	2	3	0	5
				2017	2	1	2	5
				2018	2	0	1	3
				Total	10	11	28	49

B12

General Linear Model		
Notes		
Output Created		06-JAN-2022 22:43:33
Comments		
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		N of Rows in Working Data File	59
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		Cases Used	Statistics are based on all cases with valid data for all variables in the model.
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Appendix G: Ethics Approval



Appendix: H Turn it In Report

 [AltheWhitakerThesis.pdf](#)

Appendix I Editors Letter

SD Dumbo University of Business and Integrated Development Studies
Faculty of Public Policy and Governance
Post Office Box WA64
Wa, Upper West Region
Ghana

December 12, 2024

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Confirmation of language and technical editing doctoral thesis: Althea Nadia Whitaker

This is to confirm I edited the doctoral thesis of Althea Nadia Whitaker, titled 'The Management Competency of Senior Local Government Managers in the Western Cape, South Africa' submitted to Department of Public Administration and Governance in the Faculty of Business and Management Sciences at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Cape Town, in fulfillment of the requirements for the doctoral degree in Public Administration.

As editor, my mandate was to proofread and edit the thesis but, as a seasoned academic, I went further and considered the thesis from the perspective of conformity with the tenets of established research processes, including ethics. I found it to be of a very high standard in adhering to the cardinal tenets of research and rigorous as expected of doctoral theses in higher education.

After thorough reading of the entire thesis and scrutiny, I confirm that the thesis meets the rigorous standards of formal academic writing in all respects expected of doctoral studies regarding structure (layout of chapters), presentation, logical soundness and style, argumentation within chapters, inter-chapter coherence as well as coherence at sentence and paragraph levels. The language used is scholarly, but easy to understand and devoid of technical jargon. Further, technical quality in terms of regarding List of Figures and Table of contents as well as in-text citations and bibliographic referencing are fairly well done.

My feedback involved providing guidelines regarding numbering of the preliminary pages and text of the work itself, need to adhere strictly to the APA regarding use of capital and small letters in headings, sub-headings and sub sub-headings and a few issues with respect to in-text citations and bibliographic referencing.

In line with my mandate to critically read the work and edit it with a view to improving its quality as a scholarly submission, I did not, in any way, change its substance, except to recommend addressing of a few substantive issues and changes in language to enhance scholarly clarity. Should there be a need to verify the authenticity of this letter, please contact me by email: cassabie@yahoo.co.uk.

Yours sincerely



Professor Maurice Oscar Dassah

Appendix J Focus Group Structure

Focus Group Structure Organised around the Four Research Objectives

Introduction outlining the purpose of the study and clarifying the role of the discussion. At the start of the session, a short quantitative questionnaire was administered to participants to capture demographic information, including age, ethnicity, length of service in local government, qualifications, and training background.

The focus group discussions is **semi-structured format**, guided by a set of open-ended questions directly aligned with the research objectives. This is to ensure consistency across groups while allowing for flexibility in participants' responses

Objective 1: Qualifications and Experience

This objective explored the appointment processes, traits, and behaviours associated with senior management in local government.

- **Guiding questions included:**

What are your views on the appointment processes for senior management?

What traits and behaviours are important for effective leadership in local government?

Objective 2: Audit Reports and Performance

This objective examined audit outcomes, performance management practices, municipal performance differences, and service delivery.

- **Guiding questions included:**

What are your views on the audit outcomes the municipality receives?

How would you describe the performance of the municipality?

Objective 3: Relevance of the Municipal Minimum Competency (MMC) Regulations

This objective focused on participants' understanding of the MMC, its role in professionalisation, its human resource development value, and its implementation.

- **Guiding questions included:**

How relevant is the MMC for local government?

What are the issues with the MMC?

How long did it take you to complete the MMC?

Did you complete the MMC in the prescribed period?

Objective 4: Content and Training Delivery

This objective assessed the usefulness and value of the MMC training, the relevance of course content, the mode of delivery, and whether processes such as training needs analysis and recognition of prior learning (RPL) were applied.

- **Guiding questions included:**

Was a training needs analysis conducted before the training?

Was the training effective enough to be regarded as professionalisation?

What is the human resource process in your organisation for training?

Was the content relevant for local government?