



**UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE**

A study exploring motivational factors that influence the morale of General Assistants in the CWED through the application of the theories of Maslow, Herzberg and Marciano

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation has been prepared by me, and that it has not been previously submitted to any university or institution of higher learning. All the sources of information specified in this work have been duly acknowledged both in the text and the bibliography.

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CHARISSE BEUKES

October 2017
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Last but not least, I express appreciation to authors and publishers whose works have been quoted from or cited in this study.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to identify and explore factors that influence the morale of general assistants in the Cape Winelands Education District (CWED) through a qualitative study at five schools in Worcester. General assistants are perceived as low-skilled workers due to the content of the functions they fulfill at educational institutions. The Needs Theory of Maslow, the Two-factor Theory of Herzberg and the Respect Model of Marciano provide the theoretical context for the study. A qualitative approach was followed by conducting one-on-one structured interviews with principals and general assistants at the identified schools.

The goal was to determine how attitudes and behaviour of some stakeholders at the educational institution had an impact on the morale of the general assistants. Some of the main findings that resulted from interviews revealed that general assistants have been employed at schools for long periods, ranging from one to more than twenty years. The majority of the participants indicated that they were content with their salary and leave allocation. The factors that influenced their morale positively were identified as the relationship and communication with the principal, friendliness and respect by colleagues and the opportunities to grow and develop. Factors that influenced their morale adversely, were negative and disrespectful behaviour displayed by learners, disrespect by colleagues, including educators and situations of conflict.

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KEY WORDS

General Assistants

Schools

Morale

Motivation

Intrinsic factors

Extrinsic factors

Cape Winelands Education District (CWED)

Worcester

Western Cape Education Department (WCED)

School Governing Bodies (SGBs)



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ATR	Annual Training Report
CWED	Cape Winelands Education District
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DSDC	District Skills Development Committee
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NSNP	National School Nutritional Programme
SDIP	Service Delivery Improvement Plan
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
SPMDS	Staff Performance Management and Development System
WCED	Western Cape Education Department
WSE	Whole School Evaluation



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Although previous studies have been conducted in terms of motivational factors on the morale of a broad range of occupational groups, limited research has been conducted on the motivational factors that influence the morale of general assistants in particular and more specifically, of general assistants at schools. General assistants are viewed as lower-skilled workers based on the content of their job description which is primarily cleaning and maintaining the institution.

Janssen (2014) undertook a study to examine the extent to which the relationships of skills use, autonomy and participative decision-making (i.e. intrinsic job qualities) with intrinsic motivation were moderated. A total of 144 low-skilled workers participated in the study of which the first hypothesis suggested that high levels of (a) skills use, (b) autonomy and (c) participation in decision-making would positively impact the intrinsic motivation of employees. According to this study, this hypothesis was supported by research conducted by several authors (notably Fried and Ferris, 1987; Humphrey et al., 2007 and Spector, 1986, all cited by Janssen, 2014). Additionally, in practice, the results of this study demonstrate that organisations should invest in a high level of skills use, autonomy and participation when designing jobs and that employee participation could be increased by regular meetings and consultations.

This study can relate to the study of Janssen (2014) since factors that influence the morale of general assistants at schools and their participation in decision-making, amongst other factors were probed. The finding is that they participate in decisions in terms of their work plans and work-related matters and as a result, their work performance and morale are influenced positively since they were part of the decision-making and planning.

While undertaking this study, it was discovered that limited research was conducted on lower-skilled workers. Janssen (2014) and Fouarge et al (2009) also allude to the limited research of this particular occupation group.

1.2 BACKGROUND

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) of the Republic of South Africa delegates its mandate to the nine provinces. The responsibility of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) where this study was conducted, “is to provide a quality education service to the people of the Western Cape Province, in line with national and provincial objectives” (WCED, 2004) the vision of the WCED is: “A learning home for all”. The mission statement according to the Service Delivery Improvement Plan (SDIP) (WCED, 2004) is to ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge, skills and values they need to:

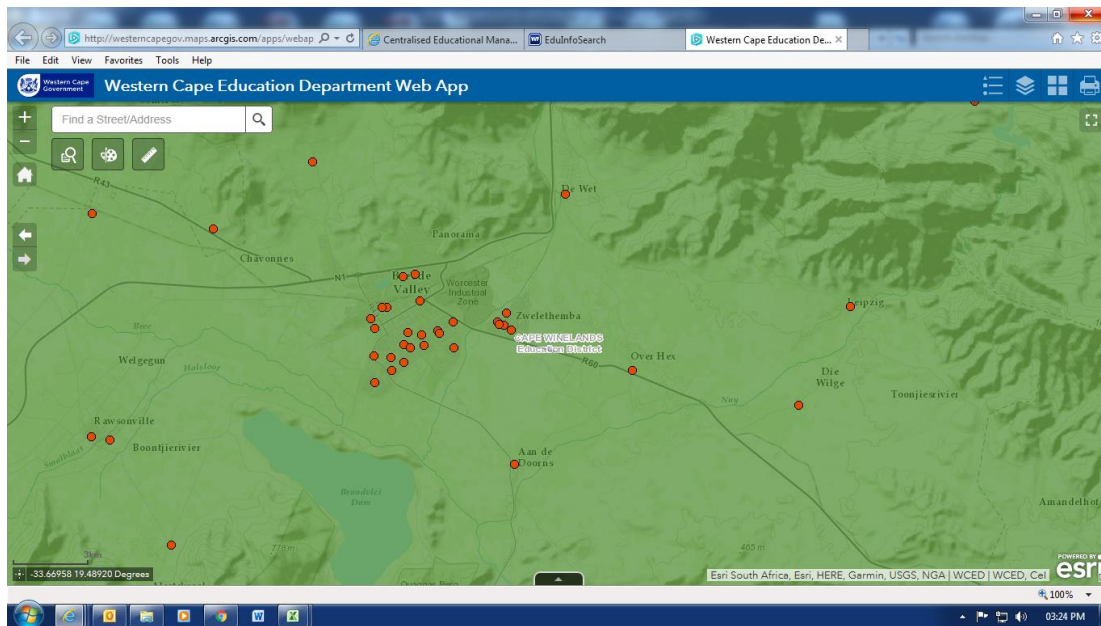
- realise their potential
- contribute to social and economic development
- participate fully in the life of the country
- compete internationally, and
- build communities capable of managing their lives successfully and with dignity.

According to the SDIP (WCED, 2004:3), the WCED ascribes to the following set of values:

- The values of the South African Constitution
- The Batho Pele Principles
- Critical outcomes of the National Curriculum
- Transformation, by ensuring access, equity and redress
- The prime importance of the learner
- Pro-poor approach to resource allocation
- Accountability and transparency
- Excellence in all we do
- Responsibility to society at large, to support efforts at ensuring social, cultural and economic development.

Below is a map of the Cape Winelands Education District (CWED), which depicts the focus area of this study.

Map 1: Cape Winelands Education District (CWED)



Source: PGWC (2017)

In terms of non-teaching staff at schools, the WCED classifies cleaners and caretakers as general assistants. According to the WCED data base, the tables below indicate the total number of general assistants employed in 2016.

Table 1: General Assistants employed at schools in CWED in 2016

SCHOOL TYPE	CONTRACT	PERMANENT	Grand Total
Agriculture School		3	3
General Assistant		3	3
Art Centre	1	1	2
General Assistant	1	1	2
Preparatory School		3	3
General Assistant		3	3
Primary School	37	178	215
General Assistant	37	178	215
Secondary School	15	78	93
General Assistant	15	78	93
Special School	3	13	16
General Assistant	3	13	16
Technical High School		1	1
General Assistant		1	1
Grand Total	56	277	333

Source: PGWC (2016).

Table 2: General Assistants employed at hostels in CWED in 2016

SCHOOL TYPE	CONTRACT	PERMANENT	Grand Total
Agriculture School	2	12	14
Household Aid I.	2	5	7
Household Aid Ii		7	7
Primary School	3	3	6
Household Aid I.	3		3
Household Aid Ii		3	3
Secondary School	4	77	81
Household Aid I.	4	27	31
Household Aid Ii		50	50
Special School	15	69	84
Household Aid I.	15	31	46
Household Aid Ii		38	38
Technical High School		8	8
Household Aid I.		5	5
Household Aid Ii		3	3
Grand Total	24	169	193

Source: (PGWC, 2016).

Table 3: General Assistants employed at CWED in 2016

COMPONENT	PERMANENT	Grand Total
Circuit Teams (Cape Winelands)	1	1
General Assistant	1	1
Logistic Support (Cape W/Lands)	1	1
General Assistant	1	1
Grand Total	2	2

Source: (PGWC, 2016).

There are 528 general assistants employed in the Cape Winelands Education District (CWED). These general assistants are employed at schools, hostels and at the CWED office. Of the 528 general assistants, 333 are employed at schools across the CWED. The schools are clustered in circuits based on their location. Schools in Worcester are grouped together in Circuit 2. In the CWED, Circuit 2 consists of six high schools, fourteen primary schools and one Arts Centre. Tables 1, 2 and 3 above reflect the number of general assistants who are employed across the institutions of the CWED. In this occupation group there is also a promotion post of Foreman allocated to schools, depending on their learner enrolment. This

post is at a higher salary level (level 4) than those of the general assistants who are remunerated at level 2.

The responsibilities of general assistants are mainly the general maintenance of the infrastructure and landscaping. In other parts of the world, they are known as janitors. “Janitors are required to provide heat and hot water for the tenants, remove the garbage regularly, make minor emergency repairs, and keep the building and grounds clean” (Gold, 1952:489). Tannock (2001) referred to janitorial duties as: emptying garbage cans, sweeping floors, mopping up spills, and (most dreaded of all) cleaning up staff bathrooms. In essence, general assistants are responsible for the basic cleaning of grounds, ablution facilities and classrooms.

General assistants are in many instances, the first employees who are called upon when non-teaching service delivery is required at schools. They are not only cleaners and gardeners but they also assist with security and safety, plumbing, electrical work, caretaking, deliveries, stock-taking, etc. The fruit of their labour reflects in the neat landscaping and well-maintained gardens, buildings and infrastructure which are the first impression for visitors and officials entering the school premises.

With regards to staff provision, depending on the grading of the school and the learner enrolment, the majority of schools are allocated two to three general assistants and one foreman. The key performance areas according to their job description include:

- cleaning
- maintenance of grounds and buildings
- minor electrical and plumbing repairs
- ensuring the safety of learners
- landscaping, and
- general work.

According to the New South Wales (NSW) Education Department in Australia:

“General assistants are employed in all our schools to maintain school playing fields, gardens and lawns and, receipting and distributing stores. General assistants support student learning by:

- preparing and maintaining equipment
- preparing materials and constructing teaching aids
- undertaking minor maintenance of buildings, plant and equipment
- receiving and distributing stores and goods delivered to the school
- maintaining and caring for school grounds” (NSW, 2017).

There is a resemblance between South African and Australian schools in terms of functions, responsibilities and duties of general assistants. As mentioned, their core function is cleaning and maintenance while the teachers are responsible for educating the learners and the administrative staff is responsible for maintaining sound administrative and financial management. In terms of the staff establishment and composition at a school, the general assistants are perceived and classified as lower-skilled and lower- or unqualified workers.

According to Tannock (2001) janitorial duties of sweeping, mopping and the (most dreadful of all) cleaning of the staff bathroom and Gold (1952:487), who stated that “the janitor has a reputation of being looked upon as an ignorant, lazy and dirty occupational misfit. There is a general belief that if a man cannot do anything else, he can always become a janitor.” This antiquated perception of general assistants by School Management Teams (SMTs), staff and learners, do not appear to be of high value in terms of the service they deliver. However, the change in the education environment challenged some of these perceptions. The Schools Act of 1996 (RSA, 1996b) indicates that general assistants are, in fact, eligible to be involved in policy formulation and decision-making through representation on School Governing Bodies (SGBs). If a general assistant is elected as a School Governing Body (SGB) member, he/she is given a certain ‘status’ and forms an integral part of decision-making. An elected SGB makes decisions in terms of policies, curriculum, recruitment and selection, appointment of staff, including promotional posts e.g. principals, deputy principals and heads of department. As a member of the SGB, a general assistant is equal to the other members, irrespective of the status or position they might hold in society.

Crime and violence is another factor that might influence the morale of general assistants. According to the Western Cape Education Departments' *Implementation plan for Tirisano*, (2000), "school safety was declared one of the priorities, of which the strategic objective is to create a safe and tolerant learning environment that celebrates innocence and values human dignity." The high occurrence of crime, violence and the vandalism of schools in the Western Cape, has an impact on quality learning and teaching. According to the Procedural Manual: Managing Safety and Security within WCED institutions, "the vision is to secure safe learning institutions for all" (WCED, 2003:5).

Due to criminal intent by certain elements in neighbourhoods, it is expected of general assistants to function as security guards at schools during and after-hours. Execution of this function is dangerous since schools have become the target of vandals. According to the process of Whole School Evaluation (WSE), which is a collaborative transparent process of making judgment on the holistic performance of schools measured against agreed criteria, they are an important link to the school (RSA, 2001:18). Section 8 of the nine identified areas of WSE is school infrastructure. Maintenance of the infrastructure is measured against agreed criteria and therefore, the role of general assistants and their contribution to secure a learning environment that is neat, hygienic and safe is of paramount importance.

General assistants are instrumental in securing a safe learning environment through elimination of potential physical risks to learners and staff. They must ensure that classes and the playing rounds are neat, safe and free of dangerous obstacles. Primary schools with Grade R learners have a playground which includes a sandpit and jungle gym. The sand needs to be treated with salt to keep it in a safe and hygienic condition for the learners to play in. A jungle gym, which is a wooden structure with ropes, swings and added structures, needs to be inspected and maintained on a regular basis.

The principal as head of the school is ultimately responsible for the safety of the learners and staff. The general assistant reports to the Foreman and principal of the school and their role cannot be underestimated. Against this background, general assistants have an important contribution to make in the context of the operations and functioning of the school. Therefore, a study that contributes to an understanding of the factors that either contribute to or impede their morale is important.

1.3 CONTEXT AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The RSA Constitution stipulates that everyone has the right to a basic education and to access ~~further~~ education and places on the state the responsibility of making available such access progressively (RSA, 1996a). Therefore, post-1994 and in the context of primary and secondary schooling, the Department of Basic Education was established to ensure equal access to basic education and coordinate and promote learning across all schools in South Africa. In promoting equal access and learning the staffing structure is organised according to specific roles, responsibilities and duties that span professional, administrative and support categories in the sector. To this end, provision is made for different categories of staff (principal, educators, administrative and support staff) to be represented on School Governing Bodies. As part of the support staff, general assistants are included in this organisational design (RSA, 1996b).

One of the significant changes that were introduced post-1994 relates to governance at schools. School Governing Bodies were introduced in 1996 to formulate policies, determine the vision and mission of a school, and oversee the management and operations of a school, amongst other things. The composition of an SGB is made up of elected members, the principal by virtue of his/her official capacity and co-opted members. Elected members comprise of:

- parents or guardians of learners
- an educator, who is someone who teaches, educates or trains learners or people
- high school learners
- staff, who are not educators. These staff members are appointed according to the Public Service Act (RSA, 1994), who are not educators at the institution. General assistants may represent this component on the SGB (RSA, 1996b).

Consequently, School Governing Bodies facilitate more participatory forms of decision-making through its diverse and representative composition across occupational categories. It marks a shift from exclusionary processes of decision-making to more inclusive forms of decision-making and acknowledges the role of various stakeholders in this regard. To this end, it creates the opportunity for individuals holding lower-ranking positions within the school environment to get their voices heard via a representative forum, balanced by the

opinions, experiences and knowledge of people from different backgrounds and professions. This emphasises the importance of the individual within the workplace and his/her contribution towards the achievement of the school's goals and objectives. In addition to more participatory processes of decision-making through the SGBs, various other legislation and policies were introduced to govern, guide and direct the behaviour and attitudes of staff within the school environment. For example, the Basic Guidelines for Professional Conduct in the Workplace promote issues of employee well-being; respect for human dignity; and efficiencies and effectiveness (WCED, 2002:21-26). With specific reference to general assistants in the workplace, the guidelines refer to issues of cooperation with other employees; fulfillment of all reasonable instructions by persons officially assigned; processes for lodging complaints and treating other employees fairly, professionally and equitably (WCED, 2002:21-26). Chapter 2, Section 9(1) of the Constitution of South Africa (RSA, 1996a) is clear that all public servants enjoy equal rights and opportunities. General assistants also have the right to affiliate to a labour union of their choice as stated in Chapter 2, Section 4(1) b of the Labour Relations Act, No. 66 of 1995 (RSA, 1995). The Basic Conditions of Employment Act (RSA, 1997), as overarching legislation governing employee/employer relations, is clear on the working hours (Chapter 2) Leave (Chapter 3) and remuneration for all employees (Chapter 4).

However, in spite of more inclusive decision-making processes and a regulated framework for employer/employee relations, the experiences of general assistants suggest that the school environment is not conducive to one in which they feel valued, respected or afforded opportunities to develop according to their identified training priorities. Development opportunities are available for general assistants through the District Skills Development Committees, who coordinate training and skills opportunities within all Districts of the WCED. However, for the 2016/17 cycle, according to the CWED Annual Training Report (ATR) for 2016/2017 (2017) only 45 general assistants of a total of 333 received handyman training. Only the handyman training could be rolled out for the general assistants due to the allocated funds available for this occupational group although other training needs were identified.

Increasing learner numbers, limited financial and infrastructural resources, and the remnants of apartheid place a burden on equitable and quality access to basic education. For example, increased numbers lead to an increase in the use of the resources, e.g. learning material and

physical resources at the school. To this end, not all learners use water, playgrounds and toilet facilities in an appropriate and correct manner. This places pressure on general assistants to maintain a hygienic ablution facility or playground. In addition, schools are understaffed especially with regards to the general assistants. In many schools, the roles and functions of general assistants are not limited to gardening and maintaining buildings and infrastructure. Some schools make their facilities available to the communities and the general assistants are responsible for opening and closing when they conclude their activities. It is also expected of general assistants to assist external security companies after-hours with incidents on the school premises. General assistants are not always remunerated for their involvement in after-hours duties at the school. This raises the question about the motivation of low-skilled workers through pay incentives.

Another factor that might influence the morale of general assistants is the location of schools. Some schools are situated in lower socio-economic neighbourhoods and the personal safety of the general assistants may be at risk in the execution of their duties. They may be targeted by criminal elements. This is a very real concern in certain areas across South Africa as portrayed by a study undertaken by De Wet (2016). A deputy principal was also shot dead as he dropped off an ill learner at her home in one of the townships in Cape Town, in what was believed to have been a hijacking (Tswanya, 2016).

Finally, the issue of training and further education seems to emerge as a factor that affects the morale of general assistants in the school environment. While the state subsidises training and further development to encourage employers to invest in their employees, opportunities for training are limited by finances. Since conducting minor electrical and plumbing repairs, is part of the duties of general assistants and included in their job description, opportunities to attend basic courses in plumbing and electrical repairs and also learning to drive are limited.

Issues about compensation and rewards; safety and security; and opportunities to further develop themselves within their sector, may contribute to the morale of general assistants in the school environment. In terms of traditional theories that higher-order and lower-order needs to the skill level of an individual, the above stated factors warrant an examination of the morale of general assistants in the school environment.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study was to explore the factors that influence the morale of general assistants at five identified schools within the Cape Winelands Education District (CWED).

The secondary objectives are as follows:

- To examine and review scholarly debates and literature on motivation, with the view to identify a relevant theoretical framework through which to understand the factors that affect the morale of general assistants in the school environment.
- To explore the personal experiences of general assistants within the school environment.
- To identify factors that either motivates or demotivates general assistants in the school environment.
- To engage with the identified factors in the context of the motivational theories.
- To highlight the main findings and conclude the study.

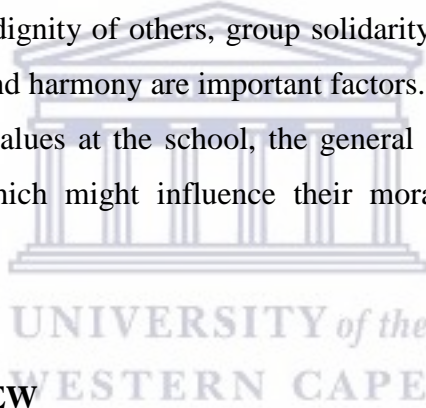
1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research questions which are closely linked to the objectives as stated above, are the following:

- What factors, in general, contribute to the happiness or unhappiness of general assistants in the school environment?
- What specific factors contribute to the happiness or unhappiness of general assistants in the school environment?
- How do interpersonal relations with the principal, foreman, educators, support staff and learners affect the morale of the general assistant in the workplace?
- Are general assistants involved with, and do they participate in, decision-making?
- Did general assistants undergo training offered by the CWED and are they interested in further training?

1.6 ASSUMPTION

- The assumption is that individuals with lower skill levels, which include general assistants, may be more motivated by lower order needs. Although viewed as lower-skilled employees in their work environment, like all human beings, they desire to be treated in a dignified and respectful manner. Some of them are employed at the schools for long periods and render essential services with regards to the ablution needs of learners and staff. The functions which employees at an organisation perform, should not determine the manner in which they are treated or respected. Although the duties of general assistants consist of cleaning and maintaining the infrastructure, they should be acknowledged, recognised and respected.
- Mbigi, (2004) identified that leadership is key to introducing and facilitating values of which respect for the dignity of others, group solidarity, teamwork, service to others in the spirit of peace and harmony are important factors. Should the principal succeed in establishing these values at the school, the general assistants might experience a sense of inclusion which might influence their morale and motivation to work, positively.



1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW

What motivates an individual in the workplace has fascinated the minds of scholars for decades. According to Marciano (2010:9), “Since the 1950s there have been a number of significant developments in the field of human motivation and a plethora of theories to explain and impact human behavior in the workplace.” Various scholars highlight motivation as the biggest factor in determining the morale of employees. In terms of morale, Crossley (2007:1) came to the conclusion that “although morale is often equated with intrinsic job satisfaction more technical definitions posit that morale refers to a summary evaluation of a broader range of job-related attitudes (e.g. organisational commitment, employee loyalty, job involvement, employee engagement, and employee well-being).” He further emphasised that “morale is often influenced by factors present in the work environment that may be common to all employees in the group or organisation” (Crossley, 2007:1). This holistic perspective

reminds us of Maslow's hierarchy of needs that distinguishes between higher order and lower order needs. However, the difference between Maslow's theory and the views of Crossley (2007) may resonate in how the need serves to motivate. In the case of Maslow's theory, once a need is satisfied, the individual seeks new forms of motivation to inspire positive behaviours and attitudes towards the organisation. However, in Crossley's view, motivational factors seem to encompass the satisfaction of both basic needs (employee wellbeing) evidenced partly through satisfaction with rewards and compensation, and higher order ones (job involvement, employee engagement,)

Several authors defined the concept of motivation, and according to Adair (2009:89) motivation is when someone wants to do something. "Motivation covers all reasons which cause a person to act, including negative ones like fear along with the more positives motives, such as money, promotion or recognition". "Motivation is a factor that plays an important role in boosting the morale of the employee" (Skemp-Arit & Toupenca, 2007:28). In this context, the literature does not distinguish between whether or not motivation is important *vis-à-vis* the morale of individuals in the workplace, but instead that individuals are motivated by different factors and/or conditions. Therefore, a consideration of the factors that contribute to the morale of general assistants as workers is important.

Although the general assistants are viewed as low-skilled employees, as human beings they need to feel valued in their contribution in securing a safe and neat facility. When staff and learners of a school visit the ablution facility, they expect it to be clean and hygienic. It is therefore also essential to determine if they value and respect the contribution of general assistants in maintaining a clean and safe facility, and the impact thereof on their morale. It can be viewed as important for the principal and School Management to ensure that all staff members are motivated and their morale influenced positively. Allen (1967) alludes to the importance of motivated employees and the role of management:

"Perhaps few problems are of more importance in our work oriented culture than a basic and comprehensive understanding of the motivation to work. Employee motivation is a situation which constantly faces management. If one accepts the suggestion that there is a relationship between motivation and productivity, even though the relationship is indirect, then it is easy to see why motivation should be one of the major areas of concern by management" (Allen, 1967:44).

Dell (1988) also emphasises the importance of motivating employees. She states that motivation is ensuring to give employees what they want most from work. If managers are able to provide what they want, they should expect the returns in productivity, quality and service. Adair (2009:106) believes that “recognition is often an even more powerful motivator”.

The behaviour of all stakeholders at a school influences the morale of general assistants. Negative and disrespectful behaviour towards general assistants at schools influences their morale and motivation in executing their duties. The functions which they are responsible for, although it is low-skilled work, if not recognised and appreciated, are likely to have a negative influence on their morale. The principal, as head of the school should ensure that all staff, including the general assistants are motivated to execute their duties and that they should be respected irrespective of the functions which they are responsible for. The principal and staff should continuously remind learners of the importance of the duties which general assistants are responsible for, and their important role in assisting and sustaining an environment conducive for learning.

In 1959, Herzberg and his associates embarked on a study where they conducted extensive interviews with employees from the public and private sector in their quest to determine the continuum in which job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction might be determined (Herzberg, et al., 1959). Herzberg added a new dimension to this theory in which he proposed a two-factor model of motivation, which was based on the perception that the presence of one set of job characteristics or incentives leads to worker satisfaction at work while on the other hand, another and separate set of job characteristics leads to dissatisfaction at work. It was determined that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not on a continuum with one increasing as the other diminishes, but are independent phenomena. This theory suggests further that to improve job attitudes and productivity, administrators and managers must recognise and attend to both sets of characteristics and not assume that an increase in satisfaction necessarily leads to a decrease in dissatisfaction.

The Herzberg study also determined that intrinsic and extrinsic factors influence productivity and the morale of employees. He refers to intrinsic factors as motivator factors of employment while extrinsic factors are referred to as hygiene factors (Herzberg, et al., 1959). Wade and Tavriss (2014) state that intrinsic motives include a sense of accomplishment,

intellectual fulfillment, the satisfaction of curiosity, and the sheer love of the activity, while extrinsic motives include a desire for money, fame, and attention or the wish to avoid punishment (Wade & Tavis, 2014:221).

According to Tauer and Harackiewicz (2004:377-378):

“Intrinsic motivation {is} when people are motivated by the inherent nature of the activity, their pleasure of mastering something new, or the natural consequences of the activity. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is motivation that is external to the activity and not an inherent part of it. People who are intrinsically motivated tend to work harder and respond to challenges by working even harder. They enjoy their work more and often perform more creatively and effectively than people who are extrinsically motivated.”

Intrinsic motivation in the case of general assistants may be stimulated by the possibility of being elected as representatives on the SGBs or being selected to attend training interventions or skills development programmes.

The Hawthorne effect of Elton Mayo (1933) changes the way managers perceive employees. Employees were previously considered as just a link in the production of goods and services. This study determined that employees were not solely motivated by money and that their behaviour is also linked to attitudes (Dickson, 1973). This study began the human relations approach to management whereby the needs and the motivation of employees become the main focus of managers. The research of Mayo provokes considerable controversy and the conclusion that was drawn at the time was that attention and acknowledgment resulted in improved productivity. Marciano (2010:7) agrees that “it shed light on the importance of psychological factors affecting employee motivation and productivity, including worker autonomy, consulting with employees about their work, and paying attention to social factors in the workplace, including group cohesiveness and relations between supervisors and employees.” According to Marciano’s Respect model, the second area is leadership and it concerns direct supervision. This model is based on leaders who believe that they are competent and ethical, and in their ability to make good decisions and to treat people fairly. Marciano emphasises that people follow leaders that they respect and by whom they are respected and as such, respect brings with it great power to influence others and their behaviour.

Marciano also alludes to employee engagement, which refers to the extent to which one is committed, dedicated and loyal to the organisation, manager, work and one's colleagues. He further elaborates on employee engagement as an intrinsic, deep-rooted, and sweeping sense of commitment, pride, and loyalty that is not easily altered (Marciano, 2010:40).

The importance of leadership on the motivation and morale of employees is further supported by Mbigi (2004) in emphasizing the important role of the leader and/or manager. According to Mbigi, (2004) leadership is key to introducing and facilitating values that include the following:

1. respect for the dignity of others
2. group solidarity (“an injury to one is an injury to all”)
3. team work is greater than the efforts of the individual
4. service to others in the spirit of peace and harmony
5. interdependence and connectedness
6. persuasion

Since general assistants do not operate in isolation, management of the school and interaction with relevant role-players may have an impact on their morale. This is where the roles of the principal and supervisor are pivotal since their behaviour can influence the morale of general assistants. The performance of the general assistant is evaluated by the principal. The principal may be perceived by the general assistant as the leader and the general assistant seeks leadership and guidance from the principal. “It has been shown that there is a relationship between leadership and employee morale, and those leadership competencies include communication, fostering trust and team building” (Ngambi, 2010:762). Fisher, et al (2003) mention that psychologist studies on leadership can be traced back to the 1940s and 1950s when researchers who were interested in leadership attempted to identify a unique set of individual characteristics or traits that could differentiate between leaders and non-leaders.

Marciano's Respect Theory distinguishes areas in which employees experience feelings of respect and disrespect. These include the organisation where employees identify with the mission, vision, values, goals, policies and actions. Employees experience a sense of pride to be associated with the organisation. In terms of leadership, specifically if it concerns a direct

supervisor, it is important for an employee to view the supervisor as someone who is competent, ethical and has the ability to make good decisions and treats people fairly. With reference to the work, it is important that employees find it challenging, rewarding, interesting and that it has value to all the stakeholders. For the individual it is important that they feel respected by the organisation, supervisor and team members (Marciano, 2010:68).

There appears to be a gap in the literature since no significant studies seem to have been undertaken in exploring the factors that influence the morale of general assistants at schools. This was also the conclusion drawn by recent studies in the field of low-skilled workers (Janssen, 2014). Janssen (2014) and Fouarge, et al (2009) allude to the limited research in terms of lower-skilled workers. Accordingly, Puangyoykeaw & Nishidi (2015) also mentioned that despite the important presence of low-skilled workers in the labour-intensive sector, a limited amount of research has been done regarding the attitude of low-skilled workers.

1.8 METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative approach. Common characteristic of qualitative research is that the aims and objectives are directed at providing an in-depth and interpreted understanding of the social world of research participants by learning about the sense they make of their social and material circumstances, their experiences, perspectives and histories. Ritchie, et al. (2014:4). Qualitative approaches seek to arrive at an understanding of a particular phenomenon from the perspective of those experiencing it. Vaismoradi, et al (2013).

Ritchie, et al. (2014:3) further emphasise that:

” it is important to be aware that there is no single, accepted way of carrying out qualitative research. Indeed, how researchers proceed depends upon a range of factors, including their beliefs about the nature of the social world (ontology), the nature of knowledge and how it can be acquired (epistemology), the purpose(s) and goals of the research, the characteristics of research participants, the audience for the research, the funders and the positions and environments of the researchers themselves.”

This approach was considered appropriate in the context of the study, since the researcher conducted an examination of a phenomenon within its real-life context. In addition, the reason for choosing the qualitative approach was that it allows for triangulation, which is the use of multiple data sources in an investigation or study to produce understanding and knowledge. Rubin and Rubin (1995:42) explain that “you cannot plan the entire design for a qualitative project in advance, because the design changes as you learn from the interviewing.” Bearing this in mind, this researcher entered this research with an open mind. Cognisance was taken of the potential design adjustment, but that was attended to during the process. The process was carefully planned through a tentative design where questions were formulated and the researcher engaged with potential participants to sort out initial ideas through piloting the questions first.

A qualitative approach was followed to examine, analyse and interpret the data. The reasons for selecting this approach were:

- the approach allowed the researcher to examine the perspective of general assistants in terms of themselves, their jobs and their working environments; and
- it enabled the researcher to focus on the perceptions and experiences of general assistants by others.

The focus is on an insider perspective and perception, rather than on an outsider perception and perspective, as the researcher works within the school environment and has some understanding of the environment wherein the general assistants find themselves. The study relied on both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary sources include face-to-face interviews and secondary sources include books, journal articles, and government documents.

The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with ten general assistants and five principals, using a semi-structured interview schedule, which was based on a set of predetermined questions, which allowed for follow-up questions as the need arose. The questions were directed at probing the experiences and views of the general assistants and those whom they report to. A total of fifteen interviews were conducted with ten general assistants and five principals at their respective schools.

The reason why the principals of the selected schools were included was to ascertain a degree of triangulation. Since the focus of this study is to determine factors that influence the morale of general assistants, the views of the principals were essential in order to confirm or obtain their views on how the general assistants view extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors aligned with their functions and responsibilities at the school.

Participants of five schools in Worcester, Western Cape were selected:

1. Two primary schools situated in Worcester;
2. One former Model C primary school in Worcester;
3. One secondary school in Worcester;
4. One former Model C secondary school in Worcester.

Former Model C schools are previously advantaged schools, which are situated in affluent neighbourhoods. There is a vast difference in relation to other schools, in terms of availability of resources and the size, appearance and condition of the infrastructure. Hence the choice of schools in historically disadvantaged areas and those previously classified as “Model C” schools. The choice of different schools, based on socio-economic status, provided contrasting findings on experiences of general assistants with reference to factors that influence their morale. In general, questions focused on working conditions, staff relations, leadership, motivation, etc. These questions were examined to determine their possible impact on the morale of general assistants.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

All ethical considerations were adhered to according to the guidelines and prescripts of the University of the Western Cape (see Appendix C). Participants were informed that participation was voluntary and that they could leave or exit the study at any time, without any consequences. Information was treated confidentially and anonymously. The specific names of the schools were not disclosed; instead pseudonyms were assigned to each of the participating schools. The diversity in terms of language of the participants was considered and the interviews were conducted in a language that made them feel comfortable. Written consent was sought and obtained by participants involved in this study. The data will be

stored on the researcher's password protected computer for a period of five years. Thereafter it will be deleted permanently.

Before the study was embarked upon, permission was requested and obtained from:

1. Director : Research Component at WCED;
2. Director : CWED;
3. Chairperson of the SGB or principals of the five identified schools.

1.10 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Due to a lack of scholarly attention to the motivation of low-skilled workers, a study of this nature is significant in probing the extrinsic and intrinsic factors that influence the morale of general assistants at schools. This study may also contribute to the adoption of a holistic perspective on the motivation of low-skilled workers that not only encompasses issues of rewards and compensation, but also issues related to higher order needs such as training and development.

Marciano (2010) refers to the work of different theorists including Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y, Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory, Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, Edwin Locke's Goal-setting Theory and John Adams's Equity Theory. He acknowledges that "each of these has contributed significantly to our understanding of employee motivation and productivity in the workplace. Collectively, this body of research provides overwhelming evidence that employees are motivated by their thoughts, feelings, and beliefs" (Marciano, 2010:9). Although this study focuses on extrinsic and intrinsic factors of motivation, the thoughts, feelings and beliefs which are related to intrinsic motivational factors, are important since the perceptions and experiences of general assistants are to be captured.

1.11 OUTLINE OF THIS STUDY

Chapter One

This chapter focuses on the introduction, background of the problem, objectives of the research, purpose of the research, key concepts, research methodology and significance of the study.

Chapter Two

This chapter deals with the literature review related to the motivational theories of Maslow, Herzberg and Marciano. The chapter focuses on the literature on motivational factors that influence the morale of general assistants in schools and includes substantial discussion on the factors that influence their morale. A theoretical framework is developed through which the issue of motivational factors is considered. The chapter then conducts a critical review of scholarly debates on motivation and the importance of motivated staff to an organisation. Factors that contribute to motivation which are considered as important in the context of the problem of the study are also included.

Chapter Three

This chapter presents a background discussion on the schools under investigation. It discusses the context of selected schools, the roles of general assistants in the school environment, their contribution to the achievement of goals, objectives and mission of the schools post-1994, and the challenges that they face.

Chapter Four

This chapter presents the data presentation, data interpretation and a discussion of the findings.

Chapter Five

This chapter presents the main findings; it proposes further ideas for research and concludes the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the key scholarly debates on motivation and employee morale, why it is important in the workplace, different theories of motivation and its contribution to factors of motivation. The emphasis is on holistic theories that focus on both extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors, bearing in mind that **extrinsic** factors are linked to the satisfaction of lower-order needs whereas **intrinsic** factors are aligned more to higher-order needs. The chapter focuses on the theoretical perspectives of the Needs Hierarchy of Abraham Maslow, the Two-factor Theory of Frederick Herzberg and the more recent Respect Theory of Paul Marciano. In terms of the perception of general assistants as low-skilled workers, the question arises if they would be motivated to achieve Maslow's highest level of self-actualisation. This level is more aligned to high-skilled workers. In order for general assistants to achieve their highest level, they might need to be promoted to the post of foreman. The post of foreman can also be viewed as lower-skilled due to the duties it entails, although it includes supervisory functions. In terms of the motivators: acknowledgement, recognition and advancement of Herzberg's Two-factor Theory and Marciano's Respect Theory which are based on engagement and respect, these are viewed as important motivational factors to ensure that the morale of employees remains positive.

2.2 CONCEPTUALISATION OF MOTIVATION

Motivation has been of scholarly interest for many decades. Scholarly research and debates identify motivation as an important factor in enhancing the morale of employees (Skemp-Arit & Toupenca, 2007:28). Theorists have been fascinated by questions such as "what motivates people; what makes them tick" (Adair, 2009:1). To this end, Bedeian, (1993) views motivation as the will to achieve. Kreitner (1995) defines motivation as the psychological process that gives behaviour direction and purpose. Buford, et al. (1995) view motivation as

a predisposition to behave in a purposive manner to achieve specific unmet needs. Higgins (1994) defines motivation as an internal drive to satisfy an unsatisfied need. Armstrong (2006:252) observes motivation as a reason for doing something and that it is concerned with factors that influence people to behave in a certain way. Fisher et al (2003:81) also refer to factors of motivation in conceiving of motivation as “the study of what makes us do the things we do.” Essentially, motivation can be defined as the internal drive that motivates and sustains behaviours and attitudes towards the achievement of specific goals, objectives or purposes. While the topic of motivation is of interest to all those concerned with the study of human behaviour, the issue of work motivation is of particular concern to those involved in organisational psychology because of its apparent link to important organisational outcomes. This is where employee morale features more prominently. The Accurate and Reliable Dictionary (AR Dictionary) provides three definitions for ‘morale’:

- The moral condition, or the condition in other respects, so far as it is affected by, or dependent upon, moral considerations, such as zeal, spirit, hope and confidence: mental state, as of a body of men, and the like.
- The spirit of a group that makes the members want the group to succeed.
- A state of individual psychological well-being based upon a sense of confidence and usefulness and purpose (ARD, 2015).

The aforementioned views bring to mind the importance of the morale of employees on the organisation. Morale has a direct influence on how employees engage with their responsibilities. Washington and Watson (1976) defined morale as the feeling a worker has about his job, based on how the worker perceives himself in the institution. They indicate that employees whose morale is positive are more likely to have an increased productivity and interest in the job than those who have a low morale. It is important for managers and supervisors to acquire people skills and knowledge on how to manage people in ensuring the positive morale of their staff. Emotional intelligence is a valuable attribute for managers in order for them to understand, value and manage their employees. According to the Business Dictionary (2016), the definition of Emotional Intelligence is: “the ability to identify, assess and influence one’s own feelings and those of others. Many effective personnel managers employed in a business environment have a well-developed form of emotional intelligence that allows them to manage their own emotions as well as those of others within their organisation.”

The preoccupation with managing people in general and the effect of managers and leaders on the morale of their staff in particular, has resulted in extensive scholarly research on motivation of people in organisations.

2.3 MOTIVATIONAL THEORIES

Major approaches that have led to an understanding of motivation are Maslow's Need-hierarchy Theory, Herzberg's Two-factor Theory, and recently, Marciano's Respect Theory. These theories which form the basis of this study will be explored.

2.3.1 Abraham Maslow

Maslow (1943) embarked on studies to determine factors that motivate individuals in his Needs Theory. Maslow determined through the study that through satisfying of needs on the lowest level, to advance from the first level which is the satisfaction of basic needs, to the next (higher) levels to ultimately reach the fifth level where a person is motivated to progress and reach self-actualisation. Fisher, et al (2003) state that Maslow's Needs Theory is founded on the premise that the behaviour on an individual is motivated by their needs and that these needs are arranged in a hierarchy. They emphasise that the critical issue underlying Maslow's theory is that the needs higher on in the hierarchy only begin to motivate behaviour once the lower order needs are satisfied. An individual will only be motivated by the need for self-actualisation once his physiological, safety and security needs have been met. Maslow is regarded by scientists as a great humanistic theorist because of his emphasis on a broad range of human needs and his belief that individuals constantly strive to grow and develop. According to Fisher, et al (2003) Maslow believed that individuals will not stagnate at any one point in the hierarchy but will endeavour to meet the next level of needs.

Abraham Maslow's theory on the hierarchy of needs is one of the most popularly referred to theories of motivation. (De Vos, 2007). Moreover, much research is predicated on Maslow's conceptualisation of needs and motivation (Blunt & Jones 1992). Maslow's theory is based on the fundamental assumptions about people in general and can also be applied to employees in the workplace. These assumptions, according to Lindner (1998:2) can be summarised as follows:

- Employees have needs, which influence their behaviour.
- An employee's needs are arranged in a hierarchy of importance.
- Needs at the higher levels of the hierarchy are only activated once needs at the lower levels of the hierarchy have attained a minimal level of satisfaction.

Maslow (1943:370) states that: "human needs arrange themselves in hierarchies of pre-potency. That is to say, the appearance of one need usually rests on the prior satisfaction of another, pre-potent need. Man is a perpetually wanting animal. Also, no need or drive can be treated as if it were isolated or discrete; every drive is related to the state of satisfaction or dissatisfaction of other drives."

According to Maslow (1943), employees have five levels of needs:

- Physiological
- Safety
- Social
- Ego
- Self-actualisation.

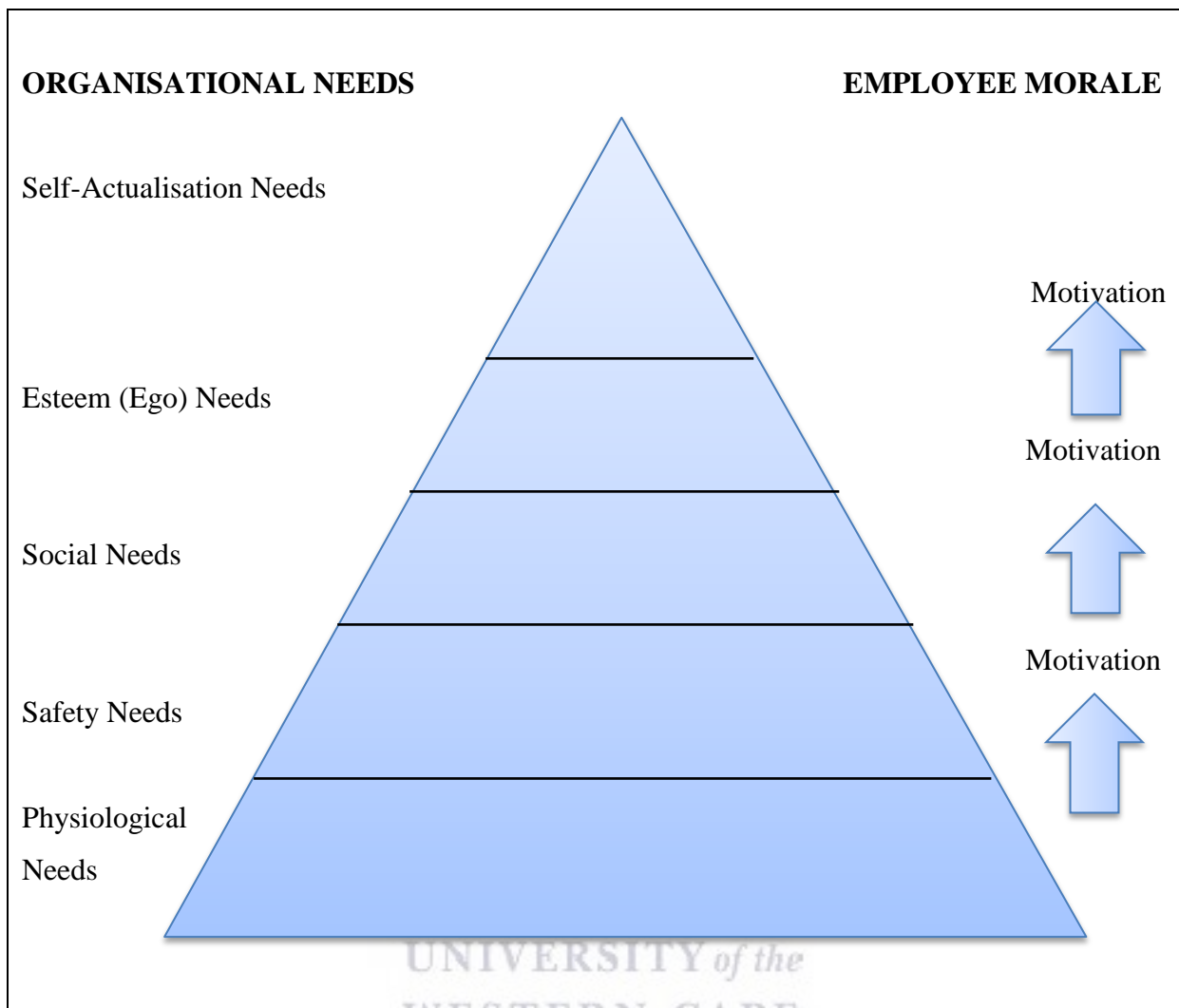


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Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory lays the ground for organisations and management to have a better understanding and concept of employee morale in the workplace.

Maslow's theory is depicted in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Source: Adapted from Smith and Cronje (1992:311).

According to Maslow's theory, **extrinsic** factors relate to the first and second level of needs satisfaction which pertains to the satisfaction of basic needs and security, e.g. working for a salary to provide for food, house, electricity and clothes. Blunt and Jones (1992:282) refer to this first and lowest level in Maslow's hierarchy as recurring needs that employees have to eat, drink, sleep and reproduce. In terms of safety, their salary and affordability determine where they reside. Some of these areas are in socio-economic environments which are plagued by social ills, e.g. gangsterism, drug and substance abuse. In terms of their work situation, this would relate to job security, salary and possible pay increases to enable them to provide for their family, to meet their basic needs and for self-sustainability.

The period of employment of general assistants ranges from 10 months to more than twenty years. They work to meet their basic needs and being employed in the public sector is a

source of security since they receive their salaries with employer benefits, e.g. medical aid subsidy, pension fund and housing subsidy. Although they are appointed on salary level 2, which is the second lowest level for public servants, their long period of employment at the school might be an indication that they are able to meet their basic needs by means of the monthly salary they receive. Another reason for the long period of employment might be related to the scarcity of work and high unemployment rate in South Africa.

The third level of Maslow's Social Needs, e.g. team cohesion, is where being part of a team is very important. Individuals normally have a sense and desire to belong, and being part of a bigger group. General assistants may experience a sense of exclusion, since they may not be included or invited to social functions, e.g. farewell of their colleagues (educators or administrative staff). This level is the human social nature for friendship and enjoying the company of others. General assistants are part of a team responsible for the maintenance of the grounds and infrastructure. As employees and a vital part of the school establishment, it is important that they be acknowledged and included in social activities of the school. In terms of recognition and respect, they should not be excluded. Marciano (2010) also identifies teamwork as one of the five areas of the Respect Model. This area includes the view that the team is competent, cooperative, honest, supportive and willing to contribute in ensuring service delivery of a high quality (Marciano, 2010). If they work effectively as a team in executing their duties to ensure a safe and hygienic infrastructure and they are recognised and acknowledged for their contributions, it might influence their morale positively and increase their level of productivity.

The fourth level is referred to as esteem or ego needs. This relates to employees having self-respect and respecting others. The fifth and highest level of Maslow's theory is self-actualisation. De Vos (2007) refers to Blunt and Jones' (1992:290) statement that at this level the self-actualising employee not only strives to be good at something but to be as good as he/she is capable of being.

Maslow is regarded as the father of human motivation and his theory contributes vastly to our understanding of what motivates human beings and this influence on employee morale. The strength of his theory and arguments are based on his needs hierarchy, that the one level must first be satisfied in order to satisfy the next need or level. The hierarchy which consists of five levels are influenced by intrinsic as well as extrinsic factors of motivation. Extrinsic

factors, e.g. employment to earn a salary to maintain one's basic needs, working for an organisation and adhering to the policies and prescripts, being part of a team, working in a team and socialising with the group or colleagues with the aim of raising and increasing the level of service delivery or productivity. However, there are ongoing needs, e.g. the physiological need of shelter, food, clothes, as well as safety and security needs. These needs are ongoing since they exist and need to be satisfied on an ongoing basis. In addition to these ongoing needs, individuals have a need to be part of a team and to develop and grow to reach their full potential. This means that our need for social relations and our physiological needs can be addressed at the same time. For lower-skilled workers to reach their full potential, this may differ from higher-skilled workers. Professionals who are viewed as high-skilled workers may aim to climb the corporate ladder to the top position within the organisation, whereas general assistants as lower-skilled workers also aim to be promoted within their area of work. It is thus difficult to conceive of the general assistants reaching the level of self-actualisation based on the lower-skilled work they conduct.

As mentioned, intrinsic factors relate more to the fourth and fifth levels, where ego and self-actualisation are achieved and obtained through further studies, training interventions for personal development and growth. Since general assistants are viewed as lower-skilled workers due to the duties and services which they deliver, the fourth level of ego needs might be their highest level to achieve. In their case, it might be to be promoted to the post of foreman or to be responsible for certain projects or to represent their component, the non-teaching staff, on the SGB.

Maslow (1943) asserted that a satisfied need ceases to motivate. An employee, who obtained the basic requirement to execute a function and continues to perform and execute his duties, will be motivated to improve or at least maintain the level of production or service delivery. This employee might do more than what is expected of him in order to be considered for a higher position with more responsibilities.

2.3.1.1 Criticism of Maslow's Theory

The issue of cultural adaptation implies satisfying one need before moving to another, yet there are needs that are ongoing. Human beings always have a need for shelter, clothes and

food, but does this imply that they will always be stuck at the first level? In satisfying the needs at the first level, the need for social relations can be satisfied at the same time, which means that more than one need can be satisfied simultaneously.

Maslow's theory has been criticised for decades. De Vos (2007:35) highlights that "Critique on the theory of Maslow includes criticism regarding the fixity of the hierarchy needs" In terms of the fixity hierarchy, it is viewed as being permanent or unchangeable. They conclude that although Maslow suggested several possible explanations for divergence, he failed to include culturally determined variations, especially for the African continent, which has to deal with diversity in terms of culture, language, and social factors including corruption, poverty, gangsterism and unemployment and the impact of these factors on motivation. There are also the ongoing needs for shelter, food and clothes. The need for social relations and satisfying people's ongoing needs are occurring at the same time. People are able to satisfy more than one need at a time.

Fisher, et al (2003:89) comment that the motivation theories of Maslow and Herzberg were developed and tested primarily in either America or Western Europe, and as such, "the cross-cultural validity and applicability of these theories to other countries and cultures, including South Africa, have been questioned." They continue that:

"Content theorists such as Maslow and Herzberg propose that their theories are based on inherent needs common to all human beings, and should thus be applicable under all circumstances and to all cultures. However, even in the countries of origin these assertions have been queried. For instance, the question of what constitutes self-actualization (in Maslow's hierarchy of needs) has not been answered satisfactorily in the body of literature emerging from Western Europe and the USA. Thus, the meaning, and possibly even existence of the need for self-actualization within an African context, is even more problematic." (Fisher, et al, 2003:89).

They also allude to the South African labour market which is characterised by extremely high levels of unemployment and a very low skills base.

2.3.2 Frederick Herzberg

Frederick Herzberg et al (1959) conducted extensive interviews with 200 engineers and accountants using the critical incident method for data collection. The study was designed to explore the importance of attitudes of the identified groups, toward work and experiences, both good and bad, reported by them.

The first component in Herzberg et al's (1959) approach to motivational theory, involves what are identified as the hygiene factors and these include the work and organisational environment. These hygiene factors include:

- Organisation
- Policies, procedures, administration
- Supervision (leadership and management as well as perceptions) which employees receive at their work
- Working conditions
- Interpersonal relations
- Status
- Job security
- Salary



Herzberg et al (1959) determined that these factors do not lead to higher levels of motivation, but without them, there is dissatisfaction.

The second component, motivation theory, consists of what people actually do on the job and that should be incorporated into the work that employees do in order to develop **intrinsic** motivation with the workforce.

These motivators are:

- Achievement
- Recognition
- Growth/advancement
- Interest in the job

According to Herzberg, et al (1959) these factors result from internal instincts in employees, yielding motivation.

The effects of the working environment on individuals, according to Herzberg, et al (1959):

- Provide sufficiently for the basic needs and sometimes more than just the basic.
- Provide adequate security since individuals want a secure job.
- Provide individual with an identity since being a member of an organisation, he/she has a purpose in carrying out a specific function.
- Provide the individual comradeship; he/she is free from being bored, and has an interest in the work he has to perform.
- Provide self-fulfillment where consideration has to be given to ensure that the work is creative and leads to job satisfaction.
- Provide the individual with status. If the job content is investigated, the work becomes more interesting.

In Table 4 below, Herzberg's Two-factor Theory is presented as a set of factors: hygiene factors, which refer to the work environment and are viewed as being not very motivating and on the other side are factors related to the job itself, which are referred to as motivators. According to Blunt and Jones (1992:290) these factors are intrinsic to jobs that provide opportunities for achievement, recognition of performance and responsibility. It also includes the opportunity for personal development, and challenging and interesting work.

Table 4: Herzberg: Two-Factor Theory

HYGIENE FACTORS	MOTIVATORS
Company policies	Achievement
Supervision	Recognition
Working conditions	Challenging and interesting work
Salary	Responsibility
Relationships	Advancement
Status and security	Personal development

Source: Adapted from Smith and Cronje (1992:314).

Maidani (1991:441) comments that the findings as determined by Herzberg showed that motivator factors were sources of satisfaction rather than dissatisfaction and that the hygiene factors were also sources of satisfaction rather than dissatisfaction. The hygiene factors of

Herzberg's theory, salary, status and security, relationships and working conditions are more aligned to the bottom needs of Maslow's theory. These factors are important and address the basic needs of human beings and thus influence the morale of employees.

Adair (2009) observes that Herzberg, among the best-known theorists on motivation in the field of management studies, conceived motivation as an individual's response to an unfolding pattern of inner needs, ranging from food and safety to achievement and self-fulfillment.

The assumption is that individuals with lower skill levels may be more motivated by lower-order needs as might be the case with general assistants at schools while intrinsic factors of motivation are more aligned to individuals with higher-order needs.

Maidani (1991:441) conducted a study to identify through hypothesis testing how Herzberg's theory applied to two different working populations using a questionnaire based on Herzberg's classification scheme. Private and public sector employees participated for a comparison analysis. The result of the analysis indicated that employees' motives for work in both sectors tended to emphasise intrinsic or motivator factors of employment while public sector employees tended to value the extrinsic or hygiene factors significantly higher than those in the private sector. The satisfaction of employees in both sectors was not attributable to hygiene factors.

General assistants, as lower-skilled workers are content with the hygiene factors identified by Herzberg, e.g. salary, status and security, relationship and working conditions. However, based on the view of Fisher, et.al (2003), they view the motivator's recognition, achievement, advancement and personal development as equally important.

2.3.2.1 Criticism of the Herzberg Theory

The criticism of Fisher, et al (2003) referred to in 2.3.1.1 which also includes Herzberg's theory, needs further elaboration:

Fullagar (1986) states that Herzberg argues that his theory is applicable cross-culturally and in a visit to South Africa, he stated that his theory is appropriate and relevant for this country.

“However, South African research indicates that employees in this country are motivated by context/hygiene factors – a finding which directly contradicts Herzberg’s theory” (Fisher, et al, 2003:90).

2.3.3 Paul Marciano

While the former two theorists focus on basic need satisfaction and higher order needs, Marciano’s Respect Model brings to the fore the importance of inter-relationships in the motivation debate. Accordingly, Marciano observes that both personal and professional relationships work within the context of respect which influences motivation. The more he felt respected and respected the organisations, its leaders, team members and the work he did, the more motivated he became (Marciano, 2010:xxvi). The Respect Model is developed to help organisations to create cultures of respect and workforces of highly engaged employees. Although general assistants, as lower-skilled workers may not be viewed as highly engaged employees, they view engagement in terms of their daily and weekly plans and to be included and to participate in decision-making as important. They experience their input as being valued and taken into consideration. Furthermore, the basis of this theory is applicable to lower-skilled workers as well, since irrespective of the content of a job description, all employees and human beings should be valued, respected and acknowledged. Their responsibility to ensure a safe environment for learners became more important in light of gangsterism, drug abuse and criminal elements entering school premises with weapons with negative intentions which pose a danger to the learners. Schools situated in previously disadvantaged neighbourhoods are more exposed to criminal activities and are affected by social ills.

Marciano (2010:49) lists the following factors that cause low employee morale and disengagement:

- Constantly being under-appreciated and devalued
- Lack of basic pleasantries such as “hello” or “thank you”
- Lack of support from management
- Having to do work that does not appear to add value
- Seeing managers who are not actively engaged

- When a supervisor asks for an employee's opinion and then makes him or her feel stupid
- When a supervisor holds a meeting to get employee feedback and suggestions and does not follow up
- Lack of appreciation of compliments for a job well done
- When employees go above and beyond their duties, without recognition of their efforts
- Receiving criticism that is not constructive
- Not being respected.

While the issues listed above, cut across various occupational categories, the specific issues of coaching and support, respect for human dignity, recognition for a job well done and being valued for one's contribution, may be issues that directly affect the morale of low-skilled workers. Marciano's (2010) study determined that when individuals are acknowledged and respected, it has an impact on them, not only as a worker, but as a human being.

Marciano (2010:67) further claims that "the Respect Model is an actionable philosophy based on the simple principle that when people are treated with respect they engage and work harder to achieve the goals of the organisation." He went further to state that:

"Over the past few years, a handful of researchers from around the world have empirically supported this premise, most notably Ed Sleebos, Naomi Ellemers, and Dick de Gilder from the Netherlands. These researchers have demonstrated in both laboratory and field studies that when people feel respected, they exhibit greater discretionary effort in order to benefit the group and organisation. In addition, their research uncovered that when disrespected individuals exhibit discretionary effort, they do so to achieve personal gain – not to advance the goals of their group. These findings validate the basic premise of the Respect Model and highlight the distinction between engaged employees who work for the betterment of the organisation and motivated employees who work for themselves" Marciano (2010:67).

The respect theory of Marciano relates to the third level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs where employees want to be accepted in a group and experience group cohesion and be part

of a team who delivers their services as expected from the component, and are respected, acknowledged and valued. Figure 2 below depicts Marciano’s Circle of Respect Model.

Figure 2: Marciano: Circle of Respect Model



Source: Adapted from Marciano, 2010:69.

Marciano’s model is based on engagement research and distinguishes five areas in which employees experience feelings of respect and disrespect:

- Organisation – its mission, vision, values, goals, policies, and actions. Employees are proud to say, “I work for this organisation.”
- Leadership – especially as it concerns their direct supervisor, believing that he or she is competent and ethical, makes good decisions, and treats people fairly.
- Team Members – believing that they are competent, cooperative, honest, supportive and willing to pull their own weight.
- Work – finding it challenging, rewarding, interesting, and as having value to both internal and external customers.
- Individual – feeling respected by the organisation, supervisor and fellow team members (Marciano, 2010:68)

Moorhead and Griffin (1998) and Ambrose and Kulik (1999) stated that work motivation and leadership are often linked within the organisational behaviour literature because one of the primary functions of a leader within an organisation, is the ability to motivate employees. Fisher, et al. (2003:107) make the statement: “Whether leaders are attempting to influence their followers to achieve their goals at the individual, group or organisational level, and

whether they are attempting to do this within the context of daily organisational activities or within the broader context of organisational and national transformation, the ability of leaders to start, energise and direct their followers' behaviour in a particular direction, i.e. their ability to motivate their followers, is a fundamental leadership competence in organisations today." This emphasises the important role of the principal who is in a leadership position, to motivate and influence the morale of the general assistants.

General assistants are responsible for maintaining the infrastructure of the school, they take pride in their work and therefore it is important for them to be associated with the school. How do they experience the principal, who is in a leadership position? Are they perceived as being fair in the manner in which they treat people, irrespective of the duties they are responsible for? There should not be a difference in how the educators, administrative staff and general assistants are treated. Although the content of their work is viewed as low-skilled, their view might be that it adds value to the school and all stakeholders. If the ablution facilities are clean, the landscaping is well maintained, and it is valued and recognised, this will influence the morale of the general assistants. Should they have the opportunity to be creative in establishing the gardens and playgrounds, they take ownership not only for their individual projects but for the school as a whole. They would take pride in their work and would like to be associated with the school, irrespective if they are responsible only to maintain the infrastructure, they should be treated fairly, be recognised and respected by the principal, parents, learners and all stakeholders.

Marciano (2010:xiii) concludes that the enthusiastic adoption and success of this model is due to its simplicity, power, effectiveness and universal appeal, and most importantly: "It works because all human beings desire one thing: respect." Therefore, recognising an individual's contribution in the workplace; supporting their development towards the accomplishment of organisational goals and objectives; and showing respect for human dignity may contribute positively towards an employee's morale in the workplace, in spite of poor physical and/or challenging working conditions.

2.4 SUMMARY

The chapter focused on three prominent motivational theories. In the case of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Two-factor Theory, motivation is conceptualised according to lower order and higher order needs. In the case of Marciano's Respect Model, respect between leaders and followers are brought to the fore.

All in all, the motivational theories examined in this chapter illustrate the effects of both the physical and social environment on the behaviour and attitudes of individuals in the workplace.

In terms of the effects of the physical environment on an individual's behaviour, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs depicts the levels which need to be satisfied in order to progress to the next level although there are ongoing needs that are being satisfied simultaneously, e.g. the need for shelter, clothes and food running concurrently with social needs where it is important to be included and to be part of a group. The security of earning a monthly salary which enables general assistants to be self-sufficient and the long period of employment may influence them to continue with their employment at the school. The physical condition and availability of equipment, behaviour of learners and all stakeholders at the school are motivational factors that influence their morale negatively.

Herzberg's Two-factor Theory, consisting of hygiene factors referring to the physical elements, e.g. company policies, supervision, working conditions, salary, relationship and status and security which are extrinsic motivational factors that influence the morale of workers.

In terms of intrinsic motivation, Herzberg identified challenging and interesting work, responsibility, advancement and personal development as important to employees while achievement and recognition are also included in the motivators which Marciano identified and refer to in his Respect Theory.

Therefore, these theories provide a foundation upon which to explore and understand the effects of motivational factors on the morale of low-skilled workers such as general assistants

in the school environment. Also, it highlights the value of an integrated, as opposed to a singular perspective, to exploring motivation in the case of low-skilled workers.



CHAPTER THREE

QUALITATIVE STUDY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is two-fold. Firstly, the chapter presents a contextual background to the schools under investigation. As mentioned elsewhere, the schools identified to be part of the study comprise of former Model C schools situated in previously advantaged areas and public schools situated in previously disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The reason for including schools from different categories was to explore and understand whether general assistants across the schools were faced with similar or different kinds of challenges in their everyday work life. **Secondly, the chapter provides a context to the nature of extrinsic and intrinsic factors that could potentially affect the morale of general assistants in the schools under study, probed through a qualitative approach.**

3.2 CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND OF SCHOOLS UNDER STUDY

The five identified schools consist of two high schools and three primary schools – one high school and one primary school (former Model C schools) and one high school and two primary schools situated in previously disadvantaged communities. Former Model C schools were previously reserved for white learners only. These schools are situated in more affluent, previously white neighbourhoods. **The five schools were identified to participate in the study, based on socio-economic categorisation and geographic location.**

Description of schools in terms of resources and physical infrastructure:

3.2.1 Former Model C High School

- 2 rugby fields
- 1 rugby pavilion
- 1 cloak room

- 2 netball courts
- 1 astro and 1 grass hockey field
- 2 cricket net areas
- 2 tennis courts
- 1 swimming pool
- 2 computer laboratories
- Parents are paying school fees

3.2.2 Former Model C Primary School

- 1 rugby field
- 1 rugby pavilion
- 2 netball courts
- 2 tennis courts
- 2 computer laboratories
- Parents are paying school fees



3.2.3 High school situated in previous disadvantaged neighbourhood

- 1 computer laboratory
- No sport infrastructure
- No school fees are charged

3.2.4 Primary school situated in previous disadvantaged neighbourhoods

- 1 computer Laboratory
- No sport infrastructure
- No school fees are charged

3.2.5 Primary school situated in previous disadvantaged neighbourhoods

- 1 computer Laboratory
- No sport infrastructure
- No school fees are charged

The two former Model C high schools charge school fees to supplement the WCED financial allocations to the school, while the three schools situated in previous disadvantaged neighbourhoods only receive WCED financial allocations.

In terms of staff provision, the WCED Circular 0025/2011 (WCED, 2011) makes provision for: 1 general assistant and 1 foreman per 201-400 learners; 2 general assistants and 1 foreman per 401-1200 learners. In addition to the staff employed by the WCED, former Model C schools are in a position to appoint additional general assistants employed by the SGB. These schools are in a position to purchase the necessary yet expensive equipment, e.g. tractor/mobile lawnmowers, for general assistants to execute their functions and responsibilities.

In terms of safety and security, former Model C schools are in a position to procure security services, including alarm systems, security cameras, safety guards, surveillance, security gates and security doors, etc.

The high school and two primary schools situated in previously disadvantaged neighbourhoods are confronted by social ills, e.g. gangsterism, substance abuse and vandals, putting the safety of learners, staff and general assistants, in particular, at risk. Due to the schools being targeted by certain elements, the entrance gates have to be locked for the safety of especially the learners. General assistants have to operate as security guards since these schools do not have funds to employ additional staff. They have to open and lock after-hours for school functions and when schools make their facilities available to the communities, leaving late from the school makes them vulnerable since they are not safe, especially those who have no means of transport. For these additional functions and responsibilities, they are not always rewarded in monetary value. They are even overlooked for nomination for performance bonuses or incentives.

In terms of the high learner enrollment at schools, this puts additional pressure on the ablution facilities. Since not all learners use the facilities in a correct and proper manner, repairs and maintenance is ongoing. Floor and toilet tiles need to be replaced, broken toilet systems need to be fixed, toilet seats need to be replaced, taps and light bulbs need to be

replaced and repaired frequently. This increase in learner numbers at schools, further results in an increase of waste and refuse removal and consequently leads to an increase in the responsibility and workload of general assistants.

Since schools are targeted by criminals, the limited availability of funds and budget constraints in replacing stolen equipment make it problematic for general assistants to execute their duties.

3.3 MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE MORALE OF GENERAL ASSISTANTS

The management of general assistants in the CWED is governed by broad and specific regulatory frameworks applicable to education in general and the province in particular. The Labour Relations Act No 66 of 1995 (RSA,1995) and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act No 75 of 1997 (RSA, 1997) are specific in terms of the rights of employees while the Code of Conduct for the Public Service (WCED, 2002) is clear on the manner in which public servants should maintain and conduct themselves. Their behaviour is also guided by The Batho Pele (People First) principles on the manner in which they should engage with clients and stakeholders. These principles include: Consultation, Service standards, Access, Courtesy, Information, Openness and transparency, Redress and Value for money (LGA, 2016).

The aforementioned are the overarching laws and policies that influence the management of general assistants. In this context, extrinsic factors of motivation include general responsibilities, duties and functions; salaries and compensation; performance incentives; working conditions; leave and resources to fulfill duties. Intrinsic factors include training and development; and participation in decision-making.

3.3.1 Extrinsic factors of motivation

Armstrong (2006) posed the question: “What is motivation”? Although this study makes reference to several definitions of motivation, Armstrong’s view is more relevant in that he describes motivation as a reason for doing something and the motivation is concerned with

factors that influence people to behave in a certain way. Morale is the state of mind of a person and behaviour influences the morale. A person is motivated by a reason/stimulus, acts upon it and these actions have an influence on 'how you feel', which may be a sense of negativity or positivity.

3.3.1.1 Responsibilities and duties

The job description of all general assistants is in principal the same, as determined by the WCED. Schools may add additional duties which can be taken into account for performance bonuses. The core duties of the general assistants are cleaning of classrooms, offices, ablution facilities, libraries and storage rooms at the school and maintaining the infrastructure and grounds of the school. In maintaining the infrastructure, they are responsible for repairing dripping taps and water pipes, changing light bulbs, repairing plugs, fixing door handles and broken window frames and doing minor plumbing and electrical repairs. Although the size of schools differs, the grounds are significant in size. The maintenance of the ground consists of keeping the area where learners play during breaks safe and clean. Over time, schools had to accommodate increasing number of learners. This increase in learner enrollment put pressure on the availability of accommodation, infrastructure and use of ablution facilities and this adds to the additional pressure on general assistants. Schools situated in previously disadvantaged neighbourhoods are plagued by vandalism and robberies. After such criminal acts, the general assistants are responsible for cleaning up to ensure that learning continues. In some instances, they had to replace ceilings where criminals gained access to the classrooms and offices.

Many schools avail their facilities to the communities where they are located. Their activities take place after school hours and during weekends. The opening and closing of the school premises is the responsibility of the general assistants. Their safety is compromised since after finishing their work, especially in the evenings, they need to go home and may become the target of gangs if they are on foot or travelling by bicycle. Many of them are not rewarded for this additional responsibility and extra working hours.

With the inception of Early Childhood Development (ECD) at primary schools, provision was made for Grade R learners from the age of 5½ years. Haque, et al (2013:1) concluded in their study that "Early Childhood Development and pre-primary education are widely

recognised as having a significant impact on the performance of children in basic education programmes.” The inclusion of Grade R and Early Childhood Development in public schools came with certain conditions. A separate playground has to be established, fitted with a jungle gym (wooden climbing apparatus, with swings and slide), sand-pit and sufficient grass where they can participate in recreational activities. Suitable space for this playground on the premises of the school should be identified, developed and maintained. Maintaining this playground is the responsibility of the general assistants. The maintenance of the jungle gym is a significant responsibility, based on the high premium that is placed on the safety of learners. The general assistants must ensure that the ropes of the swings are safe and that the wooden structure is free of splints, nails or any hazardous objects. Continuous treatment of the sand is essential to ensure that it meets the required safety standards. Planting, cutting and maintaining the grass of this playground were added to the duties and responsibilities of the general assistants.

Another intervention from National Government was the implementation of the National School Nutritional Programme (NSNP). This programme is established and implemented to address the hunger of poverty-ridden children. Under this programme, learners receive food at the school since it is difficult for a learner to study on an empty stomach. However, the general assistants became an important aid to this programme. When food and supplies are delivered to the school, they assist with carrying these items to the kitchen to be checked and verified and then to the storage room where the supplies are recorded on the inventory. Previously, learners were called to carry the supplies but that is no longer possible, since the learners may not conduct functions aligned to child labour. They are also prohibited from assisting with functions that are in conflict with their classroom contact time. Although this programme is essential in addressing the hunger problem of children from poor communities, this placed an additional responsibility on the general assistants.

General assistants as low-skilled workers are an important link in determining the functionality of schools, based on 9 key areas for evaluation according to the National Policy in Whole School Evaluation (WSE). These areas are: basic functionality of the school, leadership, management and communication, governance and relationships, quality of teaching and learning, and educator development, curriculum provision and resources, learner achievement, school safety, security and discipline, school infrastructure, parents and community. Key Area 8: School infrastructure, is related to the service delivered by general

assistants. Maintaining the infrastructure and the important contribution by general assistants cannot be emphasised enough as is recognised by the WCED.

This study explores and examines if general assistants are motivated by both extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors. According to Maslow's theory their basic reason for working is to be self-sufficient and provide for their basic needs e.g. food, house, and clothes. In order to meet the identified needs, general assistants often work at schools for longer periods than required by their employment contracts.

3.3.1.2 Salary

Remuneration as an extrinsic motivational factor may have a significant influence on the morale of general assistants. The second level of Maslow's hierarchy (1943) is safety and security. The security of a monthly salary with employee benefits, e.g. housing subsidy, pension fund subsidy, and medical aid subsidy is an assuring factor in satisfying the basic needs of housing, food and clothes. Since general assistants are remunerated at the lowest levels within the salary range for public servants, and depending on their expenditure, their income might be sufficient to meet their needs depending on their financial commitments.

According to Fisher, et al, (2003:90) rewards and compensation are important motivational factors in the South African context which directly contradict Herzberg's Two-factor Theory. It is important to explore how general assistants feel about not being rewarded for the extra hours and additional duties which they perform, their view on meeting their financial obligations and responsibilities with their monthly income, the security of being employed permanently as opposed to being on contract for long periods and the challenges they experience in executing their duties. This study also explores the relationship with colleagues, learners and other stakeholders and their impact on the morale of general assistants.

3.3.1.3 Performance incentives/bonuses

The WCED Staff Performance Management Development System (SPMDS) (WCED, 2016b) is the performance management system for non-teaching staff at schools.

Performance of non-teaching staff is measured on a scale of 1 (unacceptable) to 5 (outstanding). In achieving a 3 (acceptable), staff that are not on the maximum notch of their salary range, are eligible for a 1,5% salary increase. Since general assistants are employed at schools for long periods, they might be on the maximum notch on their salary range, and therefore are not eligible for annual salary notch increases and therefore have to compete for a cash performance bonus with their colleagues in the same occupational group, including the administrative staff, who all form part of the non-teaching staff. At three schools, only one out of 4-5 employees can be nominated per annum for the bonus. Out of this long period of more than 20 years of employment by some general assistants, they might be nominated only once for a performance bonus. This is a factor that might influence their morale negatively since they might not be fairly considered for a performance bonus in particular if a rotation system applies where the staff decides that all employees in the section should benefit and receive the performance bonus. This might result in only one out of a group of 4-5 receiving a performance bonus every fourth to fifth year. Although a rotational agreement does not serve the purpose of continuous high performance, it is a compromised option for the participants at the three schools, in order to be fair to the staff competing for the bonus.

3.3.1.4 Leave allocation

It was important to probe how the general assistants viewed the leave allocation as an extrinsic motivational factor. All public servants in the WCED are eligible for 30 working days' annual leave after completion of 10 years of continuous service, and 22 days for less than 10 years (PGWC, 2002). These leave days must be used by 30 June of the following year, otherwise the leave days will be forfeited. This study further explored if the general assistants were satisfied with the leave allocation and if the utilisation thereof was based on other factors, and how it influenced their morale.

3.3.1.5 Working conditions: Restroom facilities

Not all general assistants are allowed to use the staff rooms during their lunch or tea breaks. It was important to explore if they have a designated restroom and what the condition entails. To revitalise and utilise lunch and tea breaks, it is important to have a dignified place to eat or rest before commencing and resuming duties. Should the principal and school management

team view and acknowledge the valuable input by general assistants they should ensure that they have a neat, clean and hygienic facility. Accommodating them in a space that is inferior to the facilities available to the rest of the staff, might influence their morale negatively. Herzberg, et al (1959) and Marciano (2010) make reference to recognition, acknowledgement and respect. If employees experience a sense of value including recognition, acknowledgement and respect from management, this may influence their morale positively.

3.3.1.6 Condition and availability of equipment

Challenges in terms of budget cuts, the condition and availability of equipment are important factors in the execution of duties. Since schools are targeted by vandals and thieves, items, especially those with steel content, are what they focus on. This often results in general assistants not having the necessary equipment or tools to execute their duties effectively, while waiting for equipment to be replaced. This is demoralising since some schools, especially those situated in previously disadvantaged neighbourhoods, are targeted continuously. This places significant pressure on the WCED allocation to schools situated in previously disadvantaged communities. The WCED norms and standards (N&S) allocation is transferred to schools annually. The WCED suggests that the total N&S allocation be divided as follows: 30% for learning material, 20% for local purchases, 25% for maintenance and 25% for municipal services. If the 25% allocated for maintenance is exhausted, it means that stolen or damaged equipment cannot be replaced within a financial year. If there is a shortage of equipment, it hampers service delivery which might influence the morale of general assistants negatively.

3.3.2 Intrinsic factors of motivation

3.3.2.1 Training

Training is an important component to improving and empowering oneself. Goldstein (1991:508) defines training as “the systematic acquisition of attitudes, concepts, knowledge, roles, or skills that result in improved performance at work.” The WCED Basic Guide for

Professional Conduct in the Workplace (WCED, 2002:26) encourages employees to “broaden their knowledge via formal studying and skills-development courses.” General assistants are encouraged to enhance their self-motivation and to develop themselves. In order to move upwards on Maslow’s (1943) Needs Theory, this is an important factor to improve knowledge and to increase the level of service delivery. If general assistants perform better, they might be acknowledged according to one of Herzberg, et al (1959) motivator factors and be valued and respected according to Marciano’s (2010) Respect Theory.

Since graduation ceremonies are important to affirm the hard work of students, the same applies to general assistants. The successful completion of a training course, is likely to result in a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. This could also be an important tool if a worker wants to pursue opportunities by applying for another job. The WCED argues that, as an employer it invests in its personnel through skills development and training, as it would prefer its employees to remain in its service. However, there is a bigger picture in terms of scarce skills within the WCED workforce. If the workers equip themselves with the required skills, they are likely to become sought after, and this could possibly address the scarce skills problem.

3.3.2.2 *Decision-making*

It is important for the confidence of an individual to be part of decision-making and to participate in meetings. It also provides the opportunity for growth and development. If general assistants have the opportunity to make inputs in their work plans or in the purchase of equipment, they may feel that their input is valued and important. Marciano’s (2010) research is based on engagement. His study determined that “when people are treated with respect, they engage and work harder to achieve the goals of the organisation” (Marciano, 2010:40)

3.3.2.3 *Representing the non-teaching component on the School Governing Body (SGB)*

The SGB is responsible for policy formulation, appointment of staff and general governance of the school according to the South African Schools Act (RSA, 1996b; 2016). Being nominated to represent a component on this structure is an expression of a vote of confidence

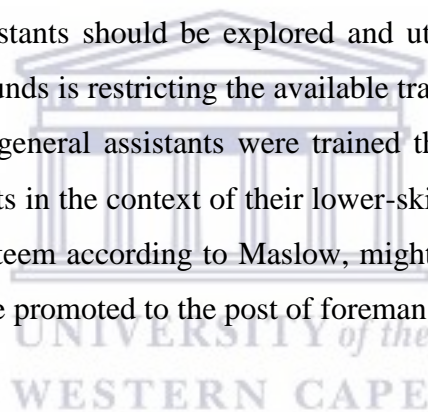
and trust in a nominee, by colleagues. This responsibility could have a significant impact on the morale of a general assistant, if elected.



3.4 SUMMARY

Maslow's (1943) first and second level factors, as well as Herzberg, et al (1959) hygiene factors refer to salary, leave, performance bonuses and job related conditions as factors that motivate individuals. In terms of Maslow's third level of social cohesion, this also relates to the theories of Herzberg and Marciano, that being part of a group motivates the individuals within the group to perform at a higher level. It may be that they do not want to disappoint the group and that leads to the next level of being acknowledged within the group and being respected by the group.

In the WCED high priority is given to training interventions as addressed in the WCED Basic Guide for Professional Conduct in the Workplace (WCED, 2002) and encourages employees to broaden their knowledge via formal studying and skills-development courses. General assistants are not excluded from training and skills development interventions and opportunities for general assistants should be explored and utilised to up skill themselves. However, the availability of funds is restricting the available training interventions as was the case in 2016 where only 45 general assistants were trained through the Work Skills Plan. Applicable to general assistants in the context of their lower-skilled duties, their highest level in achieving enhanced self-esteem according to Maslow, might be to obtain a trade diploma to qualify as an artisan or to be promoted to the post of foreman.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents, interprets and discusses the responses of participants interviewed. The study was conducted as a qualitative study of general assistants at five schools in Worcester. The selected schools operate within the boundaries of the Cape Winelands Education District (CWED). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with respondents, and included two general assistants and the principal from each of the five schools who participated in the study. The questions included in the interview schedules were influenced by the motivational factors identified and discussed in Chapter Two of this study. This chapter is organised into three parts.

The first part discusses the responses with regard to basic information of the general assistants. The second part presents responses that probe extrinsic factors of motivation, according to Maslow's Lower-order Needs Theory and Herzberg's Two-factor Theory. The third part deals with the responses probing higher-order or intrinsic factors as well as issues probing relationships.

In other words, the first part of this chapter presents the basic information of the general assistants, followed by the findings of extrinsic factors, which include responsibilities, work environment and safety, equipment, rewards and compensation. The chapter then discusses the findings of the intrinsic factors, where the focus will be on training and development, participation in decision-making, the factors that influence their morale and relationships.

The last part of this chapter consists of the findings obtained from the interviews with the principals/managers of the participating schools. The reason for including the principals in this study is to probe their views and stake in factors that influence the morale of general assistants. This served as a means of triangulation to determine if their views and those of the general assistants are aligned according to the responses to the posed questions. Another reason was to pose questions regarding general assistants to them in light of the limited

research on lower-skilled workers. Their inclusion was to raise awareness of the plight of general assistants in their quest to be recognised and acknowledged. Although their views are important, no recommendations will be made on their feedback since the focus of this study is on the morale of the general assistants.

4.2 BASIC INFORMATION OF GENERAL ASSISTANTS

Six participants are employed at primary schools and four at secondary schools. The reason why there are more participants from primary schools is due to the fact that in Worcester there are more primary schools than secondary schools. The ten participants indicated if they were employed at a primary school or secondary school.

Table 5: Status of appointment

Status of appointment	Number	%
Permanent	7	70
Contract	3	30
TOTAL	10	100

Table 5 indicates that more general assistants are appointed in permanent positions. Six of the general assistants who are appointed permanently, are employed at schools situated in previously disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Two participants, who were eligible for conversion to permanence, are appointed on contract at former Model C schools. Permanent appointment means more stability due to eligibility for employee benefits, e.g. pension fund, subsidies for medical aid and housing. This may result in a positive morale since the opportunity exists for self-sufficiency and to provide, not only for their immediate needs, but also to make provision for their retirement. Permanent appointment resonates under the second level of Maslow's theory where the safety and security of being employed permanently affords the opportunity to do long-term planning, e.g. purchasing a house instead of renting it, since a permanent appointment secures long-term employment with an assured income.

According to the WCED Recruitment and Selection Minute 3/2015, contract workers employed at schools are eligible for permanent appointment if they have been working at a school for longer than 1 year in a contract post. Items 5.2 and 5.3 inform principals of this regulation. One of the factors that influence the morale of general assistants negatively is the long period of temporary/contract appointment. Principals had the opportunity to apply for the conversion to permanence, which would enable those general assistants to receive employee benefits, e.g. subsidies for medical aid, housing and pension fund. However, some principals missed the opportunity to complete the Verification Certificate attached to that Circular (WCED, 2015), to ensure a more secure position for those who were eligible. The result was that, even though the provision existed for the conversion to permanent tenure, the negligence on the part of some principals jeopardised the prospect of permanent tenure for many general assistants in contract posts.

Principals of former Model C schools also did not apply for general assistants to be converted from contract to permanent status, as instructed by the WCED in 2015. Although the reason for the non-application was not probed, it might be deemed as it not being important for general assistants on contract to be appointed permanently. This resulted in them not being able to enjoy the benefits in terms of medical aid, housing and pension fund subsidies.

In 2017, however, the WCED Recruitment and Selection Circular 0002/2017 (WCED, 2017) informed principals that the conversion of all temporary/contract positions to permanent appointments was terminated due to the tight fiscal environment. Items 3 and 4 state that the redeployment of employees in excess would be accelerated. That means that staff in excess would be deployed to vacant substantive posts currently occupied by temporary/contract appointments. This new legislation will undoubtedly have a negative impact on both the morale and livelihoods of those general assistants appointed on contract, since they were eligible for permanent appointment, but instead face redeployment, or even retrenchment. In light of the scarcity of jobs in South Africa and the high unemployment rate, which in 2008 was at 26 percent according to Banerjee, et al. (2008), this legislation will definitely influence their morale. In the second quarter of 2017 the unemployment rate in South Africa was at 27, 7% (Trading Economics, 2017).

Table 6: Period of employment (in years)

Period of employment	Number	%
Less than 1 year	1	10
1 – 10 years	2	20
11-20 years	5	50
More than 20 years	2	20
TOTAL	10	100

Seven general assistants are employed for periods that range from 10 to 20 years and above. The stability of being employed permanently and in light of the high unemployment rate in SA, the scarcity of work opportunities, may be the result why almost all participants are employed for long periods at the schools. The long periods of employment also relate to the second level of Maslow's theory, which is safety and security, since they are assured of receiving their salary every month.

Table 7: Highest grade passed (General Assistants)

Highest grade passed	Number	%
Primary School : Grade 7 and less	0	0
Secondary School: Grade 8-10	7	70
Secondary School: Grade 11 – 12	3	30
TOTAL	10	100

In terms of their academic qualifications, all ten participants are in the category of Gr. 8-10. To be eligible for training interventions, training service providers request the academic qualification/level of participants as a requirement, as was the case with the handyman training of the CWED in 2017, where the minimum qualification of Gr. 10 was required.

4.3 EXTRINSIC FACTORS

Extrinsic factors were probed and responses are discussed below under the following headings:

- Basic responsibilities and duties
- Work environment and safety
- Condition and availability of equipment
- Rewards and compensation

4.3.1 Basic responsibilities and duties

The 5 general assistants responsible for cleaning and maintenance (see Table 8 below) are not trained to perform handyman duties. Training is important to perform handyman functions since it requires a certain level of skills, e.g. electrical repairs, plumbing installation and repairs (fix basins, taps and cisterns of ablution facility. If the general assistants acquire handyman skills and attend training, they may be considered to act in the absence of the foreman. If the opportunity arises, a general assistant may later apply for the foreman post which is a promotional post at a higher salary level than those of the general assistants. The foreman post has more responsibilities, is of higher value since it has a supervisory function as well. If general assistants choose not to be empowered or trained in a specific area, they will still be able to perform the basic cleaning and maintenance functions. In light of the decrease of national funding to schools, it may become less affordable to outsource some functions, e.g. repair of lawnmower, replacing of water pipes in cases where copper pipes were stolen or vandalised. Principals should encourage and motivate general assistants to undergo training interventions especially training opportunities offered by the District Skills Development Committee (DSDC).

Table 8: Basic responsibilities and duties

Basic responsibilities and duties	Number	%
Cleaning: classrooms/grounds/ablution and maintenance	5	50
Maintenance and handyman duties	5	50
TOTAL	10	100

4.3.2 Work environment and safety

Eight of the participants perform functions outside their job descriptions. These functions include unlocking and locking up after the facilities is utilised after-hours by the school or the community. They sometimes have to render security services during extra-mural activities of the school. When their services are required in the evenings, this becomes challenging and dangerous especially due to the area where the school is located. Three of the participating schools are situated in the poorer socio-economic neighbourhoods. In light of the violence at schools, the safety of all stakeholders, in particular general assistants rendering their services during and after-hours should be a concern, since they are normally the last persons to leave at the end of a school day or after a function.

Table 9: Work environment and safety

Work environment and safety	Number	%
Good	7	70
Satisfactory	2	20
Poor	1	10
TOTAL	10	100

Nine general assistants are satisfied with their working conditions and feel safe at the school. One participant is dissatisfied, due to the rudeness of learners (e.g. spitting on his head, swearing) and therefore he does not feel safe. The bad and negative behaviour of learners is cited as reasons for the poor working conditions of the general assistants. The behaviour and attitude of learners towards the general assistants vary from learners of primary schools to learners of secondary schools. Respect or lack thereof is an important factor that can influence the morale of a human being. Primary school learners tend to be more respectful towards adults and are more willing to listen and cooperate when asked to assist, whereas secondary school learners are more disrespectful not only to educators but to general assistants as well. Primary school learners are more keen to assist in keeping the grounds neat, and establishing a clean environment.

4.3.3 Conditions and availability of equipment

Most participants were satisfied with the condition of the equipment. All participants declared that equipment/tools were sufficient in order for them to perform and execute their duties.

Table 10: Conditions and availability of equipment

Conditions and availability of equipment	Number	%
Good	9	90
Satisfactory	1	10
Poor	0	
TOTAL	10	100

4.3.4 Rewards and compensation

Four of the participants received performance incentives. Another 4, who performed duties beyond their job descriptions, did not receive performance incentives. The other 2, who did not perform duties beyond their job description, did not receive performance incentives. Although some general assistants rendered services beyond their job descriptions, they were not rewarded with a performance bonus. This suggests that they were overlooked when they were evaluated for their performance.

Table 11: Rewards and compensation

Questions	YES	NO	%
Did general assistants receive performance incentives?	4	6	100
Are general assistants content with monthly salary?	9	1	100
Are general assistants content with annual leave allocation?	7	3	100
Are general assistants satisfied with performance system? (*one was unsure)	4	5	100*

Nine of the participants are content with their monthly salary. One participant, who is not satisfied, ascribes this to the high percentage deductions from his salary. Earning a monthly income ensures that general assistants are eligible for membership of the pension fund and

medical aid and they may benefit from a housing subsidy. The need for safety and security according to Maslow's theory is present in the case of general assistants. They are able to visit a doctor or hospital of their choice since they are members of a medical fund and they can make provision for their retirement through their retirement fund.

Seven of the participants are satisfied with their leave allocation. The current leave provision for public servants with less than 10 years is 22 working days and for more than 10 years, the allocation is 30 working days, according to Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) Resolution 15 (PGWC, 2002).

Four participants who received performance incentives are satisfied with the performance system. One who is unsure is employed for less than a year and did not qualify to participate in the performance system and 5 of the participants are not satisfied with the performance system. A performance bonus as an extrinsic motivation factor is important in demonstrating acknowledgement, respect and appreciation. The benefit of a financial reward serving as an extrinsic motivator might have a positive influence on their morale.

Six of the respondents are not satisfied with the performance system. Appreciation and recognition as motivation influences the morale, yet a monetary benefit as an extrinsic motivator seems to be just as important. This was determined by a study in a South African context which contradicts Herzberg's theory (see Fisher, et al. 2003).

4.4 INTRINSIC FACTORS

Intrinsic factors were probed and responses are discussed below under the following headings:

- Training and development
- Decision-making
- Factors influencing the morale
- Relationships

4.4.1 Training and development

General assistants and all employees in the WCED are required to indicate their training needs on their personal development plans, which are included in the performance appraisal system. This information is submitted to the Manager: People Management at the CWED, who compiles a Summary of Training Needs as identified and prioritised by the employees. This summary is submitted to the District Skills Development Committee (DSDC) for approval and rolling out of training and skills development interventions. If general assistants are trained in electrical or plumbing skills and are able to conduct minor repairs, it may result in the school saving money since they do not need to obtain the services of qualified artisans. Should general assistants attend training, they may set an example to their colleagues and it may influence them to also embark on training or studies to equip and better themselves. It may even influence their immediate relatives.

Table 12: WCED training attended by General Assistants

Nature of training	Number	%
Plumbing: Repair taps, toilets, irrigation.	2	33,33
Plumbing and gardening: Repair taps, repair broken toilets, install basins, landscaping: apply knowledge of kind of plants, when and how to plant, water austerity measures.	1	16,66
Electrical: Repair faulty plugs; Urns, fitting of light bulbs.	1	16,66
Electrical and flower arrangement: Exchange light bulbs. Do minor electrical repairs.	1	16,66
Hospitality and flower arrangement: Improvement of serving/presentation of beverages to visitors to the school. First impression of visitors to the schools was positive due to the beautiful floral arrangements.	1	16,66
None	4	40
TOTAL	10	100

The responses to the question regarding training opportunities were interesting due to the diversity of training that participants underwent. In terms of the training in hospitality and floral arrangement, these trained general assistants offer more than their colleagues since the aesthetical outlook which promotes and enhances the image of the school will be of a higher

standard. In addition, the presentation of a beautiful floral arrangement leaves the creator with a sense of pride and accomplishment. If the arrangement is complimented and acknowledged, according to Marciano (2010), it has a positive influence on the morale of a person.

Six out of the 10 participants who underwent training offered by the WCED, received proof of the training. The significance of receiving a certificate is that it creates a sense of pride, accomplishment and self-worth. If this certificate is handed over at a ceremony or gathering attended by colleagues, the acknowledgement and respect will influence the morale positively. This might inspire colleagues to attend and explore training opportunities since any form of recognition results in a feeling of satisfaction.

Eight participants indicated a desire to be trained. A further breakdown revealed that:

- 3 would like to qualify as a plumber;
- 2 would like to qualify as an electrician; and
- 2 were not specific in terms of artisanship, but indicated that they wanted to be trained to empower themselves.

These responses suggest that general assistants aspire to equipping themselves and to be qualified in a specific trade. In obtaining a qualification, it serves as motivation to move to the next level in order to eventually achieve higher self-esteem or self-actualisation, according to Maslow's theory. Although general assistants are viewed as low-skilled workers, for them to reach self-actualisation might be to retire as a foreman or qualified artisan. Self-actualisation differs from person to person. For one person, self-actualisation is to obtain a degree while for the general assistants it may be to obtain a trade diploma with the desire to better themselves.

Seven respondents indicated a desire to qualify as an artisan. It seems that general assistants, although viewed as lower-skilled workers, are motivated by intrinsic factors based on their responses to develop themselves further.

4.4.2 Decision-making

Seven respondents participated in work-related decision-making which includes: work distribution, purchasing of equipment, calculating working hours, lunch breaks (staggered hours) and duties beyond their job description. Those participating in decision-making usually deliver a service of high quality and meet deadlines. Corporate decision-making is important in creating and enhancing a positive and work-friendly environment where all inputs are valued and incorporated. Decision-making resorts under the third level of Maslow's (1943) theory, which pertains to social needs where general assistants are part of decision-making. In terms of Herzberg, et al (1959), hygiene factors of relationships, decision-making is an important component as the objectives of the section must be met. Marciano (2010) identified team members being cooperative and supportive in executing their responsibilities.

Six respondents participated in decisions at the following meetings:

- Section – where special projects, daily and weekly work plans are discussed.
- Staff – where fundraising projects are discussed and where responsibilities are allocated to the different role-players.
- SGB – representatives receive a mandate from colleagues and they participate in decisions made at the highest governance level of the school

Table 13: Decision-making

Questions	YES	NO	%
Do general assistants participate in work-related decision-making?	7	3	100
Do general assistants participate in decisions at meetings?	6	4	100
Do general assistants serve as representatives on SGBs?	3	7	100

If one's input is requested, it raises a certain level of confidence if one can speak on a public platform or in front of others. If one's opinion and inputs are acknowledged and appreciated, it influences one's morale positively. Intrinsically it motivates one to be creative and innovative, due to the acknowledgement.

This was the case where a general assistant was allowed a small budget to plan the landscaping at the entrance of the administration block. He installed sprinkler/irrigation systems and he obtained floral donations to supplement the budget. Even if the creative and innovative project is not successful, the fact that they are intrinsically motivated to explore, is worth encouraging.

Three participants represented the non-teaching component on the School Governing Body (SGB). The functions of the SGB include:

- policy formulation
- fundraising
- shortlisting and interviewing of all applicants, including Head of Departments, Deputy Principals and Principals.

Representing the non-teaching staff component and being part of the highest decision-making body at the school can be viewed as an endorsement of a person's abilities and attributes to be selected. Representing the non-teaching staff and participating in the appointment of positions such as principal, deputy principal, head of department, educators, non-educators, is a significant responsibility. This may also be experienced as a sense of power which can motivate others and result in a positive morale.

4.4.3 Factors influencing the morale of General Assistants

Table 14: Factors that influence their morale positively

Factors	Number	%
Friendliness and respect by colleagues, good communication by principal	9	90
Opportunity to grow: finances, SGB representative	1	10
TOTAL	10	100

One participant cited intrinsic factors of personal growth and development as factors that influence their morale positively. The human perspective influences the morale of the participants due to the relationship between themselves, their colleagues and the principal. Nine respondents indicated that it influenced their morale positively.

Table 15: Factors that influence their morale negatively

Factors	Number	%
On contract for long period	1	10
Negative and disrespectful behaviour by learners, conflict	6	60
Disrespect by colleagues, interference by educators	1	10
Relationship with principal	1	10
None	1	10
TOTAL	10	100

Eight of the participants indicated that interpersonal relations influence them negatively. This includes relationships with learners, colleagues, and the principal.

This relates to the hygiene factor of relationships, as identified by Herzberg, et al (1959), team members as identified by Marciano (2010) and the third level of social needs, according to Maslow (1943).

One participant expressed negative sentiments, due to being on contract for a long period. He is losing out on pension fund benefits at retirement since the period of contributing to the government pension fund is taken into consideration on retirement.

As indicated earlier, general assistants were declared eligible for permanent appointment after 12 months of uninterrupted service, according to the Public Service Act (RSA, 1994; WCED, 2015) However, the retraction of this provision in 2017 caused a dampening of the morale of employees in temporary and contract positions.

4.4.4 Relationships

Relationships between colleagues, individuals and stakeholders of the school are an important factor as identified by the main theorists in this study. This relates to the third level: social needs according to Maslow (1943), the hygiene factor of relationships as identified by Herzberg, et al (1959) and team members as identified by Marciano (2010).

4.4.4.1 General Assistant's relationship with Principal

Table 16: Relationship with the Principal

Nature of relationship with Principal	Number	%
Good	8	80
Satisfactory	1	10
Undecided	1	10
TOTAL	10	100

Eight participants reported having a good relationship with the principal of their school and one described the relationship as satisfactory. The one person, who was undecided, has been employed for less than a year and is relatively new at the institution and needs to build a relationship with the principal. The significant role of the manager on the morale of general assistants seems to be underlined in how they viewed the relationship. There is mutual respect and appreciation and the general assistants do not want to disappoint their principals.

Table 17: Are General Assistants happy in their work?

Question	Yes	No	%
Are you happy in your work?	10	0	100
TOTAL	10	0	100

All 10 participants indicated that they were happy in their work.

4.5 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION ON RESPONSES FROM PRINCIPALS

4.5.1 Service delivery

During the interviews with the 5 principals of the participating schools, the following was indicated:

Table 18: Responsibilities of General Assistants

Responsibilities	Number	%
Minor plumbing, electrical, repair equipment (school desks, foundation phase chairs and tables), cleaning, maintenance of infrastructure and grounds	2	40
Repair: minor plumbing, electrical, equipment (school desks, foundation phase chairs and tables), cleaning, maintenance of infrastructure and grounds, attend WCED training courses and render support at fundraising-events, ensure safety and security	3	60
TOTAL	5	100

All principals agreed that repair work is the bulk of the general assistants' work description. Support at fundraising-events and rendering safety and security are beyond their work description but the general assistants assist with these functions to be eligible for consideration through the performance system.

All the principals emphasised further that they expect punctuality, diligence, and a focus on service delivery from the general assistants. Three principals also indicated that general assistants must be professional, self-disciplined, and able to function independently with minimal supervision, be responsible, take pride in their work, be creative, apply cost-saving measures and they must love children.

4.5.2 Functions expected outside their work description

Four principals emphasised after-hours opening and closing of buildings for meetings and assistance during fundraising projects while one principal accentuated rendering of security services and preparing the school hall for events. Four participants indicated further that it is required of general assistants to do work after their normal working hours, if needed.

4.5.3 Responses to Staff Performance Management Development System (SPMDS)

Table 19: Responses to SPMDS

Questions	YES	NO	%
Are General Assistants familiar with the SPMDS?	5	0	100
Are General Assistants consulted or do they give input?	5	0	100
Did the General Assistants receive a performance bonus?	4	1	100
Are you satisfied with the performance system for General Assistants?	4	1	100

All principals indicated that the general assistants are familiar with the SPMDS. Every term the principal and general assistants engage in completing the quarterly evaluation. The discussions are active and the merits of being nominated are discussed and agreed on. All principals further indicated that the process was communicated with general assistants and they participate in the performance system (SPMDS). Four principals indicated that the general assistants received a performance bonus. Four principals expressed their satisfaction with the performance system, stating that it serves the intended purpose while one principal was dissatisfied with the system. He cited too much administration involved and too many forms to be completed.

4.5.4 People management training

All principals attended people management training offered by different service providers. The table below summarises the WCED training offered.

Table 20: WCED training attended by Principals

Categories of training	Number	%
Conflict management, strategic planning, project management	1	20
Ace school leadership, Personnel and Financial Management, recruitment and selection for Principals and SGB	1	20
Staff performance Management Development System (SPMDS)	2	40
Training for new Principals	1	20
TOTAL	5	100

All principals received training offered by WCED. Attending the SPMDS (Performance Management System) training is significant since it is important for principals to be well informed in terms of the performance management system. The decision of the principal to nominate an employee for a performance bonus should be without fear, favour or prejudice. Although the general assistants may be viewed as lower-skilled workers, this should not be to their disadvantage in competing for a performance incentive.

All participating principals attended HR/People management training. From their responses they deemed it important to understand people and to manage them in a positive manner. In light of the aforementioned, it is encouraging that the principals attend people management training and view it as important.

Table 21: Principals' views regarding working conditions

Questions to Principals		Number	%
Are there opportunities for general assistants to make work/job related decisions in terms of improving their working conditions?	YES	5	100
	NO	0	
In light of the recent financial cut in the WCED norms and standard allocation to schools for 2016, how will this influence/impact the service delivery of the general assistants?	HUGE	2	40
	MED.	1	20
	NONE	2	40
How would you describe the work conditions of the general assistant(s)? (Excellent = E, Satisfactory = S, Unsatisfactory = U)*	E*	1	20
	S*	2	40
	U*	2	40
Is there a designated facility/restroom where general assistants can have their lunch- or tea breaks?	YES	4	80
	NO	1	20

All principals indicated that general assistants participate in decisions concerning their daily and quarterly work schedule; additional duties; needs analysis and purchases for their section. The impact of a cut in financial support from the WCED has a bigger impact on schools that are dependent on this allocation. Two principals indicated that the cut in the Norms and Standards allocation would have a huge impact on the budget. This had bearing on the “no charging school fee schools” situated in previously disadvantaged neighbourhoods. These schools have no available funds or resources to appoint additional general assistants. Two principals indicated that it has no impact on the functioning of the school. These schools are the former Model C schools who are charging school fees.

The feedback to this question is in line with the view of Yamauchi (2011) who examined a range of historical and geographic factors that determined the quality of public school education in post-apartheid South Africa. To address the imbalance, Yamauchi determined that financial support to disadvantaged schools should be strengthened further. This also underlined the challenges of schools that depend on the financial allocations from the WCED.

One principal responded that the working conditions are excellent due to adequate resources, good safety measures and a neat environment. Two principals indicated the conditions are satisfactory in spite of sporadic incidents of vandalism, school building belongs to the church, are old with wooden floors where the constant dust pose a potential health risk to the older general assistants. Two principals described the working conditions as unsatisfactory. This is due to challenges in terms of ill-discipline, untidiness and disrespect of learners.

Table 22: Restroom for General Assistants

Description of facility/restroom	Number	%
Under stairway, close to ablution facility for learners	1	20
Own and separate facility	1	20
Own, separate facility with ablution facility for general assistants	1	20
Storeroom, small (3x3m)	1	20
None	1	20
TOTAL	5	100

Four principals indicated that there is a restroom for general assistants. The designated restrooms are described above and differ from school to school. The restroom facility for general assistants differs in appearance from the staff room used by their colleagues. This might be a factor that has a negative influence on the morale of the general assistants.

4.5.5 Relationship with General Assistants

Four principals described their relationship as good due to an open-door policy, good and effective communication, while one principal indicated that the relationship was reasonable

due to the general assistants' status of appointment which led to unhappiness by the general assistants since they are eligible for permanent appointment.

Table 23: Positive factors

Positive Factors	Number	%
Acknowledgement, involvement, open communication, respect by colleagues and learners, job satisfaction.	2	40
Sense of belonging, team cohesion, moral support by management.	2	40
Positive encouragement, good relationships with management, staff and learners, respect.	1	20
TOTAL	5	100

All principals indicated that good interpersonal relations and positive self-image were the main factors that influence the morale of general assistants positively. Mbigi, (2004) emphasised that leadership is key to introducing and facilitating values of which respect for the dignity of others, group solidarity, teamwork, service to others in the spirit of peace and harmony are important factors. The role of the principal in establishing strong relationships based on respect between the general assistants and all stakeholders, including learners, educators and visitors is of significant importance. Most general assistants responded that a positive working relationship exist with the principal in spite of the negative and disrespectful behaviour of learners. In general, they are happy and feel safe in their work. Should the principal succeed in establishing and maintaining values of respect for the dignity of all his staff, the general assistants might continue to experience a sense of inclusion and being respected, which might influence and maintain their morale positively.

Table 24: Negative factors

Main Challenges	Number	%
Lack/no acknowledgement, negative critique and feedback, no recognition for rendering service and support beyond their job description	2	40
Management of their personal finances. Difficult to meet personal budget requirements	1	20
Negative attitude of staff members, make them feel inferior, disrespect of staff and learners, challenges in terms of personal finances	2	40
TOTAL	5	100

All principals agreed that general assistants are positively influenced by appreciation for the work they are doing and respect for them as human beings.

4.6 SUMMARY

In exploring motivational factors that influence the morale of general assistants, their experience is that both extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors are present. In terms of Maslow's theory, their basic reason for working is to be self-sufficient and to provide for their basic needs, e.g. food, housing, clothes, etc. which is also in line with Herzberg's hygiene factors, which include salary, leave, performance bonus and job related conditions.

General assistants are part of the non-teaching staff, which comprise administrative and support staff. They work as a team responsible for the maintenance of the general infrastructure of the school. Collectively, their main focus is maintaining the infrastructure and grounds but they also have their individual responsibilities in achieving the identified goals. In terms of Maslow's (1943) third level of social cohesion, this also relates to the theories of Herzberg (1959) and Marciano (2010) that being part of a group motivates the individuals within the group to perform at a high level. It might be that they do not want to disappoint the group and this leads to being acknowledged and respected by the group.

The reason for including the principals in the interviews, as explained earlier, is for purposes of triangulation. The researcher probed their awareness of the plight and needs of the general assistants and their responses and views were important within the context of the study with reference to permanent appointment, restroom facilities, performance bonuses and decision-making.

What is of concern, are those general assistants who are on contract for a substantial period and who are eligible for permanent appointment. Section 13(3) of the Public Service Act (RSA, 1994) allows for them to be appointed permanently if they are in a substantive post for 12 months. A substantive post is a post allocated to the school and reflects on the staff provision. These general assistants missed out on employee benefits in terms of subsidies for medical aid and housing, and membership of the state's pension fund. This was as a result of

the retraction (in 2017) of the 2015 legislation making provision for permanence. This had a direct impact on both the morale and livelihoods of general assistants, whose tenure remains precarious and insecure.



CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter concludes the study. The chapter is organised into three parts. The first part summarises the study's aims and objectives. The second part demonstrates how the study achieved its objectives by discussing the main findings of the study in the context of the motivational theories discussed earlier in the study. The final part concludes the study and identifies areas for future research.

5.2 WHAT THE RESEARCHER SET OUT TO DO

5.2.1 Aims and objectives of the study

The main objective of this study was to explore the motivational factors that influence the morale of general assistants at five schools identified within the Cape Winelands Education District (CWED).

The secondary objectives were to:

- Examine and review scholarly debates and literature on motivation, with the view to identify a relevant theoretical framework through which to understand the extrinsic and intrinsic factors that affect the morale of general assistants in the school environment;
- Explore the experiences of general assistants within the school environment in the hope of identifying factors that either motivate or demotivate general assistants;
- Highlight the main findings through an engagement with the key motivational theories;
- Conclude the study and highlight areas for future research.

5.2.2 Guiding Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- What factors, in general, contribute to the happiness or unhappiness of general assistants in the school environment?
- What specific factors contribute to the happiness or unhappiness of general assistants in the school environment?
- How do interpersonal relations with the principal, foreman, educators, support staff and learners affect the morale of the general assistants in the workplace?
- Are general assistants involved and do they participate in decision-making?
- Did they undergo training offered by the Cape Winelands Education District (CWED) and were they interested in further training?

5.3 HOW THE RESEARCHER ACHIEVED THE OBJECTIVES

5.3.1 Guiding assumptions

The assumption is that individuals with lower skill levels, which include general assistants, may be more extrinsically motivated by lower order needs. Although viewed as lower-skilled employees, in their work environment, as all human beings, general assistants desire respect for human dignity and to be treated in a dignified and respectful manner which is the basis of Marciano's (2010) theory. The findings highlighting contrary beliefs to those depicted through Maslow's (1943) theory, namely the regimented focus on lower order versus higher order needs. The responses suggest that general assistants are influenced by more than just lower order needs as identified by the hygiene factors of Herzberg (1959). In fact, those who underwent training expressed a desire to pursue further training and be acknowledged for this training through obtaining certificates. This illustrates that they may be intrinsically motivated Marciano's (2010) fourth area of work, refer to the work being challenging, rewarding, interesting and having value to both the general assistants as well as the school. The motivators of Herzberg (1959) include achievement, recognition, challenging and interesting work, advancement and personal development.

This study was conducted to understand the motivational factors that influence the morale of general assistants in the school environment. The literature of Maslow (1943), Herzberg (1959) and Marciano (2010) form the theoretical basis of this study. The first three levels are identified by Maslow. Psychological, safety and social needs are found to be present in the factors identified by the participants that influence their morale. The policies guiding their employment, which include leave, performance, working conditions of salary, security of being permanently employed, and enjoying employee benefits of pension fund, medical aid, housing subsidy are extrinsic factors that are important to the general assistants, which Herzberg also relates to as the hygiene factors.

5.3.2 Factors that influence the morale of General Assistants

The findings of the study suggest that the morale of general assistants is influenced by various factors that transcend the boundaries of lower order versus higher order needs. In fact, the responses challenge the idiosyncratic approach employed by Maslow (1970) in his Needs Theory. In certain instances, Maslow's hierarchy is beneficial in understanding the importance of basic needs satisfaction as a starting point to thinking about motivation and its effect on the individual in the workplace. In other instances, however, it poses a limitation on the employer initiating interventions aimed at motivating individuals in the workplace. In the case of general assistants for example, training and development was considered important and provided them with an opportunity to grow and aspire to higher levels within their occupation. To this end, the work of Herzberg seems more appropriate since it allows one to engage with issues of motivation in the context of extrinsic and intrinsic factors.

5.3.2.1 Extrinsic motivational factors

The study determined that for general assistants, their employment at the school and the security of earning a monthly salary constitute the basic elements to be self-sufficient and thus are identified as having a positive influence on their morale. General factors in terms of the content of the job, leave allocation, performance system, restroom facilities and policies that govern their employment are other extrinsic motivational factors that influence their morale. The first level of Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs is related to these extrinsic factors while the security of earning a monthly salary relates to Maslow's second level which refers to safety needs.

The hygiene factors of Herzberg, et al (1959) Two-factor Theory include company policies, working conditions, salary, status and security. Elements of Maslow's first and second level and the hygiene factors of Herzberg were present as extrinsic motivational factors. The findings that emerged from the interviews, with general assistants indicated that these extrinsic factors are imperative to them because they help them to be self-sufficient and to provide for their families and relatives. The security of being employed and being remunerated monthly is an important extrinsic motivational factor for general assistants. From the responses of the principals, the restroom facility differs from that of the rest of the staff yet the general assistants responded that they were happy and maintained a good relationship with the principal.

From the responses of general assistants, it is clear that the equipment is sufficient, available and in a good condition. However, some principals responded that the budget and availability of funds have an impact on service delivery at the school and that general assistants are not excluded from the reality and effect of budget cuts and austerity measures.

However, this research found that the budgetary impact is bigger on the schools situated in previously disadvantaged neighbourhoods. These schools do not charge school fees and have no additional funds to supplement their budgets. Furthermore, the findings indicate that general assistants experience their working conditions as positive and according to Herzberg's (1959) theory, as an extrinsic motivational factor, it influences their morale positively.

A specific factor that was probed was the status of the appointment of general assistants as extrinsic motivational factor which they view as important. The study indicates that one of the factors that influenced the morale of general assistants negatively, was their long period of appointment on a temporary contract.

Another specific factor that was probed was the effect of budget constraints on extrinsic and intrinsic factors that influence the morale of general assistants.

Training is the systematic acquisition of attitudes, concepts, knowledge, roles, or skills that result in improved performance at work, according to Goldstein (1991), which is in line with the WCED policies that encourage employees to broaden their knowledge via formal studying and skills-development courses. The WCED district offices are instrumental in affording general assistants an opportunity for development since they are not excluded from self-motivation and the opportunity to empower themselves. In order to move upwards on Maslow's (1943) Needs Theory, this is an important factor to improve knowledge and improve the level of service delivery. However, as indicated in the CWED 2016/2017 Annual Training Report (ATR) (2017), only 45 general assistants out of the 333 employed in the CWED, received training. This was due to the available funds for this occupational group for this period. The value and opportunity of the training they received, are viewed as important and as a significant investment since most of them indicated that they would be interested in further training.

5.3.2.2 *Intrinsic motivational factors*

Intrinsic motivational factors are usually related to jobs that provide opportunities for achievement, recognition of performance and responsibility. It also includes the opportunity for personal development, and challenging and interesting work. In the study, the general assistants demonstrated an eagerness to utilise training interventions through available resources to empower themselves, which relates to Herzberg's (1959) personal development factors and Marciano's (2010) reference to having value for all stakeholders. Through training they strive to be better in the execution of their duties, to better themselves and improve their personal circumstances, as determined during the interviews.

The findings determined that general assistants, through availing themselves to represent the non-teaching staff on the SGBs and be selected by their section, boost their self-esteem and influence their morale positively. As members of the SGBs they participate and vote on policy matters and appointments of all employees, including for the post of principal and promotional posts. Being part of the highest decision-making body of the school influences their morale positively as they participate in the governance of the school. This relates to Herzberg's (1959) advancement factors and Marciano's (2010) reference to individuals feeling respected by their colleagues.

5.4 EQUAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ALL EMPLOYEES

Although the general assistants described their relationship with the principal and school community as good and they indicated that they feel safe and are happy and proud to be associated with the school, they should be equally respected as the administrative staff and educators. Herzberg's (1959) theory identified recognition as a motivator and Marciano's (2010) reference to the organisation and the role of employees is relevant to relationships and the influence thereof on the morale of general assistants.

5.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study explored a problem where limited research has been conducted, namely the factors that affect the morale of general assistants within the school environment. Globally, reference is made to the limited research conducted on low-skilled workers (Janssen, 2014; Fouarge, et al, 2009; Puangyoykeaw and Nishidi 2015). The findings suggest that regardless of the occupational level that an individual holds in the workplace, they do aspire to transcend their current circumstances and/or position. Therefore, attention needs to be attributed to the needs and interests of all individuals in the workplace. In addition, the research illustrates that contrary to popular belief that low-skilled workers are motivated by lower order needs, general assistants in the schools under investigation were keen to pursue further training and development to advance them within the workplace environment. Relationships with others also emerged as an important factor affecting morale.

5.6 IDEAS FOR FUTURE RELATED RESEARCH

5.6.1 Compensation for additional duties

General assistants and administrative staff are part of the non-teaching component and are employed at the schools for long periods. In terms of the SPMDS all non-teaching staff that are at their maximum salary notch, compete annually for the performance bonus. They do not qualify automatically and the additional duties are only taken into consideration for a specific 12-month period.

5.6.2 Compensation for overtime work

Chapter 2, section 10 of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (RSA, 1997) makes provision for overtime worked, yet the study revealed that general assistants are not compensated for working overtime.

5.6.3 Negative learner-behaviour

The general assistants identified learner-behaviour as one of the reasons influencing their morale negatively. Studies on how this can be addressed should be undertaken.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

The ideal practice would be if the principal as leader of the school paid attention to the general assistants and acknowledged and valued their contributions. The important role that general assistants play at the school in establishing an environment conducive to learning cannot be adequately emphasised. If the principal encouraged and motivated learners and educators to acknowledge and respect general assistants, that might boost the morale of general assistants. They might not experience a sense of “invisibility” because their contributions and inputs are respected and valued.

The WCED as employer should ensure that all employees are recognised and treated equally. Celebration of teachers through World Teachers’ Day or of secretaries through Secretaries’ Day, should also be extended to general assistants as acknowledgement of their input and contribution.

In terms of conversion of general assistants from contract to permanent appointment, the WCED should ensure that principals abide to prescripts in applying for conversions timeously.

5.8 CONCLUSION

Conventionally, general assistants are categorized as low-skilled workers and probably motivated by lower-order factors. However, the results suggest that general assistants, albeit that they fall within the category of low-skilled workers, are motivated by more than factors such as rewards and compensation, safety and security. The fact that many responded that they desired the opportunity to further develop themselves or that recognition from their supervisors was important, suggests that they are motivated by factors not expected or associated with the duties they are responsible for.



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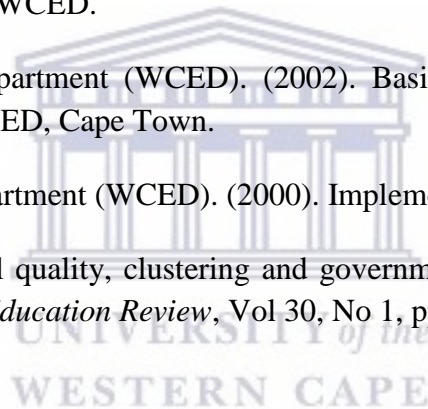
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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE – GENERAL ASSISTANTS

LYS VAN VRAE/LIST OF QUESTIONS: GENERAL ASSISTANTS

1. Tipe skool / Type of School: High School [] Primary School []
2. Tipe aanstelling/Status of appointment: Permanent [] Tydelik / Temporary []
op Kontrak / On Contract [] op proef / On probation []
3. Hoe lank is u werksaam by die skool? /Period of employment:
Minder as 10 jaar [] 10-20 jaar [] 21 – 30 jaar [] meer as 30 jaar []
Less than 10 years [] 10 – 20 years [] 21 – 30 years [] more than 30 years []
4. Hoogste standerd geslaag/ Highest standard passed: Std. []
5. Watter take is u verantwoordelikheid (volgens u pligstaat?/ According to your job description, what are your responsibilities?
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
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6. Het u al opleiding bygewoon wat deur die WKOD aangebied is? / Have you attended training offered
by the WCED? Ja/yes [] Nee/no []
7. Indien ja by nr. 6, noem tipe opleiding asb. / If yes at no. 6, what type of training?
7.1
7.2
7.3
8. Het u 'n bewys/sertifikaat ontvang van die opleiding wat u bygewoon het/Do you have proof of the training/certificate? Ja/yes [] Nee/no []

9. Hoe het die opleiding u gehelp in die uitvoering van u pligte? /How did the training assist in performing and execution of your duties?

.....
.....
.....

10. Sou u belangstel in verdere opleiding?/Would you be interested in further training?

Ja/yes [] Nee/no []

Indien ja, watter tipe opleiding?/If yes, what type of training?

.....
.....

11. Watter take verrig u buite u pligstaat/ What functions do you perform over and above your job description?

11.1

11.2

11.3

11.4

11.5



12. Het u al prestasie-erkenning ontvang? /Have you received a performance bonus?

Ja/yes [] Nee/no []

13. Is u tevrede met die Prestasie-erkenning stelsel? / Are you content with the Performance system?

Ja/yes [] Nee/no []

Motiveer asb./Please elaborate:

.....
.....

14. Is u tevrede met u salaris?/Are you content with your monthly salary?

Ja/yes [] Nee/no []

15. Is u tevrede met u verloftoekenning per jaar?/Are you content with the annual leave allocation?

Ja/yes [] Nee/no []

16. Hoe sal u u verhouding met die prinsipaal beskryf? / How would you describe the relationship between you and the principal?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

17. Is daar geleentheid vir u om besluite te kan neem t.o.v. u werk?/Do you participate in work-related decision-making?

Ja/yes [] Nee/no []

.....
.....

18. Is daar geleentheid vir u om besluite te kan neem in vergaderings?/Do you participate in decision-making at meetings?

Ja/yes [] Nee/no []



19. Dien u of het u al gedien op die Skool Beheerliggaam (SBL)?/Are you currently or have you served on the School Governing Body (SGB)?

Ja/Yes [] Nee/No []

20. Hoe sal u u werksomstandighede beskryf?/How would you describe your working conditions?

.....
.....
.....

21. Is daar voldoende toerusting om u pligte uit te voer?/ Are there sufficient tools/equipment to perform your duties?

Ja/Yes [] Nee/No []

22. Wat is die toestand van die toerusting?/What is the condition of the equipment/tools?

.....
.....
.....
.....

23. Voel u veilig by die skool?/Do you feel safe at the school?

Ja/Yes [] Nee/No []

24. Is u gelukkig in u werk?/Do you feel happy in your work?

Ja/Yes [] Nee/No []

25. Watter faktore laat u positief voel?/What factors influence you positively?

.....
.....
.....

26. Watter faktore laat u negatief voel?/What factors influence you negatively?

.....
.....
.....



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APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE - PRINCIPALS

LIST OF QUESTIONS: PRINCIPALS

1. Who is responsible for the appointment of general assistants?
.....
2. What are the criteria for the appointment of general assistants?
.....
.....
3. According to you, what are the responsibilities of the general assistant(s)?
.....
.....
4. As Manager, what are the expectations of general assistants in terms of service delivery?
.....
.....
.....
5. Are there functions which they perform outside their job description?
.....
.....
.....
6. Are general assistants familiar with the Staff Performance Management Development System?
(SPMDS) Yes [] No []
7. Are general assistants consulted and do they give input in the SPMDS?
Yes [] No []
Please elaborate:
.....
.....
8. Did the general assistant(s) receive performance bonuses? Yes [] No []
9. Are you content with the performance system for general assistant(s) (SPMDS)?
Yes [] No []
Please elaborate:
.....
.....
10. Are you satisfied with the annual leave allocation for general assistants?
Yes [] No []

11. Have you attended HR or People Management training? Yes [] No []

11(a) If yes, what kind of training? (Please indicate if it was offered by the WCED).

.....
.....

12. How would you describe the relationship between you and the general assistant(s)?

.....
.....

13. Is there an opportunity for general assistants to make work/job related decisions in terms of improving their work conditions? Yes [] No []

14. In light of the recent financial cut in the WCED Norms and Standard allocation for schools in 2016, how will this influence/impact the service delivery of the general assistant(s)?

.....
.....

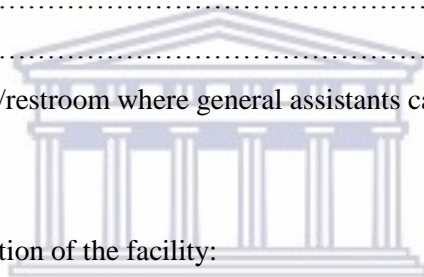
15. How would you describe the working conditions of the general assistant(s)?

.....
.....

16. Is there a designated facility/restroom where general assistants can have their lunch or tea?

Yes [] No []

If yes, please give a description of the facility:



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17. According to you, what factors influence the morale of general assistants positively?

.....
.....
.....

18. Which are the main challenges general assistants experience that influence their morale?

.....
.....
.....

APPENDIX C: ETHICS CLEARANCE LETTER



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22 August 2016

Mrs C Beukes
School of Government
Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences

Ethics Reference Number HS/16/5/59

Project Title: Exploring motivational factors that influence the morale of general assistants in schools in Cape Winelands Education District (CWED): A case study at five schools in Worcester.

Approval Period: 29 July 2016 – 29 July 2017

I hereby certify that the Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Western Cape approved the methodology and ethics of the above mentioned research project.

Any amendments, extension or other modifications to the protocol must be submitted to the Ethics Committee for approval. Please remember to submit a progress report in good time for annual renewal.

The Committee must be informed of any serious adverse event and/or termination of the study.



Ms Patricia Josias
Research Ethics Committee Officer
University of the Western Cape

PROVISIONAL REC NUMBER - 130416-049