



**Investigating the relationship between leadership and employee work ethics at  
eThekweni Municipality Libraries and Heritage Departments**

**BY**

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**Date:**

## DECLARATION

**The Registrar (Academic)**  
**Durban University of Technology**

Dear Sir or Madam

I **Kwenza Madlala** Student No: 21649421

Hereby declare that the dissertation entitled:

**An investigation into the relationship between leadership and employee work ethics in the Public Sector: eThekweni Municipality Libraries and Heritage case study**

Is the result of my own investigation and research and that it has not been submitted in part or in full, for any other degree or any other institution of higher learning. Subsequently, other sources are acknowledged and explicit references are provided.

Signed: 

On the 25<sup>th</sup> day of March 2019

## ABSTRACT

Leaders play a key role in respect of providing a healthy employee work ethic and influencing behaviour across all organisations, particularly within the public sector. The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between leadership and the work ethic of employees within the public sector, with reference to eThekweni municipality's libraries and heritage department. This area of focus is in light of the serious complaints from the public that senior management should be blamed for the unethical conduct of certain employees over the years.

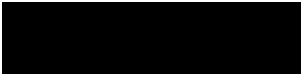
The study employed a quantitative methodology where a questionnaire was used to gather data from a sample of 230 employees, selected from a population of 2300 using the systematic random sampling technique. Data was analysed using SPSS version 20 and excel. The major findings of the study indicate that there was no significant relationship between leadership and an employee's ethical behaviour. However, employees were aware of what was expected from an ethical point of view, in addition they were also aware of the importance of ethics. The study revealed that employees viewed unethical practices as a serious matter leading to such practices being reported by colleagues. The study highlighted that behaving in an ethical manner was not rewarded by the organisation.

The study recommended that the need to consider rewarding employees who display the appropriate ethical conduct, furthermore a position of "ethics" officer should be created to ensure that ethical behaviour and standards are part and parcel of municipal obligations. It is important to be mindful of the fact that the study focused on a single department – the library and heritage, the study recommended further studies be undertaken across the other departments, encompassing the entire municipality in order to have balanced views of ethics at eThekweni Municipality.

## DECLARATION

I, **Kwenzu Madlala**, declare that this research is my own, unaided work, except as indicated in the acknowledgements, the text and the references. It is submitted in partial fulfilment for the requirement for the degree of Master of Human Resource Management in the Faculty of Management Sciences at the Durban University of Technology, Durban. It has not been submitted before, either whole or in part, for any degree or examination at this or any other university.

**Kwenzu Madlala**

Signed: Signed: 

On the 25<sup>th</sup> day of March 2019

## **DEDICATION**

This study is dedicated to my Mother Happy Madlala who brought me to this earth and raised me as a single parent through the power of the Almighty LORD GOD.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This study would not have been completed without God's guidance and the support of certain key individuals. First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor and mentor Dr Emmanuel Mutambara the meticulous wise guidance he has given from the beginning to the end of the study. I acknowledge the support given by the eThekweni Municipality for allowing me to conduct a study of this nature. I am humbled by the role played by all those who participated in the study, whose names I cannot mention, this study could not have been complete without them. Lastly, I give thanks to my ex fiancé for her patience and for doing everything humanly possible to support me throughout the whole journey of studying for this Masters degree.

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

### **1.1. INTRODUCTION**

The issue concerning the behaviour of public servants always rises when the challenges in service delivery are brought forward. Whilst individuals may join private organisations and are observed as behaving professionally and client/customer oriented, it is an arguable phenomenon that upon settling in public service organisations behavioural changes are observed. This study investigates the impact of various leadership styles on the ethical behaviour of front-line employees in the public sector. These behavioural changes apply vice-versa, where a former public service employee joins a private company and starts behaving appropriately. His/ her approach to customers/ clients changes drastically. It is acknowledged that a number of factors may contribute to this matter, this study shall link the different leadership styles to public sector employees generally but focusing on front line employees in particular.

This Chapter introduces the study by presenting the background to the study, the problem statement is stated and the study objectives and questions are developed. The significance of the study is also explained followed by a brief methodology for the study. Finally, the Chapter provides the structure of the study.

### **1.2. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

Leaders play a key role towards ensuring that the employees they lead conduct themselves in an ethical manner, hence the study focuses on leadership and its influence on the ethical conduct and behaviour of frontline employees. The South African government, in particular local municipalities are receiving negative criticism, this is an ongoing issue that has not been addressed for several years. This is due to a failure to serve the community in a humane or ethical manner resulting in the eThekweni Municipality receiving an increase of complaints in recent years (Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Report, 2015). The Sunday Tribune (2015) reported that the majority of eThekweni Municipality front line employees have become popular for poor service delivery, with the majority of criticism directed at the unethical conduct by frontline employees. Frontline employees are the face of the

organisation, they are a strategic window to the organisation, hence they need to act in the interest of both the organisation and customers. According to Northouse (2015), leaders have a huge role to play, by demonstrating effective ethical leadership which will serve as a shining example to the frontline employees.

At eThekweni municipality the current ethical conduct of most frontline employees results in a lot of questions going unanswered. For instance, employees do not show sympathy for customers that wait in queues, they do not provide service that is fast or efficient. The worst scenario is depicted when elderly citizens wait in queues for an extended period without being served, let alone told to come back the following day. The argument is that front line employees ought to serve the public in an effective and respectful manner, being mindful of the fact that they are employed to serve the nation and that their salaries come from tax payers. In view of the emerging and rather persistent challenge of serving the citizens ethically, leaders who hold leadership positions at eThekweni Municipality ought to lead by example, in order to influence the ethical culture of the frontline employees. As these employees are the ones who deal with the public face to face.

Geldenhuis (1999; 1) argues that professional public managers are well qualified persons with unquestionable integrity, that allows them to preserve high ethical standards under all circumstances. Geldenhuis (1999; 1) further asserts that they are persons who firstly are sensitive to the values of individual citizens and groups and acts responsibly taking into cognisance each individual's needs, values and problems as well as those of specific groups. Secondly, they strive for justice and social equity deploying their efforts on behalf of each individual, providing a means to resolve disputes.

A study on transformational leadership made it apparent that between transformational leadership and performance exists a direct and positive relationship, Gasper; (1992) and Lowe, Kroeck, and Sivasubramaniam (1996) quoted in Bruce et al (1999: 299). Lewis & Gilman (2005) argue that it is the job itself – the complex, ambiguous, pressured public service world – that presents particular problems for ethical people who want to do the right thing, but are often lured into unethical practices and behaviours.

Brown et al. (2005) quoted in Annebel De Hoogh (2008: 300) established a positive relationship between an ethical leadership style and satisfaction with the leader,

perceived leader efficiency, follower's job devotion and follower's willingness to report problems to management. To this end, there is not much of a link in relation to leadership style and the ethical/unethical behaviour of employees. The above indicates that there is indeed a relationship between management's leadership style and how employees behave within an organisation. The topic of how management's leadership impacts employee behaviour within the South African public sector becomes very critical to investigate, considering that the issue of unethical public employees' is one of governments' main concerns. Werner et al (2007: 37) cited that the second King Report on corporate governance established ethical principles which corporate leaders must follow in order to ensure management of organisations in an ethical manner.

One amongst the seven primary characteristics of corporate governance highlighted by Werner is discipline, with emphasis placed on the need for senior managers to display the appropriate ethical behaviour. Such a theory creates grounds for this research, leading to the relationship between employee conduct and management's leadership style in the public sector being investigated.

### **1.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

At the period of conducting the study between 2015 to 2017, eThekweni Municipality had received negative comments from the public for failing to serve customers who visit the library and heritage department in a manner that was deemed appropriate with the blame levelled against frontline employees. Frontline line employees play an important part in an organisation, as they are a strategic window to an institution. However, they can only do so with the support of managers and leaders. Unfortunately, the eThekweni library and heritage frontline employees are criticised left, right and centre for failing to show empathy, good ethical conduct and displaying the behaviour that is expected of them by the public. All public servants inclusive of municipalities ought to uphold the Batho Pele principles (people first – a national framework of ethical principles for all public sector employees).

A case in point reported in the Berea Mail (September 17, 2016) revealed that a customer who suffered from excruciating cancer-based pain had to wait in long queue with only two employees serving the clients. When the client enquired, a lady at the reception merely

nodded and walked away without providing any form of assistance, in front of senior employees, sending a message that frontline employees do as they please even in the presence of managers. The purpose of the study is therefore to investigate the relationship between leadership and employee work ethics at eThekweni municipality.

#### **1.4. AIM OF THE STUDY**

This study is aimed at investigating the relationship between leadership and employee ethics at eThekweni Municipality, with a view to inculcate an ethical culture among the eThekweni workforce particularly frontline employees who must be mindful of the fact that they are the face of the organisation

#### **1.5. STUDY OBJECTIVES**

The study objectives are the following:

- a. To explore management's perception of employee work ethic in public sector organisations.
- b. To assess employee perceptions of leadership styles on employee work ethic in public sector organisations.
- c. To ascertain management's perception of the ethical behaviour of employees
- d. To explore the relationship between employee work ethic and leadership style.
- e. To recommend appropriate a leadership style that promotes a sound work ethic in public sector organisations.

#### **1.6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The principal research questions are the following:

- a. What is management's perception the work ethic exhibited by employees in public sector organisations?
- b. What is the impact of the leadership style on employee work ethics in public sector organisations?

- c. What are management's perception of the ethical behaviour as exhibited by employees
- d. What is the relationship between employee work ethic and the leadership style in public sector organisations?
- e. What role can transformational leadership play in promoting employee work ethic in respect of public sector organisations?

### **1.7. BRIEF RESEACRH METHODOLOGY**

The study employed the quantitative methodology. According to Wiil & Diggines (2010) quantitative research depends on numbers, measurements and calculations, and is mostly highly structured and its approach is scientific, this particular study uses a questionnaire as a data collection instrument. The research design used in this study was the descriptive study, as the study is aimed at identifying the impact that the varying leadership styles have on employee's work ethic, in the public sector using eThekwini municipality; libraries and heritage unit as a case study. The date required relates to the behavioural attributes of both leaders and front line employees.

The questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 230, selected from a target population of the eThewkini library and heritage department, using the systematic sampling technique. The data analysis was completed using the SPSS vession 20 tool and excel speradsheets, employing graphs, tables and frequencies as measures of expressing and analysing the data.

### **1.8. SIGNIFICANCE OR IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY**

This research seeks to contribute to literature that enhances the understanding and the importance of ethical practices at management level, so as to facilitate a culture of moral and ethical behaviour amongst employees, specifically those who are the face of government in the public sector.

### **1.9. ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY**

The study consists of five chapters as outlined below:-

### 1.9.1. Chapter 1: Introduction and background to the problem.

The researcher introduces the topic and the background to the research. This chapter looks into what gave rise to the need for this study to be conducted and further evaluates what this study aims to achieve. The study takes a look at the contribution to both theory and practice of the topic chosen topic.

### 1.9.2. Chapter 2: Literature review

This Chapter will be looking into the theoretical framework around the subject matter. It will explore the different leadership styles, the concept of ethics, as well as perceptions of ethical or unethical behaviour.

### 1.9.3. Chapter 3: Research design & Methodology

This Chapter presents the structure of the research, what the target population is, how the sample population is drawn. This chapter outlines the use of Quantitative Methodology techniques in employed in the data collection process and presents how confidentiality will be ensured.

### 1.9.4. Chapter 4: Presentation of findings

Data collected from the Questionnaire is presented, analysed and interpreted.

### 1.9.5. Chapter 5: Conclusion and recommendations

The conclusion of the research based on results is presented, aspects of the topic requiring further discussion are highlighted and recommendations are made.

## **1.10. CONCLUSION**

Public sector organisations are about service delivery; ethics play a very critical role on how the services provided are perceived by the general community at the receiving end of it. Employees will always look up to leaders in the work place, hence leadership must be seen to be leading by example, encompassing ethical qualities in their everyday activities. This Chapter has provided a background to the study, explored the research problems, outlined the aim and objectives of the study, posed necessary questions the



study must respond to and presented the structure of this study. Literature relating to the variables of this study is reviewed in the next Chapter.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 2 of this research dissertation explores in detail what work ethics are, as well as what the perceptions are around work ethics in public sector organisations. It explores the theory around the two concepts (ethics and leadership) from previous research and reviews of literature in relation to the research topic. An overview of different leadership styles as they relate to the ethical conduct of employees/followers is presented. It also sheds some light on the principles of employee work ethics. The main purpose of a literature review is to gain an understanding of the knowledge that is already known, in that specific area of study by reading relevant work to aid ones' interpretation of the study. This also includes a means of revealing the established and some accepted facts regarding the study (Kreuger and Neuman, 2006). The review of literature also enables a detailed understanding of past theories that have already been employed by previous researchers.

### **2.2. ETHICS AND LEADERSHIP CONCEPTS**

#### **2.2.1. Work ethics**

##### **a. Ethics and its key anchors – a definition**

Joseph (2000) defines ethics as a combination of formal and informal standards of conduct that are used by people to guide their behaviour within the workplace. It is centred around basic values such as respect, honesty, and trust, but they also can be learned directly from other's actions. According to Ciulla (2004) cited in Dutelle (2011; 34) ethics lie at the heart of all human relations, and, therefore, at the heart of the relationship between leaders and followers. According to Carlson and Perrew (2005) cited in Hood (2013; 263) researchers and managers have lately shown interest on the evolution and consequences of corporate ethical performance. This is influenced by various factors including the lack of confidence in ethical corporate practices, which seems to be increasing, and the more emphasis placed on the importance of quality of life. Nelson (2005; 94) suggests that an organisation, work teams and individuals may be affected by

unethical behaviour of other employees. Organisations are dependent on individuals to act ethically.

According to Brewster *et al* (2008; 168) there are two principal pillars of business ethics in South African business enterprises irrespective of whether they are public or private.

The pillars are the following:

- i. The values of human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedom as enshrined in the constitution; and
- ii. The King II report on corporate governance which has been instrumental for placing ethics on the agenda of boards of corporate South Africa.

It was highlighted by Brewster that the *Business ethics South African 2002 survey* reported that by merely paying lip-service to ethics management, there are high levels of risks that many enterprises will face.

#### **b. Ethics versus Morals.**

According to Nelson (2005; 94), ethics are a study of moral values, as a result, ethical behaviour is acting in a way which is consistent with one's personal values and the commonly held values of the organisation. McShane & Von Glinow (2014; 38), suggest that other factors which may influence employee behaviour at work involves moral intensity and ethical sensitivity. Moral intensity is defined as the degree to which an issue demands the application of ethical principles, whilst ethical sensitivity is a personal characteristic that enables people to recognise the presence of an ethical issue and determine its relative importance Brewster *et al* (2008). It is important that we generate an understanding of what ethics are firstly, to appropriately apply them to the workplace. The following chart not only helps us to understand what ethics are, but further provides a clear distinction between ethics and morals. Charles Colson cited by Buckam (2003; 1) provides us with the differentiation as depicted in

Morals	Ethics
Derived from Latin word <i>moralis</i> , meaning “traditional customs”	Derived from the Greek word <i>ethos</i> , meaning moral character
Typically associated with personal behaviour	Typically refers to professional practices and behaviour
Customs or manners practiced in any given community or culture	Conveys sense of stability and/or permanence
May be different from culture to culture	An absolute standard of behaviour
May be viewed as an acceptable social behaviour in the culture(s) (may change)	Standard is universal and immutable (not subject to change)

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**Table 2.1** below.

Morals	Ethics
Derived from Latin word <i>moralis</i> , meaning “traditional customs”	Derived from the Greek word <i>ethos</i> , meaning moral character
Typically associated with personal behaviour	Typically refers to professional practices and behaviour
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**Table 2.1: Moral versus ethics<sup>1</sup>**

From the above figure we are able to establish that ethics can be formulated (through a code such as in the example of workplace ethics), emulated (from superordinates) and standardised for all public service employees to live by. Nelson (2005; 98) suggests an ethical behaviour exhibited by an individual is affected by one’s level of cognitive moral development. Nelson (2005; 98) defines cognitive moral development as a process of moving through stages of maturity in terms of making ethical decisions.

**c. Ethical theories**

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<sup>1</sup> (Adapted from information found within <https://courses.washington.edu/cee440/NotesWP.htm>)

The consequences of an individual's actions determines the goodness or badness of a particular behaviour and in assessing consequences, there are three different approaches to making decisions regarding moral conduct: *ethical egoism*, *utilitarianism* and *altruism*, Northhouse (2013; 425). Brewster (2008; 176) argues that there are two widely accepted theories of ethics and such are categorised into (1) Teleology, which is concerned with understanding the consequences of actions for the common good and (2) Deontology, concerned with understanding duties, justice, and rights. The following are some of the ethical theories reviewed in this stud

### **i. Ethical egoism**

According to (Avolio & Locke. 2002) cited in Northhouse (2003; 425), ethical egoism states that a person should act so as to create the greatest good for herself or himself. A mid-level, upward-aspiring manager who wants her team to be the best in the company could be acting out of ethical egoism, Northhouse (2003; 425).

### **ii. Kantian duty**

This is a deontological theory with the underlying principle that the universe respects autonomous beings, amongst the strengths of this theory is that it protects individuals from being used as a means to an end, it is consistent with the golden rule, 'do unto others as you would have them do unto you' and lastly it has firm standards that do not depend on results. The weakness of this theory is that it can be difficult in practice to make the means/end distinction, furthermore the tests of universalizability and respect for autonomous beings may not be sufficient to achieve their intended purpose, Carey (2007) cited in Brewster *et al* (2008; 177).

### **iii. Utilitarianism**

According to Bowen (2010; 4) cited in Dutelle (2011; 15) Utilitarianism is the perspective that those actions that produce the greatest good for the greatest number of persons are "good" actions. It is also known as the "consequentialist" or "teleological ethical theory". Dutelle suggests that its basic principle is that human beings judge the morality of actions

in terms of the consequences or results of those actions. Moral acts elicit good consequences. – those acts that create happiness and are justifiable. Immoral acts elicit bad consequences – those that induce pain and suffering and are unjustifiable.

(Schumann; 2001) cited in Northouse (2003; 425) suggests that Utilitarianism informs suggests a manner of behaving so as to create the greatest good for the greatest number. Accordingly, this implies that the morally correct action is the action that maximises social benefits while minimising social costs. When the U.S government allocates a larger part of the federal budget towards preventative health care than catastrophic illness, it is acting from a utilitarian perspective, putting money where it will have the best result for the largest number of citizens, Northouse (2003; 425). Carey (2007) cited in Brewster *et al* (2008; 177) argues that some of the weaknesses of utilitarianism as a teleological theory are that; it is difficult to predict and quantify all the consequences, also it can result in an unfair distribution of common good and certain individual rights can be overlooked for net outcomes.

#### **iv. Altruism**

Dutelle (2011; 14) defines altruism as processing unselfish concerns for the welfare of others. He further suggests that another way to view it is as the opposite of selfishness. Dutelle is of the view that altruism is quite different to possessing loyalty or having a sense of duty towards something or someone. The perspective of altruism is focused on motivation to help others or wanting to do good without expecting reward, while duty or loyalty is focused primarily on a moral obligation towards a specific organisation (employer, government, country), an individual (person, deity), or even an abstract concept (such as patriotism). According to Bowie (1991) cited in Northouse (2003; 425) although closely related to utilitarianism, and at the opposite end of the spectrum from of ethical egoism, altruism is the third teleological approach. Bowie views it as an approach which suggests that actions are deemed moral if their primary purpose is to promote the best interest of others. From this perspective, a leader may be called on to act in the interest of others, even when it runs contrary to his or her own self-interests.

#### **v. Justice**

As purported by Carey (2007) cited in Brewster (2008; 177) justice is an ethical framework based on due process and due outcomes. This is drawn from Rawls's egalitarianism which supports fair distribution of benefits and burdens. The strengths here are that Justice attempts to allocate resources and costs fairly and objectively, it is consistent with a democratic approach, and it upholds the rights of liberty and property. Whilst, the weaknesses are identified by Brewster are that: it can encourage a sense of entitlement that reduces risk, innovation and productivity, it can also result in reducing the rights of some in order to accommodate rules of justice, and it emphasises freedom over other values.

#### **vi. Moral rights**

The underlying principle of moral rights is that of individual entitlements which impose obligations on others. Moral rights protect individuals from harm, impose obligations on others either not to interfere, and they are consistent with universal human rights. The weaknesses of human rights in ethical decision making, are that they can be misinterpreted resulting in selfish behaviour, they can promote personal liberties that impede productivity and efficiency, and lastly, it is difficult to balance conflicting rights.

#### 2.2.2. Leadership

##### **a. Definition of leadership**

According to Gary (2005; 8) leadership is a process of influencing others so as an understanding can be reached in respect of what is to be done and how, leading to a process of facilitating collective and individual efforts to achieve common objectives. Werner (2007; 288) discussing Gary, concludes that leadership is a process of persuading people to work voluntarily, enthusiastically and persistently towards a collective and purposeful group or organisational goal. Hitt (1990) quoted by Hood Jacqueline (2003; 264) conceptualises leadership as being conduct essentially anchored in ethical choices and attitudes and looking at ways to use of power and influence over others. In Northouse (2015; 4) it is suggested that leadership is deciphered from the behaviour an individual displays. He finds that a leader's ethical stance is determined by the he or she does when in a leadership role. The behavioural dimension is concerned

with how leaders act towards others in various situations. Unlike traits, abilities and skills, leadership behaviours are observable. When someone leads, we see that person's behaviour as they discharge the duties and obligations that leadership requires.

**b. Leadership and Management**

Werner (2007; 288) suggests that one way of understanding leadership is by comparing it with management. Werner (2007; 288) states that by creating a shared vision and inspiring people to become passionate about achieving that vision, leaders add an inspirational and emotional dimension to the organisation. He believes that leaders have a long-term perspective and make strategies to achieve organisational ideals. On the other hand, managers are responsible for coming up with and implementing plans and budgets to effectively realise strategic goals of the organisation.

Leaders	Management
Initiate change	Implement change
Develop	Maintain
Inspire people	Monitor people
Do the right thing	Do things right
Assume a long-term perspective	Act reactively
Connect with people	Preserve authority

**Table 2.2: Differences between leadership and management**

According to Werner (2008; 289), leadership and management overlap. Leaders should be able to manage and managers should be able to lead. Landsberg (2000; 112) cited in Werner (2008; 289) believes that an effective leader creates a stronger vision and is often an inspiration, while a manager that is effective creates momentum as opposed to inspiration, implements change, and depends on positional influence. Robbins *et al* (2003; 242) suggests that organisations need strong leadership and strong management for optimum effectiveness.

**c. Leadership theories**



Many leadership theories have been established by various researchers. According to Northouse (2015; 84), McGregor proposed two general leadership theories, Theory X and Theory Y, to explain how management approaches workers. According to McGregor, by exploring the biggest assumptions of each of these theories, human beings will come to a heightened understanding of human behaviour as well as the link of their viewpoints to their evinced leadership styles.

<b>McGregor's Theory X</b>	<b>McGregor's Theory Y</b>
People dislike work	People like work
People need to be directed and controlled	People are self-motivated
People want security, not responsibility	People accept and seek responsibility

**Table 2.3: Assumption of McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y. Northouse (2015; 84)**

McGregor believed that there is a need for managers to understand their main assumptions about human nature and assess how these affect their managerial practice.

**d. Factors influencing leadership**

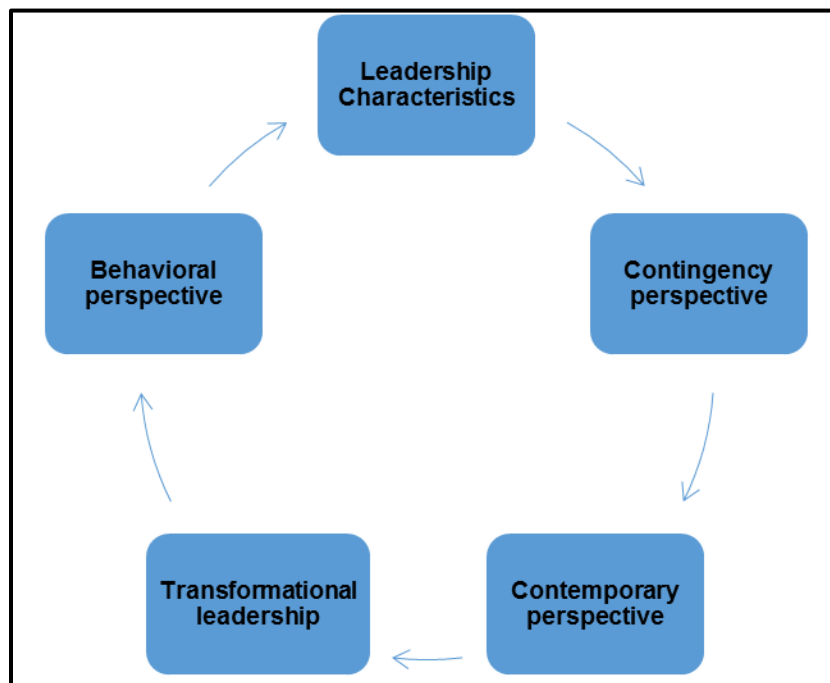
According to De Vries (2005; 15) cited in Werner (2011; 289) the following are some of the factors which influence leadership: -

- i. Leader's personality
- ii. Leader's position and experience
- iii. Follower's values, attitudes and beliefs
- iv. The cohesion existing in a group
- v. Nature of the task
- vi. Industry factors
- vii. Corporate culture and;
- viii. Socio-economic-political situation.

**e. Leadership perspectives**

Werner (2007; 289), asserts that over the years, different leadership perspectives have developed and within these perspectives a number of theories or models have developed.

For the purposes of this study, in order to get a better understanding of the leadership concept, it is imperative to review the perspectives from which different theories emanate. De Vries (2005; 15) cited in Werner (2011; 289) argues that leadership models vary, from perceiving leadership as consisting of personal and behavioural characteristics (trait theories), to a process in which a leader attempts to influence the members of a group (process theories), to a product of environmental constraints (situational theories). **Figure 2.2** below depicts the **perspectives of leadership** as pointed out by Werner (2007; 290).



**Figure 2.2: Leadership Characteristics from the trait perspective to principle-centred leadership**

The assumptions in respect of the trait perspectives, developed by early academics, was that leaders were born and not made. However, this approach fell into disfavour when two studies, conducted by Stogdill in 1948 and Mann in 1959, failed to find strong correlations between traits and leadership, Kreitner *et al* (1999; 475) cited in Werner (2007; 290). Stogdill identified five traits which differentiated leaders from average followers, namely; intelligence, dominance, self-confidence, level of energy and activity, and task-relevant knowledge. In more recent studies, greater emphasis is placed on boarder competencies than on personal and physical traits. According to Champoux

(2006; 279) cited in Werner (2007; 290), recent literature has identified the following seven competencies as characteristics of leaders: drive, leadership motivation, integrity, self-confidence, intelligence, knowledge of business, and emotional intelligence.

Werner (2007; 290-291) suggests that the contemporary approach to leadership proposes a style that is principle-centred rather than being personality-based leadership. Principle-centred leaders possess and promote good basic values such as honesty, integrity, openness, compassion, humanity, equality, trust, recognition, participation and empowerment. Less emphasis is put on personality traits and more on underlying values and the attitudes of the leader.

#### **f. The behavioural leadership perspective**

Most research within the leadership sphere had changed by 1950, from focusing on the traits of leaders to their behaviour. The behavioural leadership theory tries to detect differences in the behaviour of effective leaders as opposed to ineffective leaders. An essential factor to note is that cultural differences may influence the way in which the leader's behaviour is perceived, Werner (2007; 291).

#### **g. The Contingency leadership perspectives**

Werner (2007; 293), suggests that both the behavioural leadership perspectives and traits were attempts to identify one example of leadership and leadership behaviour. Yet, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century it became obvious that no one leadership style fitted all circumstances and the managers needed to adapt their style to keep up with the demands of the situation. As a result this gave rise to the contingency theories of leadership. Contingency means "it depends on the situation". The effective leadership is the result of a fit between a leader, the followers and the situation. A variety of contingency theories have since been developed, amongst others are; Fiedler's contingency leadership mode, the path-goal leadership theory and Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership theory.

#### **h. Transformational leadership**

A new paradigm in leadership theory is presented by Transformational leadership because it illustrates the critical role that is played in creating an adaptive organisation by

dynamic leaders. An adaptive organisation expects that changes within its environment are inevitable and readies itself to respond when it happens or even before it happens. A transformational leader is a visionary who paints a future that inspires total commitment and acceptance of the necessary change by the followers, Werner (2007; 298). Champoux (2006) cited in Werner (2007; 298) suggests that a transformational leader puts emphasis on his or her charisma, personalised consideration and intellectual stimulation of their followers. Due to the leader's charisma, it is easy for the followers to grow the trust and confidence in the leader and want to associate with their vision.

More literature will be explored around transformational leadership when leadership styles are look into.

### **i. Contemporary leadership perspectives**

According to Kreitner and Kinicki (2001; 571-577) cited in Werner (2007; 300) there are four other contemporary perspectives on leadership, namely:

- i. There is *the leader-member exchange model of leadership* emphasising the quality of the relationships between the leader and their followers.
- ii. There is the *substitutes for leadership* model suggesting that there are a number of situations or variables that can substitute for, neutralise or enhance the effect of leadership. It contests the perception that leadership is always a necessity.
- iii. *Servant-leadership* which as a philosophy focuses on increased service to others rather than to oneself and, as a result, followers become wiser, healthier and more autonomous and even become servant leaders themselves.

## **2.3. EMPLOYEE WORK ETHICS**

As put forward by Steiner (1971) cited in Reiss and Mitra (1998; 1581), ethical behaviour in organisations is conduct that is fair and just. The issue of employee work ethics remains a major challenge faced by different governments in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This is confirmed by the assertion of Moorhead and Griffin (2010; 42) when indicating that an epidemic of

ethical breaches in recent years has placed ethics in the mainstream of managerial thought to date.

McShane and Glinow (2005; 54) identifies four ethical principles namely: -

- a. **Utilitarianism** - advises us to seek greater good for the greatest number of people.
- b. **Individual rights** – allows everyone entitlement to certain behaviours by right, e.g., right to freedom of speech.
- c. **Distributive justice** - equal treatment for people of similar or equal level, and lastly,
- d. **Care** -morally or ethically correct actions are the ones which express care.

Joshua Josephs (2000) argued that the view of what is acceptable or unacceptable behaviour can be influenced by what people see their organisational leaders, managers, and co-workers do on the job. Roth (2005; 58) suggests that philosophy, ethics and religion are inseparable and that none of them can be modified without sending shockwaves that influences another.

### **2.3.1. Perception of management about employee work ethics**

According to Certo, Samuel & Certo Trevis (2006; 68), Managers strive to promote ethics in order to gain a competitive advantage in their businesses though projecting an ethical image to consumers and employees. Management always seeks to ensure that employees exhibit ethical behaviour towards customers.

Whilst management would generally expect their subordinates to perform in an ethical manner, the reality is that subordinates encompass the attributes they observe from their bosses. If the employees perceive their manager to be accessible gives constant feedback and is perceived to be a problem-solver, they are likely to follow the leaders' example.

### **2.3.2. Employee work ethics in the public sector**

It is an increasing view within the public domain that government and municipal employees do not offer service that is at the required level. The Batho Pele principles were introduced as one of the mechanisms to address this growing public concern. Although some impact on the behaviour of public employees has been made, complaints still exist within the different departments and Municipalities.

Mafunisa (2000; 5) indicates that role models are one of the factors amongst various contributing factors that lead to unethical behaviour. Mafunisa (2000; 5) attributes the unethical conduct that exists in South Africa to political and public service leadership and stresses the importance of superordinate public officials to exhibit exemplary values and, as a result, give concrete role models for subordinates to follow. Superordinate public officials show their subordinates the right (model) way of behaviour in the workplace. Mafunisa (2000; 5) identifies amongst other things the following as unethical behaviour:-

- a. **The protection and or covering up of incompetence:** According to Parum (2005), it is important for any organisation to have clear procedures, well defined roles and responsibilities on how decisions are made in exercising power. In addition, organisations must have transparency and openness (Parum, 2005).
- b. Lack of responsiveness to the needs of clients.
- c. Tardiness in the discharge of assigned and accepted duties.
- d. Unauthorised disclosure of confidential information.
- e. Nepotism.
- f. Bribery.
- g. Fraud.
- h. Theft and misuse of public property.
- i. Victimisation and sexual harassment.

Mafunisa (2000; 5) concludes that this results not only in a waste of public resources – such as public funds and equipment – but also undermines public trust in the service delivered.

There are two codes of conduct generally applicable in the workplace, namely the Phantom code of ethics and the Formal codes of ethics.

a. **Phantom codes of ethics**

A 'phantom code of ethics' refers to the exemplifying of ethical behaviour by superordinate public officials. According to Mafunisa (2000; 25-27), the code is unwritten merely due to the fact it is unlegislated. The primary influencers of ethical conduct in the public sector

are leaders. Mafunisa emphasises that leaders, both formal and informal, are seen as being responsible for the ethical standards that administer the behaviour of subordinates in the public service. They set the moral tone and are personally responsible for the set of ethics or norms that govern behaviour. Public service policies about punctuality and commitment to a high work ethic don't inspire anyone and are nothing but words, if superordinate public officials don't evince them in their daily actions.

#### **b. Formal codes of ethics**

Chapman (1993:18) cited in Mafunisa (2000; 27) defines a (formal) code of conduct as a statement of principles and standards that society, organisations and government may create in order to hold transgressors accountable. A code of ethics is defined as an assembly of institutional guidelines used in reducing ethical vagueness in organisations and serve as a way of reinforcing ethical conduct, Dutelle (2011; 41). In order to give practical context to relevant provisions of the constitution that speak to public service, the code of conduct for Public Service (*Chapter 2 of the Public Service Regulation* (No. R.697 of 1999)) was drafted to be a guideline for public servants to make them aware of what is ethically expected of them from an ethical viewpoint. It can be argued that by adopting a code of ethics enhances the development of ethics and accountability of public officials. Mafunisa (2000; 28 -29) posits this as the reason why public officials endeavours to perform their duties effectively so as not to contravene the code of conduct and face disciplinary action that may lead to punishment. Empirical studies show that codes of conduct help to enhance an organisations' reputation, it also improves the working climate within it and improves its performance (Kaptein & Schwartz, 2008). At the same time, the rules of conduct will attempt to prevent unethical and illegal behaviour, making employees' behaviour more predictable Pepescu (2016; 127).

#### **2.4. Leadership Styles**

Northouse (2015; 89) states that the primary work on leadership styles, analysing the impact on the various leadership styles on small groups was carried out by Lewin, Lippitt and White (1939). For the purposes of this study, we shall be looking at transactional,

transformational and laissez – faire leadership style amongst a variety of existing leadership styles.

#### **2.4.1. Transactional Leadership Style**

As iterated by Northouse (2003; 186), Burns gave a distinction between two leadership types, namely transformational and transactional leadership. Transactional leadership talk about the greater body of leadership models, which focus on the multitudes of exchanges that occur between leaders and their followers. It can be observed from all the levels in different types of organisations that the exchange dimension of transactional leaders is shared amongst employee. An example can be made in the case of managers who promote employees that surpass set goals as exhibiting transactional leadership. Another example is that of politicians who promises “no new taxes” in order to win votes.

According to Kanungo & Mendonca (1996; 55) there are serious ethical and moral implications to the followers where its influence fails. Followers start to experience a loss of dignity, meaning and comradely within an organisational context, which is much desired for any growth to occur. As highlighted by Brewster (2008; 58) the transactional leadership method survives only as long as the needs of both leader and follower are fulfilled by the continuing exchange process. Brewster argues that since there is no binding relationship between the leader and the follower and their needs and goals are not aligned it may be found to be counterproductive.

Transactional leadership is based on the traditional, bureaucratic authority and legitimacy where followers receive certain valued outcomes when they act according to the followers’ wishes, Mester *et al* (2003; 73).

#### **2.4.2. Transformational Leadership Style**

##### **a. Definition**

According to Northouse (2003; 186), the term *Transformational leadership* was first coined by Downtown (1973). It emerged as an important approach to leadership, it began with the classic work conducted by political sociologist James MacGregor Burns titled *Leadership* (1978). Transformational leadership is the process whereby a person gets



involved with others and builds a association that increases the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower. Gary (2005; 249) believes that transformational leadership appeals to the moral values of followers in an attempt to raise their consciousness about ethical issues and to mobilise their energy and resources to reform institutions.

#### **b. Relationship between transformational leadership and followers**

In relation to employee or followers' behaviour, Armstrong (2012; 14) believed that transformational leaders, by the force of their personalities are able to influence and create changes in the behaviour of their followers, in order to achieve the leaders' vision. Yulk Gary. A (2005; 262) finds that with transformational leadership, the followers feel trust, admiration, loyalty, and demonstrate respect towards the leader, and they are motivated to do perform way above the industry standard. According to Bass, the leader transforms and motivates followers by (1) making them more aware of the importance of task outcomes. (2) Inducing them to transcend their own self-interest for the sake of the organisation or team, and (3) activating their higher order needs.

Williams (2013; 430) finds that transformational leaders are able to make their followers feel that they are a critical part of the organisation and help them realise how their jobs fit with the organization's vision. In transformational leadership the leader creates a vision, and communicates it in such a convincing way that followers personally identify with the vision and pursue it as a personal goal, Werner *et al* (2003; 194). Ethics touch on leadership at various junctures. For instance, transformational leaders have been described by one authority as fostering moral virtue, when they attempted to change the attitudes and behaviours of followers. Robbins *et al* (2003; 255).

#### **c. Behavioural Components of transformational leadership**

Brewster *et al* (2008; 58) cited by Bass as quoted by Steers, Porter, and Bigley, suggesting that transformational leadership consists of **four behavioural components** namely:

- i. **Charisma**, where leaders evoke strong emotions in their followers.

- ii. **Inspiration**, where followers are sold an appealing vision by the leader.
- iii. **Intellectual stimulation**, which encourages creative thinking by the followers towards problem solving.
- iv. **Individual consideration**, where a leader provides accolades to individual contribution, such as giving appreciation where an individual excelled.

**d. Guidelines for Transformational leadership and effectiveness**

According to Gary (2005; 274) although much remains to be learnt about transformational leadership, the conjunction in the findings from the differing kinds of research form some tentative guidelines (see below) for leaders who intend to inspire followers and improve their self-confidence and commitment to a mission.

- i. Articulate a clear and appealing vision.
- ii. Explain how the vision can be attained.
- iii. Act confident and optimistic.
- iv. Express confidence in followers.
- v. Use dramatic, symbolic action to emphasise key values.
- vi. Lead by example.

As substantiated by Bass (1996, 1997) cited in Gary (2005; 264), transformational leadership is regarded effective in any circumstance or culture. Bass asserts that the theory does not stipulate any circumstances under which transformational leadership will be seen to be irrelevant or ineffective. The positive relationship between transformational leadership and organisational effectiveness has been replicated by many leaders at different levels of authority, in different types of organisations, and in several different countries. Transformational leaders act and do things that will enrich followers and make them less dependent on the leader. These are things such as delegating significant authority to subordinates, extending opportunities for skills development and self-confidence, enabling self-managed teams, providing access to necessary and sometimes sensitive information, removing unnecessary controls, and inculcating corporate culture that supports empowerment.

Transformational leadership is not limited to evaluation of individual follower's moralities, but also the creation of mutual trust and an ethically driven climate in the organisation. (Engelbrecht & Chamberlain, 2005; Van Aswegen & Engelbrecht, 2009) cited in Engelbrecht, Heiner & Mahembe (2014; 2). Tims *et al.* 2011 found a positive relationship between transformational leadership and the follower's engagement with their ( $t = 0.2.33$ ;  $p$  is less than 0.01), Engelbrecht A.S *et al* (2014; 2).

### **2.4.3. Laissez-faire leadership style**

Antonakis and Day (2012; 268-269) suggests that laissez-faire leaders avoid taking positions or making decisions and usually abdicate authority to subordinates. In concurring with Antonakis Den hartog *et al* (1997) cited in Hood (2003; 265) describe leaders employing the laissez-faire style leadership as not involved, aloof, and avoiding decision making or any other unpleasant supervisory responsibilities. Judge & Piccolo, (2004) cited in Antonakis and Day (2012; 268-269) suggest that transformational leadership correlates positively with leaders' outcomes while on the side of the spectrum, laissez - faire leadership correlates negatively with intended outcomes.

Northouse (2015; 92) suggests that the laissez-faire leadership style primarily produces negative outcomes. Northouse believes that the major contributing factor is that very little is accomplished under a laissez-faire leader style. Due to the fact that people are directionless and without the appropriate guidance, they tend not do anything. In these situations of complete freedom lead to an atmosphere that is chaotic for subordinates. Northouse (2015) states that in such situations, subordinates are frustrated when left to their own devices. They always need some direction provided to them. Without some sense of direction from the leader, group members struggle to find purpose and meaning in their work. Their productivity is negatively affected as they turn to be demotivated and demoralised.

## **2.5. Ethical Leadership**

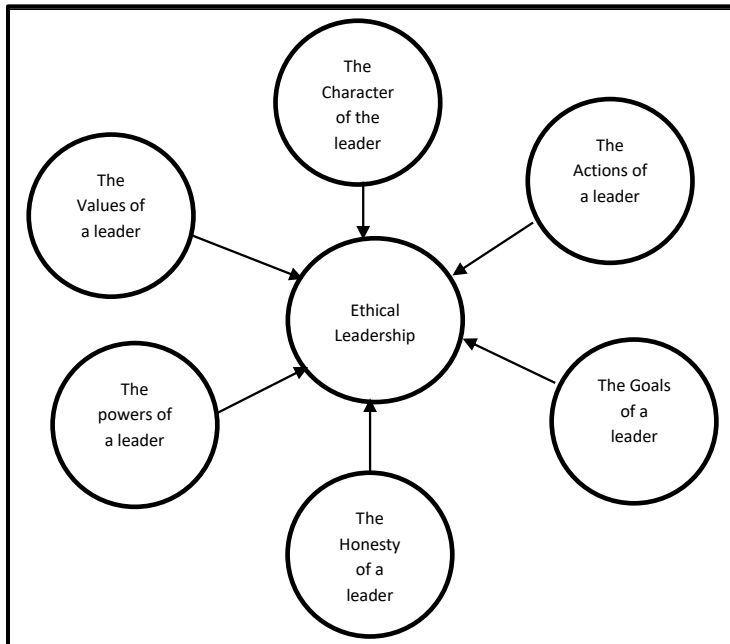
### **a. Definition of ethical leadership**

Ethical leadership is defined as the influence of a moral person who shifts others to do the right thing in the right way for the right reasons, Ciulla (2003) cited in Northouse (2015;

262). According to Engelbrecht *et al* (2014; 2) ethical leadership is a leadership style which is value based and it involves swaying the followers' self-concepts and beliefs, which as a result impacts their motivation, attitude and behaviour. Ethical leadership is crucial to the credibility of leaders as well as their potential to apply meaningful influence (Piccolo, Greenbaum, Den Hartog & Folger, 2010) cited in Engelbrecht *et al* (2014; 2).

Whilst there is growing interest in ethical leadership, there are substantial disagreements, the suitable method to draw a conclusion was to define and assess it, Gary (2005; 418). However, according to Northouse (2015; 262) there are six factors (see figure 2.5.1) which he holds a belief that they are critical to leaders when attempting to exercise ethical leadership.

**b. Factors related to ethical leadership**



**Figure 2.3: Factors Related to Ethical leadership. Northouse (2015; 262)**

Ethical leadership produces valuable outcomes. It has positive impact on organisational efficacy by increasing the effectiveness of management, increased follower performance and heightened job satisfaction, Eisenbei & Giessber (2012) cited in Engelbrecht *et al* (2014; 2). Engelbrecht suggests that since there is a direct correlation between

relationships in the organisations and organisational outcomes as affected by ethical leadership, this type of leadership has the likelihood to positively affect the work outcomes and involvement employees, Engelbrecht *et al* (2-14; 2).

**c. Aspects of ethical leadership**

Gary (2005; 424 – 425) suggests a difference between doing things to encourage and promote ethical practices and doing things to oppose unethical activities or decisions (see Table 2. below). These approaches are not mutually exclusive and can be together.

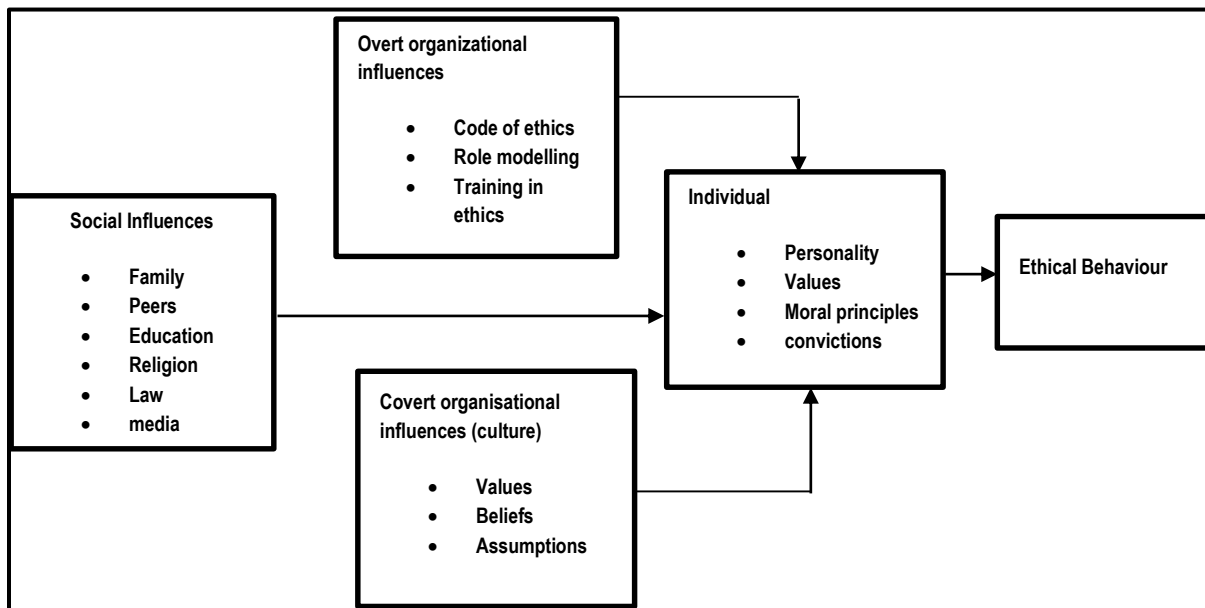
<b>Two aspects of Ethical leadership</b>
<p><b>Promoting an ethical Climate</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Set an example of ethical behaviour in your own actions.</li> <li>b. Facilitate the development and dissemination of a code of ethical conduct.</li> <li>c. Initiate discussions with followers or colleagues about ethics and integrity.</li> <li>d. Recognise and reward ethical behaviour by others.</li> <li>e. Take personal risks to advocate moral solutions to conflicts.</li> <li>f. Help others find fair and ethical solutions to conflicts.</li> <li>g. Initiate support services (e.g., ethics hotline, online advisory group).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opposing Unethical Practices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Refuse to share in the benefits provided by unethical activities.</li> <li>b. Refuse to accept assignments that involve unethical activities.</li> <li>c. Try to discourage unethical actions by others.</li> <li>d. Speak out publicly against unethical or unfair policies in the organisation.</li> <li>e. Oppose unethical decisions and seek to get them reversed.</li> <li>f. Inform proper authorities about dangerous products or harmful practices.</li> <li>g. Provide assistance to others who oppose unethical decisions or practices.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.4: Two aspects of Ethical Leadership, Gary Y (2005; 425)**

## 2.6. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEE WORK ETHICS AND LEADERSHIP

Gary (2005; 417) suggests that influencing followers is the essence of leadership, alleging that powerful leaders have considerable impact on the lives of followers and the future of their organisation.

Werner *et al* (2003; 30) identifies a number of factors that influence ethical conduct (see Figure 2.4 below) and further argues that an individual enter an organisation with their own unique values and beliefs that will invariably be continuously shaped and reinforced through socialisation and interaction. Upon entry into an organisation a person will encounter overt and covert hints that serve as boundaries and guidelines for daily ethical conduct and decision making. It is therefore important for organisations to pay attention to the ethical socialisation of its employees if they are serious about establishing a healthy ethical culture in their environment.



**Figure 2.4: Factors influencing ethical conduct in the workplace<sup>2</sup>**

As correctly illustrated by Werner in the diagram above, role models that exhibit appropriate ethical behaviour are one of the factors that influence employee ethical

<sup>2</sup> Ethical conduct in the workplace, Werner *et al* (2003; 30)

behaviour in an organisation. This is why Dutelle (2011; 41) goes on to define an organisation's code of ethics as an assembly of institutional guidelines to be used to reduce ethical vagueness in an organisation and serve as a means of reinforcing ethical conduct amongst employees.

In South Africa the code of ethics for employees of the public sector is set out as the Batho Pele principles which are displayed at all government workplaces and service delivery places. There are various training seminars conducted on customer services, to clearly define the kind of conduct expected from public servants. In light of the covert factors influencing behaviour in the workplace according to Werner et al, it is arguable that within the South African context, two (the creation of a code of conduct and Training clinics in ethics) of such factors are in practice. Therefore, a conclusion can be made that the on-going challenges around the unethical conducted exhibited by public service employees can be attributed to the lack of appropriate role models in the leadership within the public sector.

In accordance with the old saying, action speaks louder than words, the only way a leader can influence a subordinate and ensure commitment is by setting an example of exemplary behaviour in daily interactions with subordinates. Leading by example is sometimes called role modelling. Gary (2005; 276-277) suggests that a manager who asks subordinates to observe a particular standard should observe the same standard.

## **2.7 Challenges encountered in enforcing code of ethics in local government**

Maharaj (2009) mentions that corporate governance should be better regulated in order to ensure its importance. In addition, corporate governance should be a fundamental part of management and not just a tick box exercise. Kumar and Singh (2013) point out that good governance is good management and that a failure in good governance means a failure in management. There has been admittance from the regulators that they did not understand the complicated financial instruments that ultimately caused the downfall of the financial system (Applied-Corporate-Governance, 2015). It became a futile task to construct new regulations in order to control situations that was yet to emerge.

The significance of corporate governance in the financial markets was not just topical. The solution to poor governance was global and any system of regulation necessitates the right balance between encouraging innovation and customer choice and an obligatory set of minimum standards (Rose-Ackerman, 2006). Essentially corporate culture should be changed and that provision should be made for incentives to beyond these minimum standards. It has been established that the regulatory problem, has resulted in individual inventing more and more complicated systems to circumvent detection (Applied Corporate-Governance, 2015).



The Board and the Social and Ethics committee should endeavour to make sure that the organisation is and is seen to be a responsible corporate citizen. This must be done by having regard to not only the financial position of the organisation but also the impact that the business operations have on the environment and the society within which it operates. It is the responsibility of the board to ensure that the organisations ethics are managed effectively. The board or executive should also create an ethical corporate culture and make sure that the organisation's ethics are effectively managed by; incorporating ethical risks and opportunities into the risk management process; create an ethics policy and train all staff members accordingly; as well as monitoring and reporting on the company's ethics performance (Rose, 2006).

## **2.8 Empirical studies on ethical conduct in local government**

There must be a strong corporate governance to manage the unethical issues and activities. When a bribe is accepted it creates a conflict of interest between the person that receives the bribe and his or her organisation. Hence, this conflict results in unethical practices. Coercionist is forcing a person to do things which are against his personal believes, for example blocking a promotion, loss of job or blackmailing (Palmer,2010).

Insider trading is misuse of official position which means that an employee leaks out certain confidential data to those who are external to the organisation or other insiders which in turn effects the reputation and performance of the company (Nganga, 2012). Conflict of interest is when private interests are more important to the employees which are against the desire of the employer. Unfair treatment or given privileges to persons on the base of race, age, sex, nationality or religion is a failure to treat all persons equally. (Piercy and Lane,2007).

Gifts donations or contribution to political leaders or parties to obtain any unconditional act done for example the sanctioning of any special contract, issue of licenses, etc. is a concern of business ethics (Thompson,2009). Presentation of false returns of income and statements (prepare false income returns and statements of accounts for evasion of tax) and getting various government benefits and incentives is another concern of business ethics. The accumulation of profits by illegal means is another concern in that sometimes business undertakes various unethical and unconstitutional activities to maximize its profits for example hoarding of goods, black marketing, speculation, etc (Trapp, 2011).

A characteristic of an ethical organisation is that it is based on the principle of fairness and that all stakeholders are treated equally without any discrimination. In addition, the benefit of stakeholders is given precedence over their own interest and there communication is clear in an ethical organisation (Trapp, 2011). Hence, what is to be done, how it is to be done is clearly stated.

Pressure to meet unrealistic objectives and deadlines. According to a recent survey, the pressure from management or from the board to meet unrealistic business objectives is the leading factor that causes unethical behaviour (Thompson,2009). Competition is on the increase globally and every business aims to be the highest profit maker. To achieve this goal, organisation/individuals are urged to act dishonestly and unethically. People have a desire to live a life full of comforts and luxuries and hence certain individuals follow unethical ways to earn more money. Personal financial concerns become a cause for unethical behaviour such as accepting a bribe. The information given by media provides ideas to inexperienced businessman for doing unethical activities (Thompson,2009).

Pressure to earn profit in that shareholders expect larger returns. Employees hope for higher salary and benefits, while directors expect higher remuneration (Stuebs, Wilkinson, and Arnold, 2012). Hence, there is an increasing pressure to maximize profit to cope with enlarged requirements. The lack of management support or poor leadership is another cause of unethical conduct in the organisation. The leader is responsible to motivate his or her employees. If the leader does not encourage the subordinates to be ethical then there are higher chances of unethical conduct. In addition, if the leader himself is involved in unethical activities, the employees may do the same (Silver, 2015).

## **2.9 CONCLUSION**

This Chapter reviewed literature on ethics and leadership. It looked into the different leadership styles and how they influence follower/employees' behaviour. The fundamental differences between leadership and management, ethics and morals were explored, in addition to the concept of ethical leadership that was examined. Chapter 2 demonstrated how leadership specifically impacts the ethical conduct of employees, which is central to customer-business perception and loyalty. In 3, the research methodology will be outlined.

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### 3.8 INTRODUCTION

This Chapter presents how the study is to be conducted. It explores both the design and methodology used in this study to establish the impact of leadership on front line employee's ethical behaviour in the public sector using eThekweni Municipality: libraries and heritage unit as a case study. It outlines the target population, explores different sampling techniques and identifies the sample population of this study. It further identifies the target population, sample population and explores the various types of sampling techniques. It further explains what research instrument is used in this study and how it is to be administered. Chapter 3 concludes with a discussion of data analysis techniques, limitations of the study and the ethical considerations.

### 3.9 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is defined by Welman *et al* (2005; 52) as the plan according to which research participants are obtained and collect information from them. In it a description of what will be covered with the participants, with a view to reaching conclusions about the research problem. According to Bhattacharyya (2006; 40) Research design is in fact the conceptual structure within which the research is conducted.

Three types of research design will be discussed namely: exploratory, descriptive and casual research studies.

#### 3.9.1 Exploratory Studies

In line with the view of Bhattacharyya (2006; 40) exploratory studies are carried out to 'explore' a subject. Their main objective is to help to define a research problem and generate a set of hypotheses, or research questions which could be worked upon at a later stage. He further suggests that in such studies, the sample size is smaller, non-probability sampling designs are used, data requirements are vague, the objective is general rather than specific and no definite recommendations are made as a result of the analysis.

### **3.9.2 Descriptive Studies**

Adams & Lawrence (2015; 104) suggest that descriptive research can be used to provide a quick snap shot of the prevalence of a phenomenon and they believe that it helps to understand the trends in behaviours and attitudes. According to Bhattacharyya (2006; 41), with regards to research designs in the case of descriptive studies, the data collected may relate to the demographic or behavioural variables of the respondents under study, the research has a very specific objective, clear cut data requirements and uses a large sample, which is drawn through a probability sampling design and the recommendations/ findings in a descriptive research are definite.

### **3.9.3 Casual Research Studies**

Cooper & Schindler (2003:165) explain that the purpose of causal studies is to investigate the dependency between two variables, by analysing how a change in one variable is responsible for the change in another variable. According to Bhattacharyya (2006; 41) causal studies (also known as experimental studies) are used to provide a stronger basis for the existence of causal relationships between variables. The researcher is able to control the influence of one or more extraneous variables on the dependant variable

The research design used in this study was the descriptive study, as the study is aimed at identifying the impact that the varying leadership styles have on employee's work ethic, in the public sector using eThekweni municipality; libraries and heritage unit as a case study. The data required relates to the behavioural attributes of both leaders and front-line employees.

## **3.10 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

According to Bhattacharyya (2006; 17) Research Methodology is a scientific and systematic way to solve research problems. He argues that a researcher has to design his methodology and apply it as well. Welmen *at al.* (2005; 6) identifies two main approaches to research namely: the positivist and anti-positivist also known as quantitative and qualitative research approach respectively.

### **3.10.1 Positivist (quantitative) research**

Positivist research is generally quantitative and involves the use of numerical measurement and statistical analyses of measurements to examine social phenomena. It views reality as consisting of phenomena that can be observed and measured. According to Welman (2005; 6) the positivist approach underlies the natural-scientific method in human behavioural research. Welman (2005) finds that the advantages of this quantitative approach are that it places a high value on objectivity and the reliability of findings and encourages replication. Applied to social sciences and business research, positivism may not always be appropriate, as all social phenomena cannot be accurately and reliably measured, thus reducing the validity of the findings.

### **3.10.2 Anti-positivist (Qualitative) research**

Welman (2005;6) finds that the anti-positivist approach to research also known as the phenomenological or qualitative approach displays a resistance to norms in human behavioural research. According to Bryman & Bell, 2007:17-18) the phenomenological approach argues that social sciences are distinct from natural sciences, and requires an understanding of human behaviour, rather than an explanation of human behaviour which is the foundation of positivism.

Quantitative research methodology with a questionnaire shall be used to collect data from both front-line employees and District Managers of the municipal (eThekweni) libraries and heritage unit. The questionnaire will help generate data freely from concerned groups without the fear of identification, noting the fact that I am a part of the human resources team servicing them.

## **3.11 TARGET POPULATION**

A population refers to a set of items or identical objects from which a sample is drawn. Saunders *et al.* (2009:212) state that “the full set of cases from which a sample is taken is called the population”. Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006:133) describe a population as a larger pool of elements from which sampling elements are drawn, and that in turn a sample is made up of units or elements chosen for study. As Defined by Gay and Airasian

(2011:121), a population is a group of interest to the researcher, the group to which the researcher would like the results of the study to be generalised from. For the purposes of this study, the target population was mainly the 2 300 eThekweni Municipality front line employees.

### **3.12 SAMPLE POPULATION**

Sekaran (2003:266) defines a sample as a subset of the population that comprises of some members selected from it (population) where some, but not all elements of the population would form the sample. Sekaran (2003:266) further clarifies that a subject is a single member of the sample, just as an element is a single member of the population. A sample population shall be a group extracted from the total population, for the purposes of conducting this research, such a group must be representative the total population for the study results to be valid. Due to the number of the population, it is not feasible to conduct research on the entire population, because of the time and resources that can be required. Therefore, a smaller number extracted from the total unit of analysis has to be used, with the results generalised across the population.

Employees in the total unit of analysis shall be listed alphabetically according to their surnames and numbered from 1 to 2300, the first number was marked (without looking) then after which every 9th number was included as part of the sample up to a total of 230 which is the sample population. The sample population (eThekweni municipality: libraries and Heritage department) is within the public sector and the conditions affecting the employees within it are similar to those affecting the entire sector, both at front line level employee and at supervisory level, thus making it representative of the entire public sector.

### **3.13 SAMPLING METHODS AND TECHNIQUES**

Bhattacharyya (2006; 81-83) states that the sample selection is undertaken for practical reasons as researching the entire population may not be feasible. By applying rationality in the selection of samples, we can generalise the findings of our research. Bhattacharyya identifies amongst others, the following as advantages of sampling:

- a. The ideal solution to know the true or actual values of the different parameters of the population would be to take into account the whole population. However, that is not feasible due to cost, time, labour and other constraints, hence sampling is more economical.
- b. Relatively very small staff force is required for gathering information, analysing the same and preparation of the report.
- c. A researcher can collect more detailed information in much less time than could otherwise be possible in a census survey. Moreover, the researcher can afford to have a few specialists for the collection of specialised information which otherwise would not be possible for a census study because of cost and non-availability of specialists

According to Saunders *et al.* (2009:151), sampling procedures fall into two broad categories of probability sampling and non-probability sampling.

### **3.13.1 Probability Sampling**

Adams & Lawrence (2015; 120) define probability sampling as any method of sampling that uses random selection in which all members in a particular population or subpopulation have an equal chance of being selected. They further suggest that probability sampling reduces bias and increases the chance that the sample will be representative.

Probability sampling methods are centred around the concept of random selection that ensures that each element of the population is given an equal chance of selection, which ensures a non-biased representative sample. Probability sampling shall be used for sampling – this method uses some form of random selection and each unit of the population has an equal probability of being selected as part of the sample. Saunders *et al.* (2009:151). Bhattacharyya (2006; 83) suggests that in probability sampling, the probability or chance of every unit in the population being included in the sample is known, whilst the selection of the specific units in the sample depends entirely on chance.



Simple random sampling stratified random sampling and cluster sampling are amongst the types of random samples which fall under probability samples.

**a. Simple random sampling**

According to Welman *et al.* (2005; 59) in simple random sampling every employee stands a chance of being part of a sample and each sample of the population size has the same probability of being chosen. Riley *et al.* (2007:77) suggests that the simple random sampling technique involves the selection of elements from a population and each element in that population has an equal chance of being selected.

**b. Stratified random sampling**

Bhattacharyya (2006; 81) suggests that stratified sampling combines the characteristics of random sampling and purposive sampling. Initially the population is defined in different numbers of strata or groups. Then from each group a certain number of items are taken on a random basis. According to Welman *et al.* (2005; 61) using this method, we can be more certain of obtaining a representable sample from a population with clearly distinguishable strata than with simple random sampling

**c. Cluster sampling**

According to Welman *et al.* in large scale surveys it is usually difficult, if not impossible, to obtain lists of all the numbers of the population, as would be required for drawing random or systematic samples. In the case of cluster sampling, we first draw pre-existing, heterogeneous groups called clusters. All the members of the selected clusters, or a simple random sample, or a stratified random sample are drawn from the clusters, which will constitute the eventual sample.

### **3.13.2 Non-Probability Sampling**

Nonprobability sampling is any method of sampling that does not rely on random selection. The bias is a very serious concern and unlike probability sampling, there is not a set sample size that can be reached that gives us confidence that a nonprobability sample will represent the population, Adams & Lawrence (2015; 127). Welman *et al.*

(2005; 67) suggest that in non-probability sampling, in some circumstances certain members of the population may have no chance at all of being included in the sample. There are two commonly identified non-probability sampling methods, namely:

**a. Convenience sampling**

Adams & Lawrence (2015; 129) define this type of sampling as the most basic, in which those who were available and willing to provide data make up the sample. Welman (2005; 70) suggests that in convenience sampling, the choice of a sample is likely to be biased, meaning that subsequent generalisations are likely to be flawed at best.

**b. Quota Sampling**

Van Zyl (2014; 103) suggests that the quota sampling selects people with the characteristics you want (such as first grade, rural children), but does not randomly select from the population a subset of such children as would occur in proportional stratified sampling. Some of the advantages cited by Bhattacharyya (2006; 97) is that this method is easier to administer, it is economical and efficient when field work is to be done quickly. However, he cautions that since it is not based on random selection, it is not possible to ascertain the accuracy being achieved.

The sample used in this study will be a probability sample (**simple random sampling**) in order to ensure that all members of the subpopulation have an equal chance of being selected.

The libraries and heritage department comprise of eleven districts within the eThekweni Municipality and all have offices in the urban areas and the suburbs with front line employees, supervisors and a district manager in each. Therefore, regardless of which district and who is selected within each district, there is a great probability that s/he is affected by the similar conditions affecting other districts.

Through the use of simple random sampling the possibility is equal that any employee selected will be a front-line employee, either servicing a library or museum in an urban area or suburb that is affected by similar conditions being experienced the entire sample population.

### **3.14 MEASURING INSTRUMENT**

A five (5) scale questionnaire with questions around employees' perceptions on the effect of a particular leadership style and ethical conduct of their supervisors and vice-versa was used for this study. Questions will be categorised using ethical and leadership variables where each will be coded from 1 -5 and highly agree, agree, not sure, disagree and highly disagree.

According to Bryman and Bell (2007:241-242) some of the advantages of a self-administered questionnaire are that employees can complete them at a convenient time and at their own pace, they are less intrusive than other forms of data collection. Furthermore, they eliminate the risk of interviewer variability which occurs when an interviewer asks questions in a different manner or different order which could result in biased answers.

The questionnaire was issued via email to all participants by the researcher. However, due to a very low response rate, the researcher went directly to the library to distribute the questionnaires. A consent letter from the deputy head of the libraries and heritage department was issued together with the questionnaire to all respondents

A spread sheet of the sample population was formulated, when questionnaires were issued, participants were asked to sign both upon receipt and collection of the questionnaire. An assurance was given about the confidentiality not only of the questionnaire but also of the spread sheet and that it is merely for administrative purposes.

Identified participants were directly visited to be informed about the research, its purpose, confidentiality matters and requested to participate. The questionnaire had a due date, however when answered fully, participants were given the contact of the researcher for collection.

### **3.15 QUESTIONNAIRE CONSTRUCTION**

Bhattacharyya (2006; 61) suggests that when information is to be collected by asking people questions who may have the desired data, a standardised form called a

questionnaire is prepared. According to Bhattacharyya (2006; 61-62), a questionnaire must serve two functions;

- a. Translate the research objectives into specific questions, and
- b. Motivate the respondent to cooperate with the survey and furnish the information correctly.

Therefore, before a questionnaire can be formulated, a specific statement of the information which is needed must be made. The complete analysis must be anticipated.

In the construction of the Questionnaire for this study, the research objectives were taken into consideration. The literature review around the different types of leadership styles, the impact of leadership on employee's behaviour and ethics gave shape and assisted to address the structured questions.

The questionnaire consisted of 25 questions grouped into five sections as detailed below:

- i. **Section A:** Biographical data - 5 questions
- ii. **Section B:** Employee work ethics - 5 questions
- iii. **Section C:** Leadership - 5 questions
- iv. **Section D:** Management Perception - 5 questions
- v. **Section E:** Influence of leadership on employee's work ethics – 5 questions

A list of questions was used for section A, for the collection of information on biographical data. A Likert style d scale of closed questions was used for sections B to E. The Likert-style rating required respondents to state how strongly they agree or disagree with a statement or a range of questions typically on a four, five or seven rating scale as maintained by Saunders *et al.* (2012:436). The Likert scale used for this survey is illustrated below:

- a. Strongly Disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neutral

- d. Agree
- e. Strongly Agree

### **3.16 DATA ANALYSIS**

Data analysis entailed a detailed analysis of the data that was gathered so as to make sense out of patterns and behaviors (Creswell, 2014). The process of data analysis embraces all activities that are done commencing from data collection to data analyses, either manually or by a computer. Data processing in quantitative studies commences with data editing, or ‘cleaning’ the data to remove bad data. The next step in data analysis would be coding of data, which entails developing a codebook, pre-testing it, coding and verifying the coded data. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 20 was used for the descriptive analysis of the questionnaire responses. Inferential statistics help to create the relationship between variables and come up with conclusions (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). Graphs and charts were used to present the data findings.

Quantitative tools for data analysis were used. According to Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006:189), in quantitative research, the first stage of data analysis is the preparatory stage which includes coding, entering and cleaning the data. The researcher coded all responses by assigning numerical values. An excel spreadsheet was used to enter the data on rows representing each set. The data was cleaned by checking the data set of errors. Data was then cleaned and processed using SPSS version 20. Descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies and percentages were computed and the results thereof presented in the form of graphs and tables. SPSS cross-tabulations tables were used to compare some variables and to answer the research questions.

### **3.17 PILOT STUDY**

A pilot study is important in empirical studies since it helps to refine a questionnaire before commencing the actual study. As posited by Saunders et al. (2012), a pilot study enhances the validity and reliability of the data that that is used to draw conclusions in a study. Data collected without a prior pilot study might be unreliable, since the questionnaire might not be aligned to the research questions. In order to avoid such

problems, a pilot study was conducted on 10 officers who did not form part of the sampled group. The exercise of pilot study checked for double barrelled questions, vague questions and loaded questions.

After a pre-test to determine the suitability of the questionnaire, the questions were improved in terms of question content, wording, sequence, form and layout, question difficulty and instructions. The main purpose of the pilot study was to assess if the instructions were clear and the language and terminology understandable. According to Saunders *et al.* (2012:451), a pilot study is used to refine the questionnaire so that respondents will not have problems answering the questions and there will be no problems in analysing the data. Saunders believed that this enables an assessment of the validity and likelihood of the reliability of the data that is to be collected.

It assists to establish the feeling participants have in respect of the questions, ensuring that the question will be comprehended by respondents and that the required data will be gathered. Furthermore, pilot studies help to address areas of concern participants might have with the questionnaire.

After the questionnaire was designed and completed, it was distributed to 23 (about 1% of the sample population) members of the sample population from different locations of the districts (suburb and urban), with different ranking levels within the libraries and heritage Unit. 18 responses were received, the majority of which were from front line employees. They all approved of the relevance and the structure of the questions. No changes were made.

### **3.18 LIMITATIONS**

The study is focused on the public sector and considering the volume of employees which could be involved, the limited of resources makes it impossible for it to be drawn from the entire population

During the handing over of the questionnaire, the researcher established that there was a belief that the employees considered that this study was instigated by management as there was a new library that was due to open and some research was readily being

conducted to ascertain new ways in which it should operate. For some reasons, there was resistance to management's research.

The researcher was able to put the participants at ease by assuring them this study was strictly for academic purposes and that the information to be obtained was not going to be furnished to management.

### **3.19 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Welman *et al* (2005; 181) asserts that ethical behaviour is important in research, as in any other field of human activity. The following are amongst other important ethical considerations for the researcher:

**a. Informed consent**

According to Adam & Lawrence (2015; 6) informed consent is an ethical standard by which potential participants are informed of the topic, procedures, risks, and benefits of participating prior to consenting to participate.

**b. Debriefing**

Clearing up any misconceptions that the participant might have and addressing any negative effects of the study. Adam & Lawrence (2015; 8)

The research instrument used to collect data for this study contained the following disclaimer;

*"I am a Masters student at the Durban University of Technology undertaking research on "the relationship between leadership and employee work ethics: eThekweni Municipality case study". It will be highly appreciated, if you can take a few minutes of your time to sincerely answer the questions contained herein. Be assured that all Information will be treated with the utmost confidence and will only be used for the purpose of this study."*

This disclaimer informed participants about the topic and the purpose of the study. It further assured them of confidentiality. When the researcher was handing the questionnaire, respondents were informed that the research is strictly for academic purposes and no information shall be disclosed to anybody or institution other than the institution under which the academic studies are pursued.

No form of incentive was used to encourage participation from respondents.

### c. Anonymity and Confidentiality

Anonymity occurs when it is impossible for anyone, including the researcher, to link a participant to his or her data, Adam & Lawrence (2015; 10). Since this study will be conducted on subordinate employees and some questions will be referring to how they view their managers' leadership style, it is very important that their personal information remains undisclosed.

The questionnaire made provision for no personal details, making it impossible to link data with any of the respondents. Furthermore, participants in the research were assured that the information they provide will not be used for any other purposes other than academic research purposes.

According to Adam & Lawrence (2015; 10) confidentiality occurs when responses and results from an individual participant are private. However, it does not imply anonymity. Confidentiality allows employees to express their honest views without fear of any form of victimisation.

The interaction between the participants and the researcher was kept strictly between them and participants' responses were treated with high confidentiality. This too was communicated to participants.

## **3.18 CONCLUSION**

This Chapter described the research design and methodology used in this study. The quantitative approach which was used for the study and it provided the basis for adopting the approach. It identified the target population, sample population and explored various types of sampling techniques. Discussions on the sampling strategy, the research instrument including its design and administration, the pilot study and data analysis that would be used to analyse the findings were included.



It further explained the research instrument used in this study and how it is to be administered. The Chapter concluded by discussing the data analysis techniques, limitations and delimitations of the study, anonymity and confidentiality and the ethical considerations. Chapter 4 provides a detailed analysis and discussion of the findings.

## **CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The findings are presented in relation to the research questions determined in chapter 1. The first research question examines the relationship between employee work ethics and leadership in public sector organisations, the second question related to the impact of leadership on employee work ethics in public sector organisations and the last question relates to establishing the perception management has in respect of employee work ethics in public sector organisations. In an addressing the three research questions this study starts off by looking at the demographic profile of the sample, thereafter each of the research questions of the study will be addressed.

### **4.2 RESPONSE RATE**

Response rate refers to the number of respondents to a research instrument. In this study a questionnaire was used. It was distributed to 230 employees and 175 responded of which 2 of them were not included due to errors, as they had multiple responses on some answers giving a response rate of seventy five percent. According to Saunders *et al.* (2012:341) a good response rate allows for data saturation, with the potential for a reliable and valid study. Since this study had an excellent response rate of seventy five percent, it was quite promising to observe that the objectives of the study would be realised.

### 4.3 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE

Demographic Variable	Measure	% Frequency
Marital Status	Married	34
	Single	66
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>
Gender	Male	32
	Female	68
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>
Age (years)	18-25	12
	26-35	38
	36-45	31
	46-55	15
	56 and above	4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>
Tenure	0-1 year	10
	1-3 years	17
	3-5years	25
	5-10 years	23
	10 or more years	25
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>
Rank	Management	15
	Employees	85
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 1.1: Descriptive statistics of demographic details of the sample (n=173)**

Data presented above on Table 1 sought to analyse the biographical information pertaining to the respondents using frequencies as a measure of expression. As reflected in the table, the total number of participants in this study was 173 (n=173). Table 4.1 shows that the largest proportion of participants were female (68%) of which 66% were single. Thirty eight percent of the respondents were between 26 and 35 years old. The number of years of service of respondents varied from 0-1 years (10%), 1-3 years (17%), 3-5 years (25%), 5-10 years 25%. Table 4 also shows that 15% of the respondents are in the management positions.

#### 4.4 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF ALL THE VARIABLES IN THE STUDY

According to Welman et al (2005; 231) descriptive statistics are concerned with the description and/ or summary of the data obtained for a group of individual units of analysis. The questionnaire has four variables, namely employee work ethics; Leadership; perceptions of ethical behaviour of employees; and the influence of leadership on employee ethics. Each of these four variables have multiple items measured using a five-point Likert scale with '1' = strongly disagree, and '5' = strongly agree. Table 4.2 outlines the statements that measure each variable. Table shows the median, mean and standard deviation values which are then expressed on relevant tables/graphs below.

	Median	Mean	Std. Deviation
Ethics 1: I have a full understanding of ethical behaviours expected of me	4	4.4277	0.55167
Ethics 2: Assisting an old person waits till I am done with eating	2	1.9595	1.053
Ethics 3: When a customer gives you an attitude it is okay to retaliate	2	1.8256	0.89432
Ethics 4: If I saw a colleague engaged in an unethical activity at work, I would report her	3	3.1561	1.16336
Ethics 5: It is okay to accept money from a public member requesting a service	1	1.3468	0.70377
<b>Leadership</b>			
Leadership 1: I am always consulted by my superiors prior to the effect of decisions relating to my job	4	3.2616	1.07395
Leadership 2: Those to whom I report are able to take decisions and communicate a clear direction forward	4	3.6012	0.94463
Leadership 3: The vision of our department is clearly communicated	4	3.7052	1.04538
Leadership 4: My supervisor inspires me to develop	4	3.3757	1.18267
Leadership 5: There is no reward/reward recognition for ethical behaviour	4	3.5376	1.07564
<b>Perception</b>			
Perception 1: If I share confidential information with my subordinates they will never share it with someone	3	2.9769	1.13072
Perception 2: My colleagues know about Batho Pele and are able to translate it to their daily activities	5	3.659	0.94278
Perception 3: Some people are naturally unethical	3	3.1919	1.06696
Perception 4: My subordinates are intolerant to unethical practices	3	3.0465	0.89713
Perception 5: Ethics are important in the service delivery process	5	4.6337	0.55105
<b>Influence</b>			
Influence 1: Employees emulate conduct from management	4	3.8372	0.96561
Influence 2: Management has no influence on the ethical conduct of staff	2	2.4682	1.03731
Influence 3: Senior Management always demonstrate ethical conduct	4	3.1908	0.98449
Influence 4: It is possible to influence someone's behaviour by doing the right thing	4	4.1908	0.71814
Influence 5: Management always makes an emphasis of the importance of ethical conduct in service delivery	4	4.0751	0.65602

**Table 4.2: Descriptive statistics of the variables of the study**

Table shows that respondents had a full understanding of ethical behaviours expected of them (mean value = 4,4277), although their ethical behaviour with respect to Ethics 2

and Ethics 3 is questionable. It is interesting to note that the item dealing with reporting unethical behaviour scored a mean value of about 3.0. Respondents strongly agreed with the notion that the vision of the department is clearly communicated (3.7052). The respondents also made it clear that there was no reward for ethical behaviour.

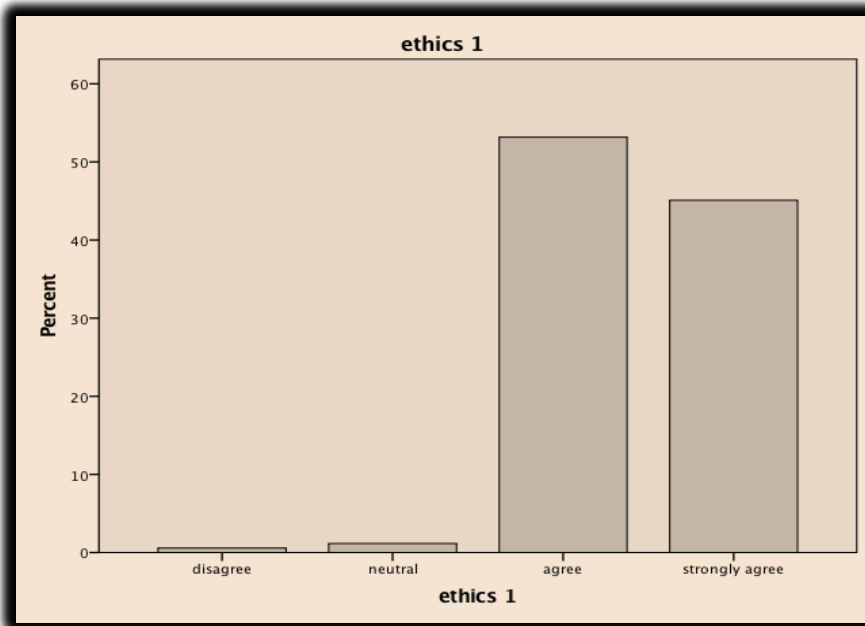
The finding above reflects that although employees had a full understanding of ethical behaviours expected of them, the manner in which they conduct themselves when dealing with the public remains questionable. According to Mafunisa (2000; 5), tardiness is viewed as being unethical, in the discharging of their assigned and accepted duties which undermines the public's trust in public service delivery. This finding is consistent with Carlson and Perrew (2005) who argue that ethical behaviour is critical to enhance organisational performance and behaviour. Eisenbein and Giessber (2012) emphasise that employees' knowledge of ethical behaviour has the potential to improve the image of the organisation as well as organisational performance in municipal organisations. Kreitner and Kinicki (2001: 577) highlight that employees' understanding of ethical conduct was of little value until leaders and or managers become fully involved in ensuring that employees speak the ethical tone of the organisation. The fact that the library and heritage frontline employees demonstrated a lack of work ethic, reduced their appetite for work and the need to assist clients, particularly the elderly. This was clear in the testimony received which was indicative of the unethical behaviour that may persist, regardless of the fact that employees are aware of the ethical standards. Regarding the perceptions to ethical behaviour the following statements had high scores:

- i. My colleagues know about Batho Pele principles
- ii. My subordinates are intolerant to unethical practices
- iii. Ethics are important in the service delivery process

These findings demonstrated that respondents feel strongly that management should always lead by example when it comes to ethical conduct. This is in line with Kennedy (1988; 14-15) cited in Mafunisa (2000; 26), where he states that It is important that superordinate public officials personify the values of the public service and, as such, provide themselves to be tangible role models for subordinate public officials to follow.

#### 4.4.1 Perception on employee's understanding of work ethic

Under this section, the focus was to ascertain how public servants assisted the community.

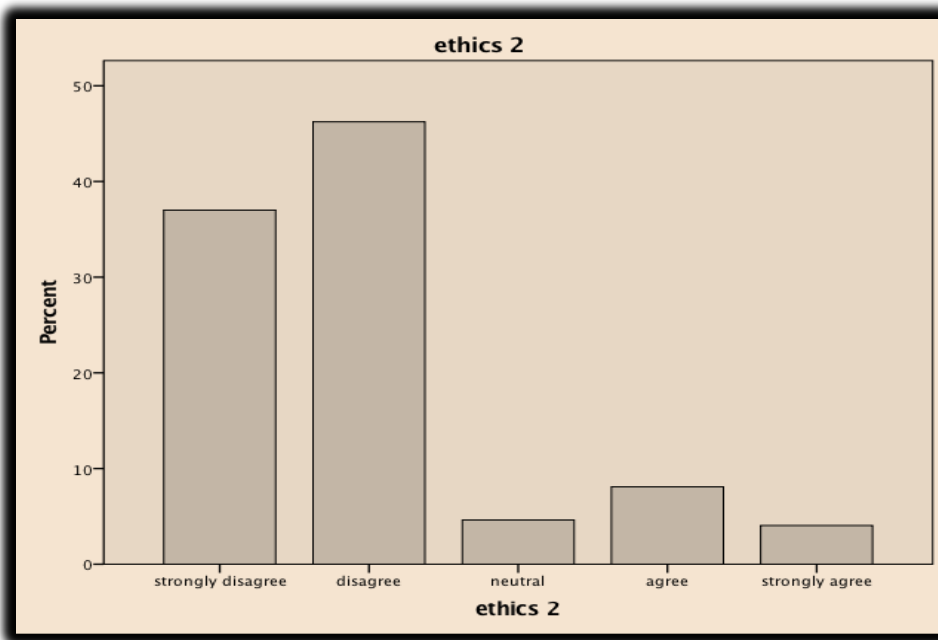


**Figure 4.1: Respondent's understanding of ethical behaviours expected of me**

Figure 4.1 sought to establish respondents view regarding the ethical behaviour expected of them by the public, in line with the Batho Pele Principle. It is clear from the data presented above that respondents generally agreed that they were aware of the expected ethical behaviour. Only an insignificant number of respondents claimed no knowledge of expected behaviours. This illustrates that the mechanisms of bringing about awareness on ethical behaviours at the library and heritage departments were quite efficient as evidenced by the visibility of Batho Pele cards/ boards in all departments.

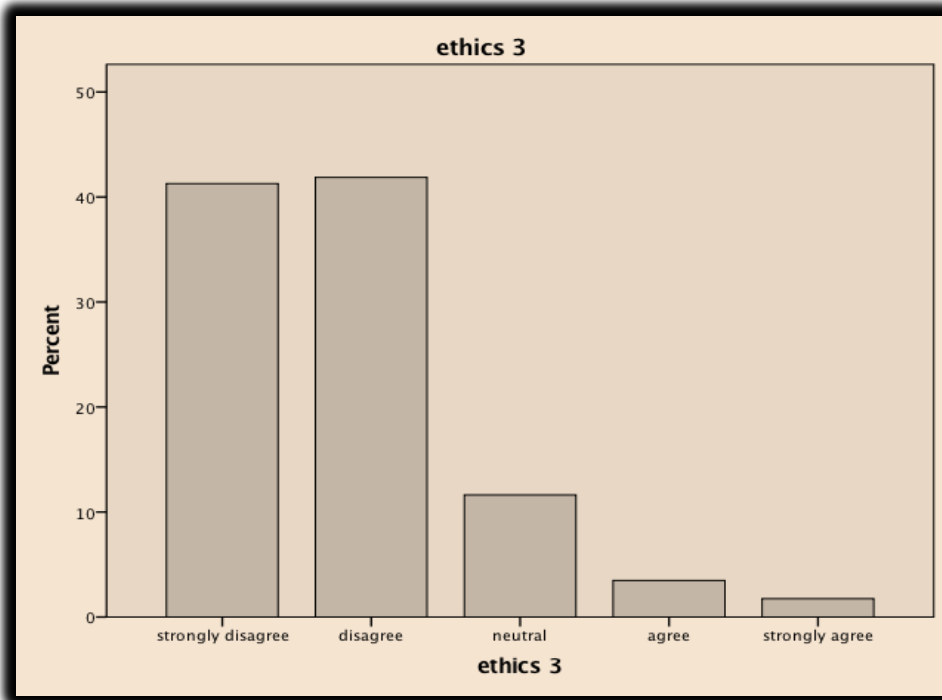
Northouse (2015: 425) posits that it has become common knowledge that public servants have a clear mind-set that their number one priority was to demonstrate ethical conduct at the highest level, as all the eyes are on them. According to Northouse (2015: 425), ethics in the public sector has become part of the prerequisites of organisational deliverables. Gary (2005; 269) also emphasises that the public organisations of the

twenty first century are required to exhibit or demonstrate high ethical values as part of its service delivery outcome.



**Figure 4.2: Assisting the old age citizens.**

Regarding assisting the old age citizens, 37% strongly disagreed whilst 47% disagreed to the statement. The other 9% agreed and three percent agreed as the remaining 4% kept neutral regarding the statement.

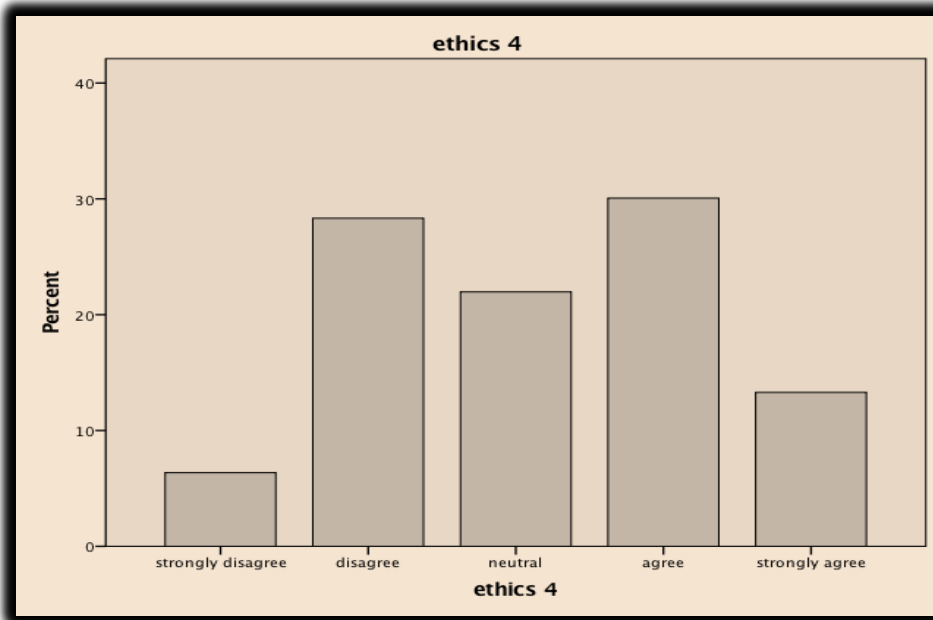


**Figure 4.3: Response to customer attitude.**

Data presented in Figure 4.2 and Figure seems to correlates with the results of Figure 4.1. It is clear that respondents were of the view that customers should be given first preference in agreement with Popescu (2016; 127).

According to Popescu (2016; 127) organisations must develop rules of conduct which prevent unethical and illegal wrongdoing on the part of the employee.





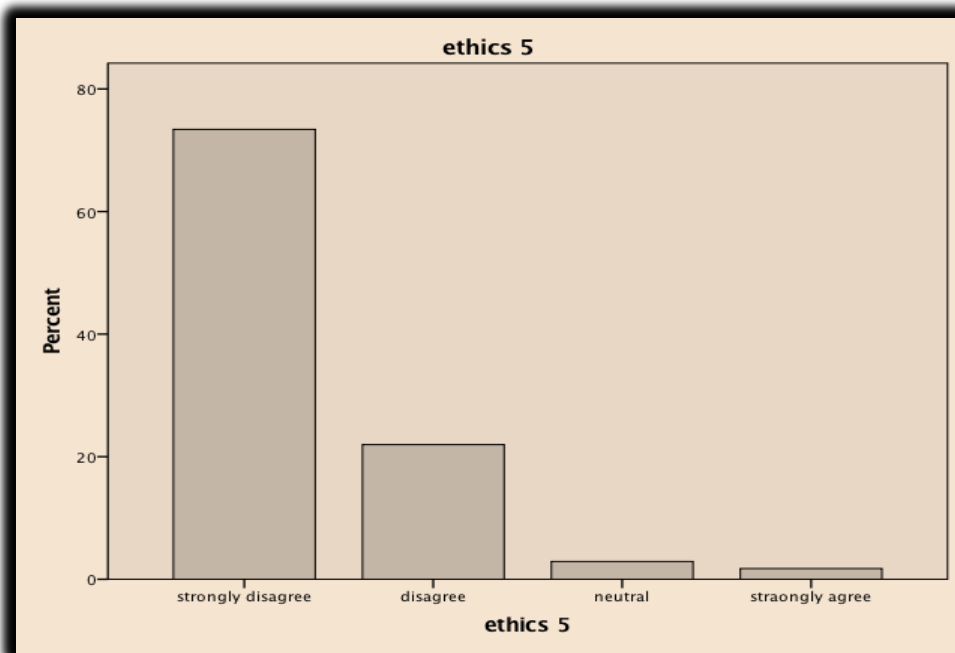
**Figure 4.4: Reporting unethical activity by a colleague at work**

Data presented in Figure above sought to establish the views of respondents regarding the decision to report a fellow employee for unethical behaviour. It is clear that employees may report a fellow employee for unethical behaviour as reflected by 45% of the respondents' agreement followed by approximately 35% who disagreed to the statement. A relatively large percentage of about 23% took a neutral position. Overall responses were skewed towards agreement with the statement. According to Carey (2007) cited in Brewster (2008; 177) human beings are by nature driven by the justice, fairness and moral uprightness nature of humanity, in cases where a wrong is committed by the other party.

The findings under this section are in line with this school of thought. Werner (2007: 290), writing on fighting of corruption and unethical practice revealed that, most of the unethical practices facing public organisations can only be solved or minimised when employees begin to play a role by reporting q wrong or incorrect doing in pursuit of a fair, just and ethical society. It is clear that, this is a good sign that in future years, unethical behaviour might be uprooted. However, the findings are worrisome as a huge percentage of about 35% disagreed. There is not much difference between 35% and 45%. This demonstrates that some employees still have an I don't care attitude regarding unethical conduct as

asserted by Buckam (2003). According to Buckam (2003) the majority of employees do not feel obliged to report unethical behaviour despite the knowledge that unethical behaviour is detrimental to organisational image. A sizeable percentage of respondents approximately 23% who gave a neutral response may have done so out of the fear of victimisation, thus calling for the need of a whistle blower as well as the protection for the whistle blowers. Generally, whistleblowing has been defined as “the voluntary release of non-public information as a moral protest, by a member or former member of an organisation outside the normal channels of communication, to an appropriate audience about illegal and/or immoral conduct in the organisation. This may also concern conduct in the organisation that is opposed in some significant way to the public interest” (Boatright, 2000:109).

Whistleblowing may be the last resort after all other channels have been utilised with no success in rectifying the situation or bringing about the desired change. Important factors related to whistleblowing include: freedom of speech (as a legal argument and a moral argument), contractual duty, loyalty and confidentiality, propensity (based on ethical principles) of individuals to take risks and to expose themselves to retaliation, and the question of protection for the whistle-blower (Boatright, 2000:109).

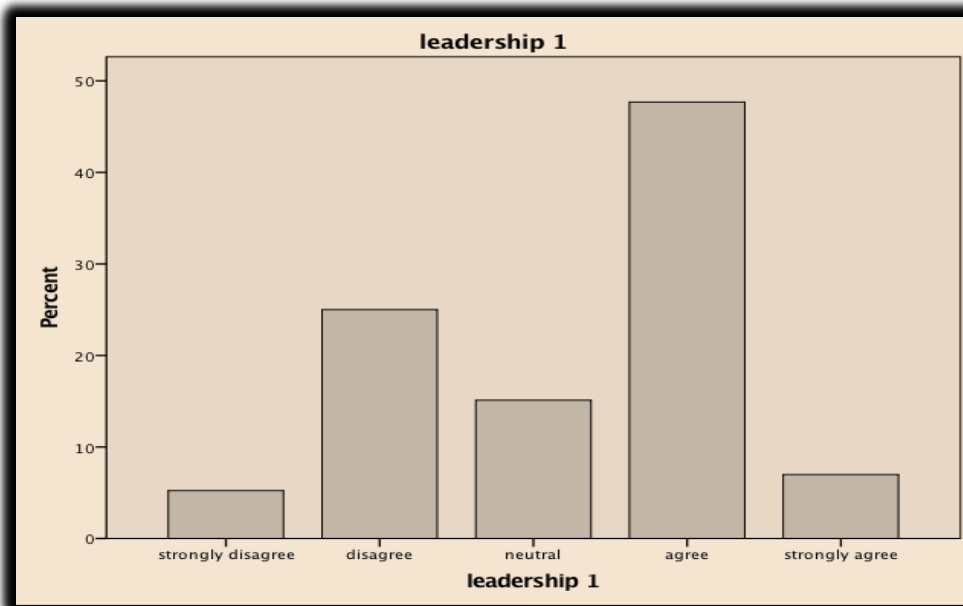


**Figure 4.5: Acceptance of gifts from the public for service rendered.**

Data presented in Figure above sought to establish the respondent's views regarding receiving a bribe in the form of money for services rendered or in order to render a service. The findings under this section were conspicuous as respondent's disagreed with approximately 85% of the respondents serving as a confirmation when indicating their awareness of the ethical conduct expected of them. According to Ladd (2010:10) bribery is illegal across the majority of countries and respective organisations but the organisation has to determine when a genuine gift ends, and a bribe begins. Ladd (2010:10) argues that bribery presents a problem since morals and customs are not the same amongst individuals. Customs can be criss-crossed and universally valid, but the validity of moral principles is not limited to a particular society. According to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 Section 32, bribery is illegal in South Africa.

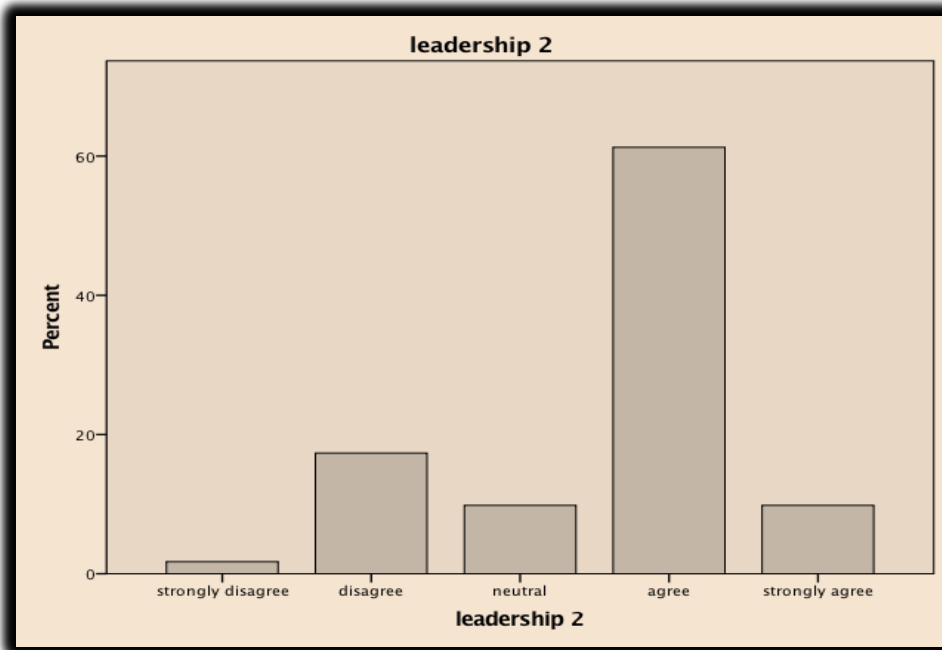
**4.4.2 Employee perception on leadership style and employee work ethic**

This section sought to assess the impact of the leadership style on employee work ethic in public sector organisations. A total of five questions were posed to respondents with findings presented under the following figure 4.5 to 4.9 respectively as leadership 1 to 5.



**Figure 4.6: Superiors consultation on decisions relating to my job.**

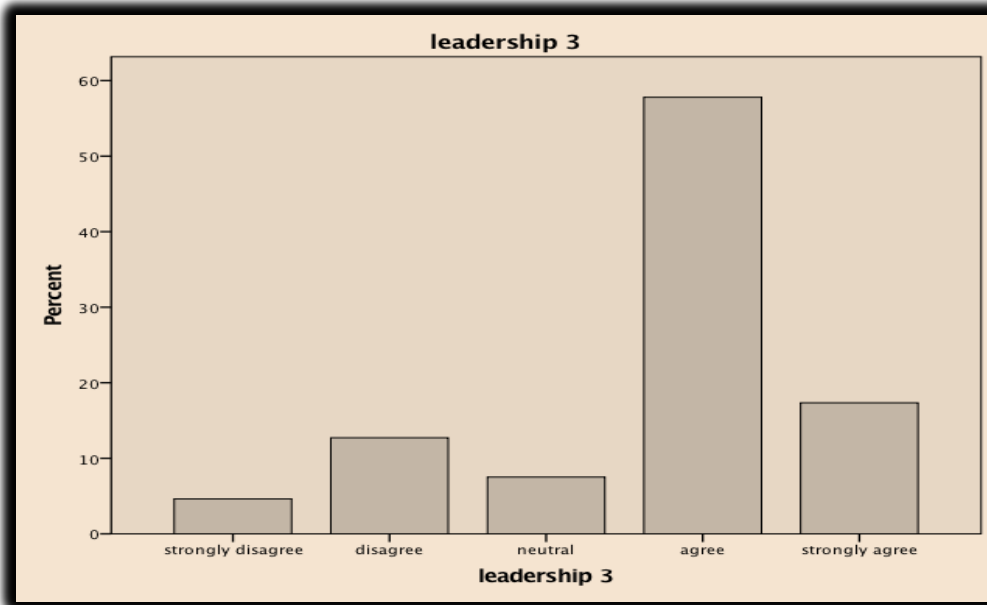
Figure presents data to establish if the respondents were consulted by the leaders prior to decision making on matters related to their jobs. The findings revealed that respondents were consulted with about 56% agreeing followed by about 32% who disagreed with the statement while about 12% were neutral. The findings under this section seem to echo what Kreitner and Kinicki (2001: 500) emphasised when they wrote about the leadership decision making process and its critical components. According to Kreitner and Kinicki (2009: 500) employee consultation is the engine that propels the effectiveness of the decision making process as without consultation, the decisions made become ineffective. Kreitner and Kinicki (2009: 500) proposed the key perspectives on leadership which include the leader-member exchange model of leadership, the substitutes for leadership and the servant-leadership all driven by the principle of employee consultation.



**Figure 4.7: Clarity of decisions and communication by seniors**

The purpose of this section was to gather data to ascertain the clarity of decisions and whether or not the decisions were communicated effectively. Data presented in Figure above reveals that respondents agreed with the statement with about 60%, followed by about 20% who disagreed with the statement and with 10 % adopting a neutral position. It

is clear from this finding that decisions were clear and were communicated in agreement to the study by Goerge and Jones (2011:106), who highlighted that senior managers have a duty to make clear decisions by embracing communication channels within the organisation's structures. An organisation's, manager's or employee's choice of communication media is important, because it is a key component of communication effectiveness. The effectiveness of communication media is generally dependent on the context in which the medium or media are used. Kreitner & Kinicki (2009) present a contingency model for selecting media to ensure that communication is effective. For instance, face-to-face communication is a very rich form of communication as it provides immediate feedback to strengthen the decision making process. According to Kreitner and Kinicki (2009) a combination of a visual and audio channels, personal communication and the language source is set to have a potential to clarify and enhance the decision making process.



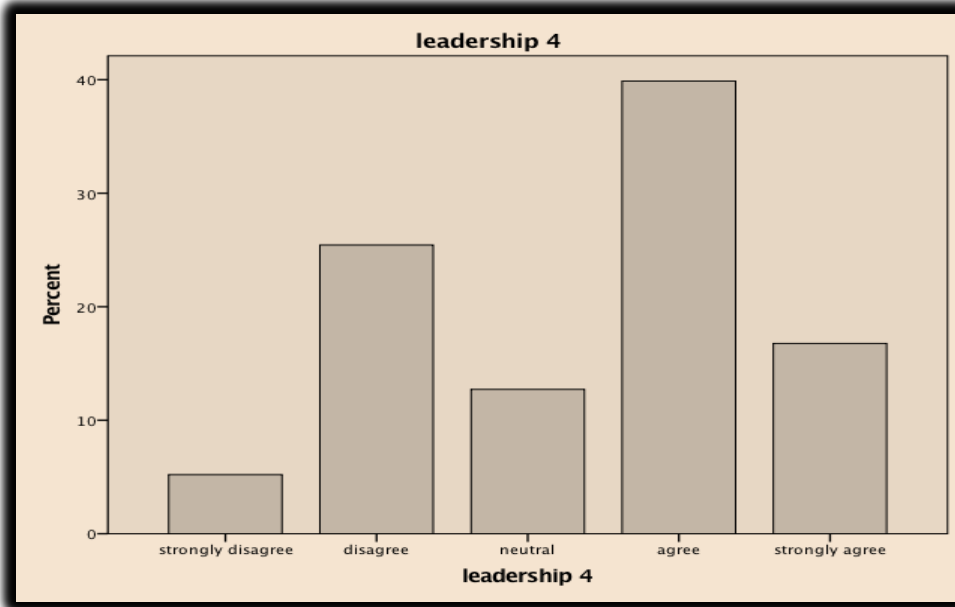
**Figure 5: Clear communication of departmental vision and mission**

This section sought to establish if the vision and mission of the library and heritage department was clearly communicated to employees. Just like the findings on the preceding section, about 75% of the respondents indicated that the department clearly communicated the vision. Put differently, it means that leaders or managers at the

department communicated the visions and missions. In determining the future direction of an organisation, a leader must develop a vision of a possible and desirable state of the organisation in the future. According to Campbell & Yeung (1991:145-147) this image, which is referred to as a vision, may be as vague as a dream or as precise as a mission statement or goal, however, the critical argument is that a vision should articulate a view of a realistic, credible, attractive future for the organisation, a condition that is better than what exists now. However, Hough (2008) contends that “visions must describe the desired long-term future of an organisation, a future that is typically not quite achievable, but also not so fantastic as to seem like a ridiculous pipe dream”.

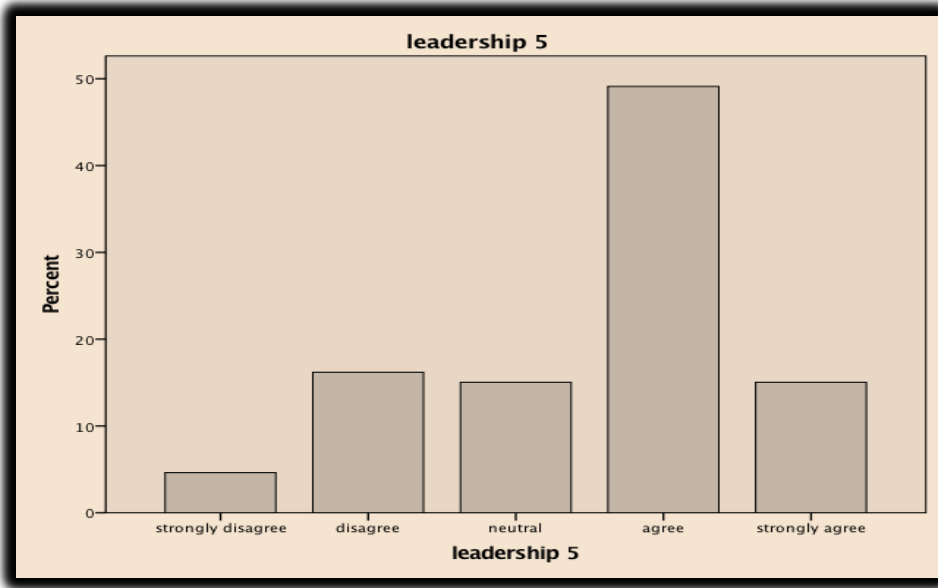
David (2009:82) asserts that the vision and mission are best understood by looking at a business when it is first conceived. David (2009:82) further argues that the business’s vision and mission are closely related yet distinguishable in terms of the specific role of each, in the development and execution of competitive business strategies. In the beginning, a business is merely a collection of ideas. Starting a new business is typically based on a set of beliefs that the new enterprise can offer some product or service in satisfying certain consumer needs, in some geographic region, using some type of technology, at a competitive and profitable price. The new business owner believes that the management philosophy adopted by the new enterprise will result in a favorable public image that will find acceptance among the firm's various stakeholder groups. When these beliefs are initially put into writing, the resulting document will more or less reflect the same basic ideas that are to be found in the vision and mission statements.

According to (David 2009:82) as the business grows and becomes established over time, the owners or managers often find it necessary to refine their fundamental beliefs without changing their original ideas in any drastic way.



**Figure 4.9: Supervisor inspiration towards subordinate development.**

This section established whether or not employees were inspired by their supervisors and if this led towards the further development of the employees concerned. This could be development in terms of career development or any form of encouragement that would improve the future of the employee. About 54% agreed with the statement that their supervisors inspired them while about 32% disagreed with the statement, while about 14% gave a neutral response. These findings were consistent with Jones and George (2009) who reiterated that management in an organisation plays a key role in the development of employees. According to Jones and George (2009) the development of an employee on its own serves as a motivator as the developed employee will seek to improve his/her contribution. Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart and Wright (2010) argue that one of the key roles played by managers in organisations is to develop employees. According to Noe *et al.* (2010), managers must thrive to inspire their subordinates towards development. The findings for this section seem to underscore to a large extent the work undertaken by Noe *et al.* (2010), which places emphasis on employee development, acknowledging it as a key role for organisational managers.



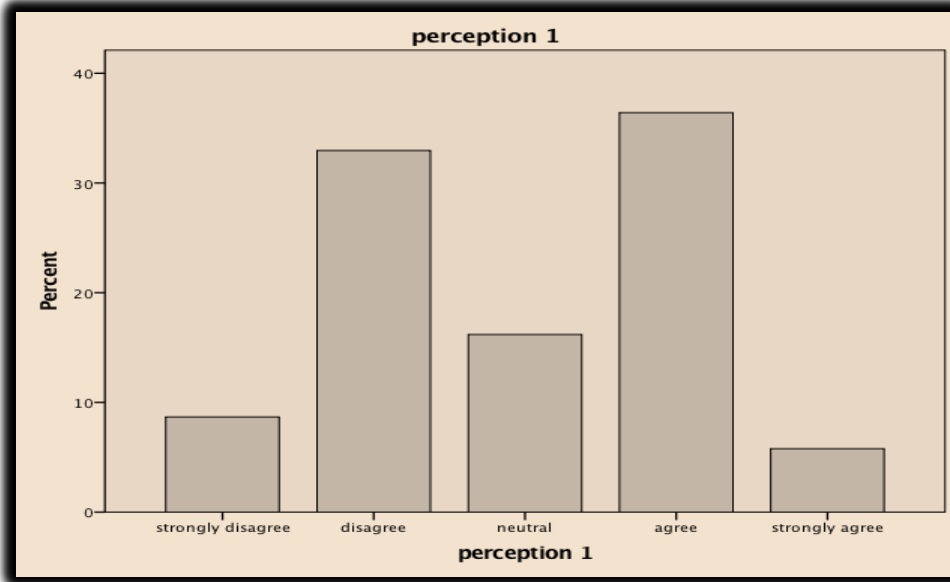
**Figure 4.10: Reward/ recognition for ethical behaviour**

This section explores respondent's views on whether a reward existed for upholding ethical behaviour at the library and heritage department. About 60 % revealed that there was no reward, followed by about 22% who disagreed with about 18% giving a neutral response. The findings gathered in this section can be referred to as the characteristics of a moral manager. According to Tyler (2011:12) the responsibility of being a good role model, the ability to reward positive ethical behaviour and punish unethical behaviour and the ability to communicate the ethical vision of the manager can only be accomplished if the corporate culture supports these characteristics. Reynolds (2000) holds that the corporate culture is the "glue" that holds together the guidance needed by the managers in order to ensure that the organisation has a positive ethical climate. Linked to this study, Reynolds (2000) suggests that the municipal managers have to ensure that the corporate culture is supportive of the organisation's ethical beliefs, the organisation must "protect" the corporate culture from threats that can have a negative ethical impact on the organisation.

#### **4.4.3 Management perception of employee ethical behaviour**



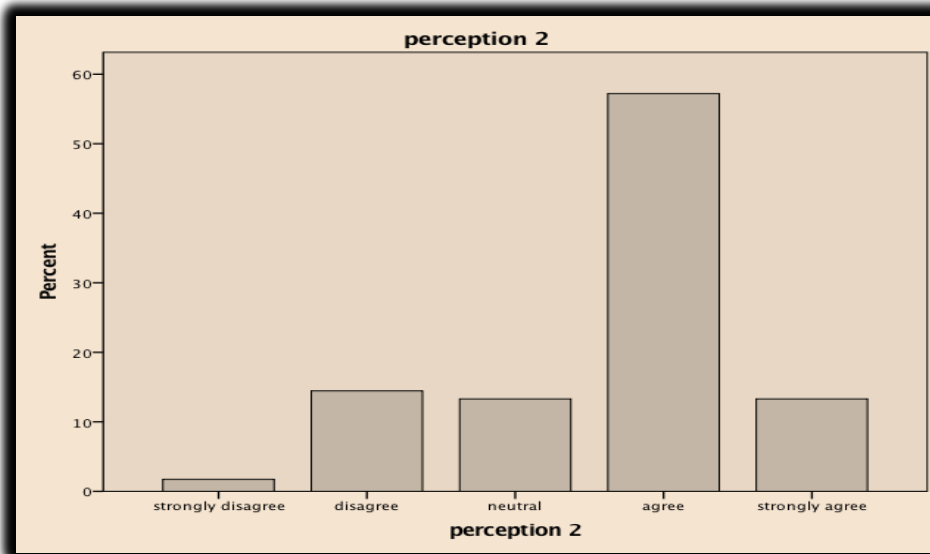
This section analysed management’s perception of employee ethical behaviour at the library and heritage department of eThekweni municipality. A total of five question items were asked to address this objective.



**Figure 4.11: Managerial confidentiality of information with subordinates.**

The purpose of this question was to establish if managers shared confidential information with subordinates, as sharing confidential information could be an expression of demonstrating trust in respect of the employees. Managers who share confidential information with employees to a large extent demonstrate how far they trust their subordinates and this goes to demonstrate the ethical fabric that exists within the organisation. The managers who responded to this question indicated by 52% of the respondents indicating that they shared confidential information with subordinates, followed by 42% who disagreed with the statement while about 6% gave a neutral response. Sharing information is a form of trust which to a large extent is considered to be an ethical issue. The findings under this section echo the study undertaken by Tyler (2011:12 which “trust” is regarded as an ethical element that underpins the stakeholder’s relationship with an organisation or entity. According to Tyler (2011:12) employees are key stakeholders of an organisation. Managers must understand the various needs of the organisation’s stakeholders (Reynolds, 2000). Reynolds asserts that it is through the

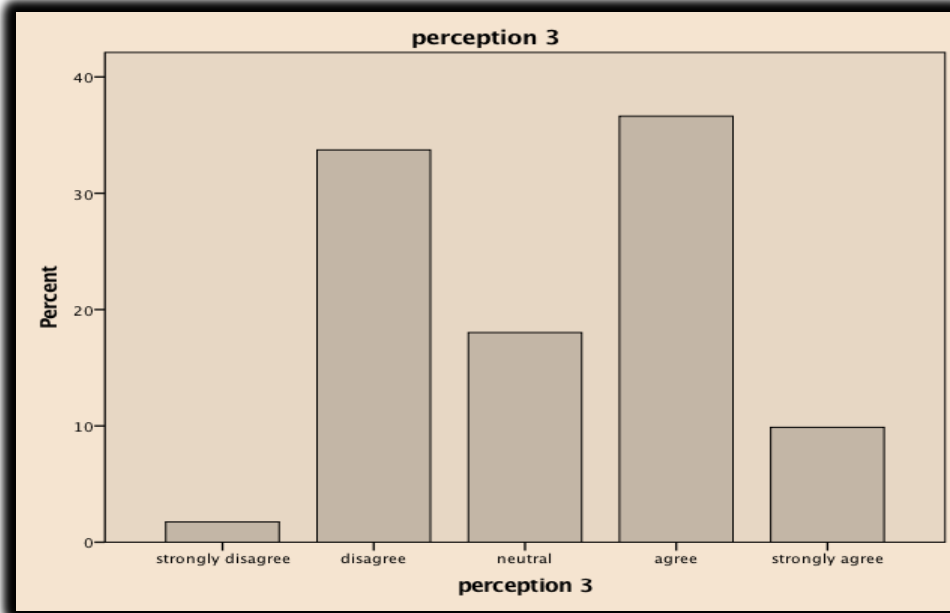
identification and empathy toward the stakeholder's needs and beliefs that managers can be rewarded by establishing trust, commitment, and effort. It is the ability of managers to effectively identify and answer the questions related to moral problems, moral reasoning, and moral courage that guides the decision-making process. If the manager understands his ethical responsibilities underpinned by confidentiality, the net result will be the development of trust, commitment and effort among the organisation's stakeholders. Tyler (2011: 12) believes that if the managers of the firm have been able to demonstrate their ethical commitment throughout their dealings with the various stakeholders, the stakeholders will reward the organisation with loyalty and commitment.



**Figure 4.12: Employee knowledge about Batho Pele and day to day application**

The focus of this section was to gain insight manager's perception on whether their subordinates knew and applied the Batho Pele principles on a daily basis. Data gathered under this section was conspicuous as it indicated clearly that managers perceived that their employees were aware of the Batho Pele principles and that they perceived that their employees applied the principles on a daily basis. About 71% of the respondents agreed with the statement while 16% disagreed with about 13% giving a neutral position. The Batho Pele cited by Mafunisa (2000; 5) are a mechanism to address the growing public concern, where public officials fail to put people first. According to Mafunisa (2000;

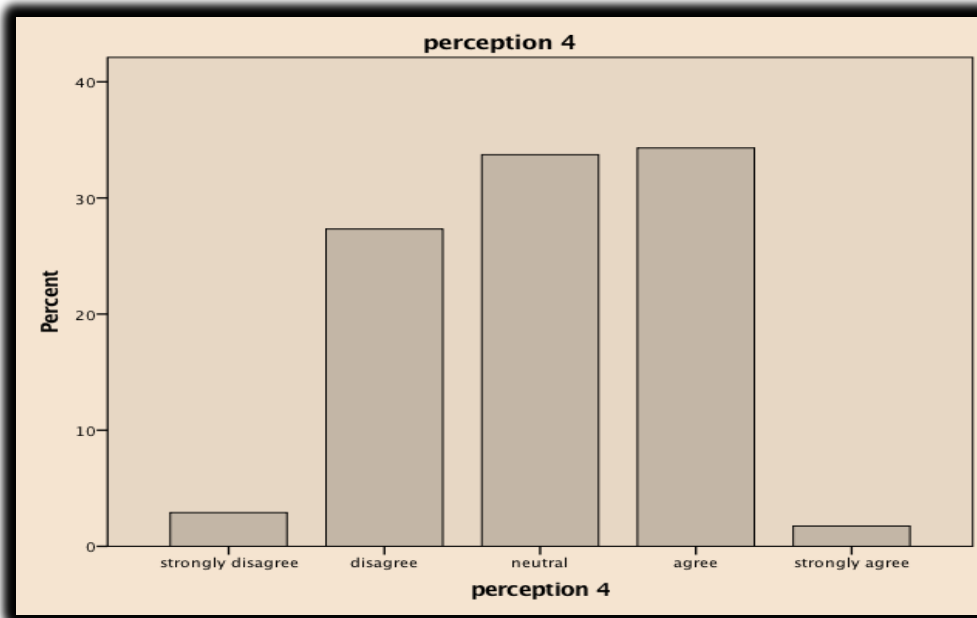
5) who argues that managers must be role models in their respective public organisations that includes municipalities. Mafunisa (2000) attributes unethical practices and conduct that exists in South Africa to political and public service leadership.



**Figure 4.13: People are naturally unethical**

This section seeks to establish a managerial perspective as to whether people are naturally unethical. The findings revealed that people are naturally unethical reflected by 45% of respondents agreeing with the statement followed by 37% of respondents who disagreed, while 18% were neutral. There is no outright conclusion that can draw from this section as none scored above 50%. However, it is clear that the findings are skewed towards agreeableness. This study somehow corroborates the views of Tyler (2011:16) who argues that ethics is the underlying component guiding human behaviour knowingly or unknowingly and the fact that it includes the “unknowingly” element, indicates that people are naturally unethical at some point. Tyler (2011:12) argues that ethics are concerned with what is right or wrong, good or bad, fair or unfair, responsible or irresponsible, obligatory or permissible, praiseworthy or blameworthy. Ethics are thus associated with guilt, shame, indignation, resentment, empathy, compassion, and care. It is interested in character as well as conduct. So, ethical behaviour in an organisation such as a

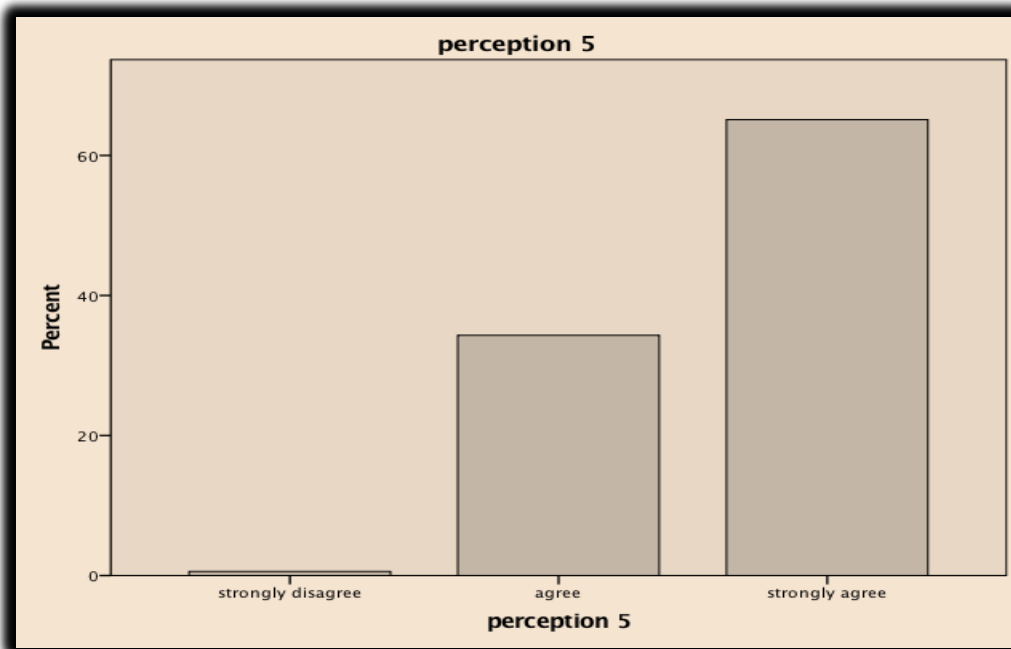
municipality is complex and controversial. Tyler (2011:12) winds off by emphasising that ethics consists of standards and norms of behaviours that are beyond laws and legal rights and has no clear line that defines the various issues that are generally referred to as “unethical”.



**Figure 4.14: Subordinates/ colleague intolerance to unethical practises.**

The managerial perception on subordinate’s intolerance to unethical practices. About 37% of respondents agreed with the statement while about 35% gave a neutral response, with about 28% disagreeing with the statement. Similarly, to the preceding section, there is no convincing finding reached in this section since none of the responses exceeded the 50% level. Nevertheless, the overall findings are skewed towards agreeableness (37%). In an organisation one would always find employees who do not tolerate unethical practices, though not many will be found. These findings receive backing from the King 1 Report (1992), on corporate governance which seeks to address the issues damaging the global image of organisations by eliminating corruption and acknowledging the role of ethical behaviour. According to the King 1 Report (1992), it is imperative that employees report unethical practices with a view to uproot corruption. While being mindful of the important role of corporate governance. Deal and Kennedy (1988; 14-15) argue that the

promotion of ethical conduct, transparency and fairness in the private and public sectors was critical through the eradication of corruption in both public and private sectors, and raising the levels of public morality. According Deal and Kennedy (1988; 14-15) this can only happen if the government protects the bona fide whistle-blowers from victimisation and reprisal for reporting malpractice and fraud or other criminal and unethical activities in the workplace.



**Figure 4.15: Ethics are important in the service delivery process.**

This part of the study seeks to determine a managerial perception on the importance of ethics in service delivery. The findings obtained from this question were very convincing as a total of 95% agreed with the statement with 65% strongly agreeing and only 5% strongly disagreeing with the statement. When considering the overall findings in response to this statement it is clear that the majority of respondents considered ethics to be a crucial part of service delivery. As put forward by Chryssides & Kaler, 1993:53) ethics encompasses honesty, fairness and justice which are important values that foster a healthy ethical culture. According to Shaw & Barry (1989) the principles of ethics, when honoured by public officials/servants the principles of ethics ensure a level playing field. Ethics will thus attempt to mitigate and reduce corruption, save money and translating

into speedy, service delivery. In addition various projects which on the verge of collapse due to unethical practices such as corruption and cronyism will be drastically reduced. According to Boatright (2010), ethics are generally stakeholder driven as they assist to create a positive work environment which makes the employees highly motivated.

#### 4.4.4 The relationship between employee work ethic and leadership style

Data was gathered to explore the relationship between an employee’s work ethic and the leadership style employed by management. To address this objective a summated interval scale was developed for the two variables ethics and leadership. Thereafter, Pearson’s correlation was used to analyse the relationship between the variables.

		<b>Ethics</b>	<b>Leadership</b>
Ethics	Pearson Correlation	1.00	0.07
	Sig. (1-tailed)		0.18
	N	172.00	171.00
Leadership	Pearson Correlation	0.07	1.00
	Sig. (1-tailed)	0.18	

**Table 4.3: Relationship between Ethics and Leadership (n=172)**

The findings in Table show that there is a positive relationship between ethics and leadership as a result of the sign of the Pearson’s correlation coefficient being positive. It should be noted though that the relationship is weak ( $r = 0.72$ ) and it is statistically insignificant ( $p = .176$ ). Overall, the study concludes that ethics and leadership are related. The findings are consistent with Boatright (2010:222) when he emphasised that for leaders to be proactive in their role as ethical leaders, they need to first have the traits of a moral person. As a result, integrity, honesty and trustworthiness are the cornerstone of the foundation of ethical leadership. It is these traits that drive the behaviours and decision-making process of the manager. Therefore, once the core has been established, ethical behaviour and decision making should logically follow. Without these key moral traits, a manager cannot become an effective moral manager.

The second research question attempted to explore the impact of leadership on employee work ethics in public sector organisations. To address this question simple regression analysis was performed with ethics as a dependent variable and leadership as an independent variable as shown in equation 1:

$$Y = a + \beta x + e$$

Where:

Y = ethics

a = constant

$\beta$  = regression weight

e = error term

#### Formula 1: Simple Regression Analysis

**Table 4.4: Findings relating impact of leadership on ethics**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		C	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.377	0.183		12.983	0
	Leadership	0.048	0.052	0.072	0.934	0.352

a. Dependent Variable: Ethics

The impact of the relationship between ethics and leadership is assessed by looking at the Beta coefficient ( $\beta$ ) generated in the regression analysis. According to the statistics depicted in Table 4.4, the impact of leadership on ethics is insignificant ( $\beta = 0.072^3$ ;  $p = .352$ ). Using the statistics in Table 4.4 above the regression equation is written as follows:

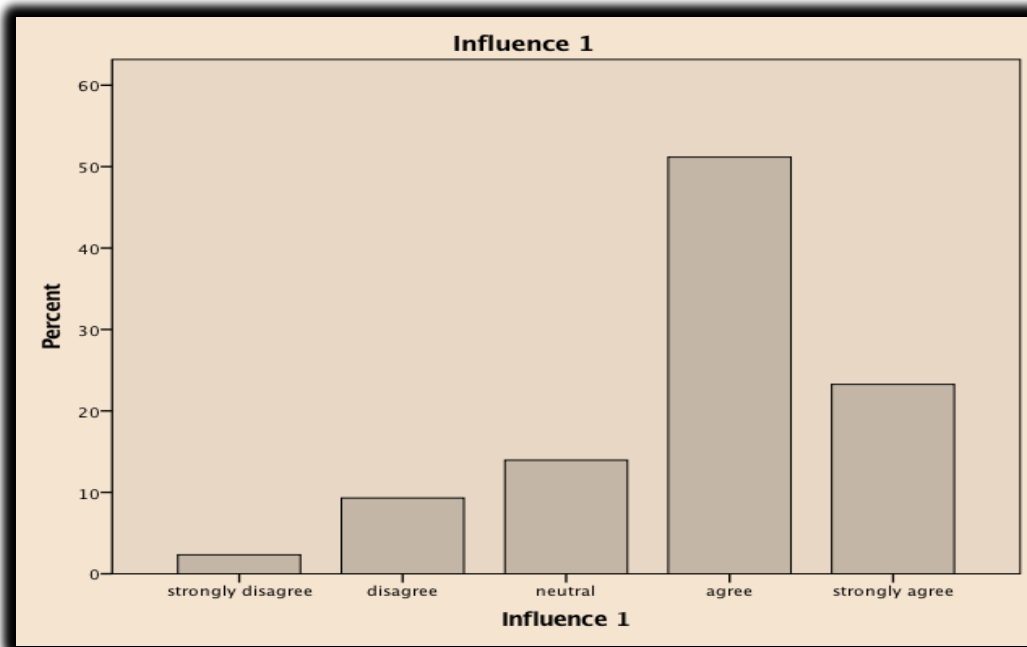
<sup>3</sup> Standardised weight

#### Formula 2: Simple Regression Analysis

$$Y (\text{Ethics}) = 2.377 + 0.048 * x$$
$$= 2.377 + 0.048 * (1)$$

These findings can be interpreted to indicate that the impact of leadership on ethics with the sample used for this study is not statistically significant, and is therefore not noteworthy. In other words, leaders have no influence when it comes to their subordinates.

The third research question was framed as follows: What is the perception that management has about employee work ethics in public sector organisations? Results depicted in Figures 4.14 capture responses of the respondents to each of the five questions that were used to assess the influence of leadership on employee work ethics.

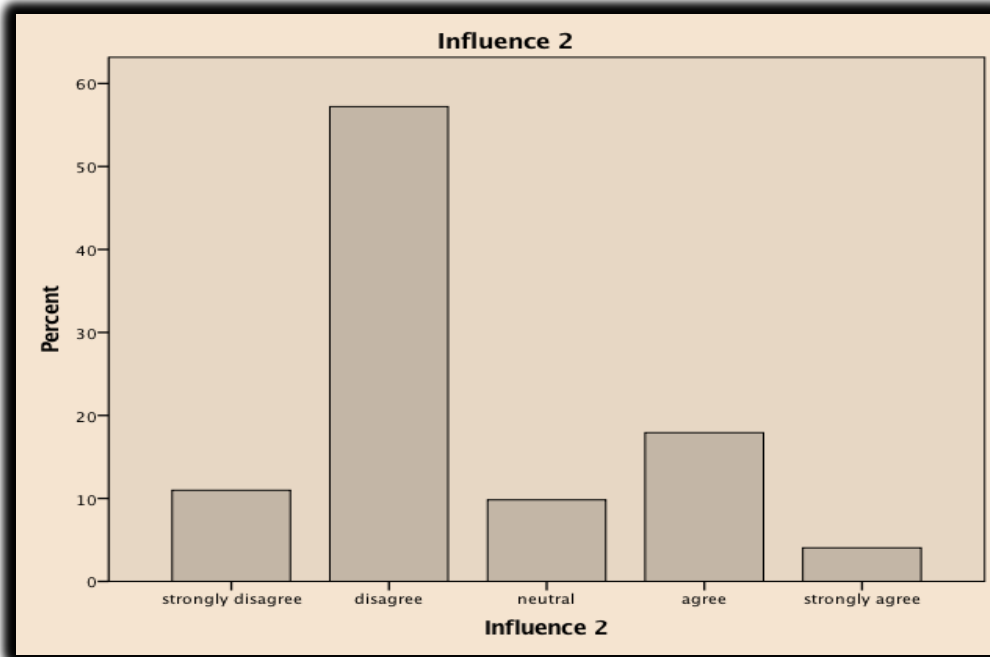


**Figure 4.16: Employees emulate conduct from management**

Responses to the statement that 'employees emulate conduct from management' are positively skewed, implying that respondents generally agreed with the statement.



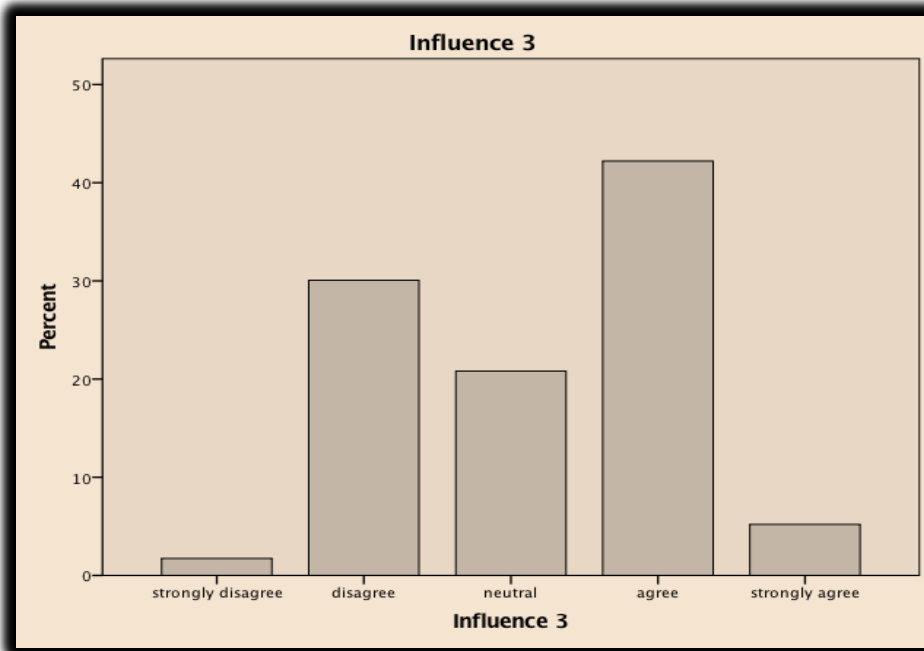
However there is marginally low dissenting view , about 10% of the respondents disagreed with the statement, 77% agreed, followed by 13% giving a neutral response.



**Figure 4.17: Management has no influence on the ethical conduct of staff**

Responses to the statement that management has no influence on the ethical conduct of staff are negatively skewed, with a total of 68% of the respondents disagreeing with the statement that management had influence on employee's ethical conduct, followed by 20% who agreed with the statement while 12% maintained a neutral position. This implies that employees disagreed that management has influence on the ethical conduct of staff, echoing the findings in table 4.8 above on the impact of leadership on ethics.

The findings in table 4.8 above revealed a statistically insignificant relationship between leadership and ethical conduct. According to Raphael (2009) employees are also independent individuals who are driven by their own consciences, which may influence their appetite for unethical behaviour.

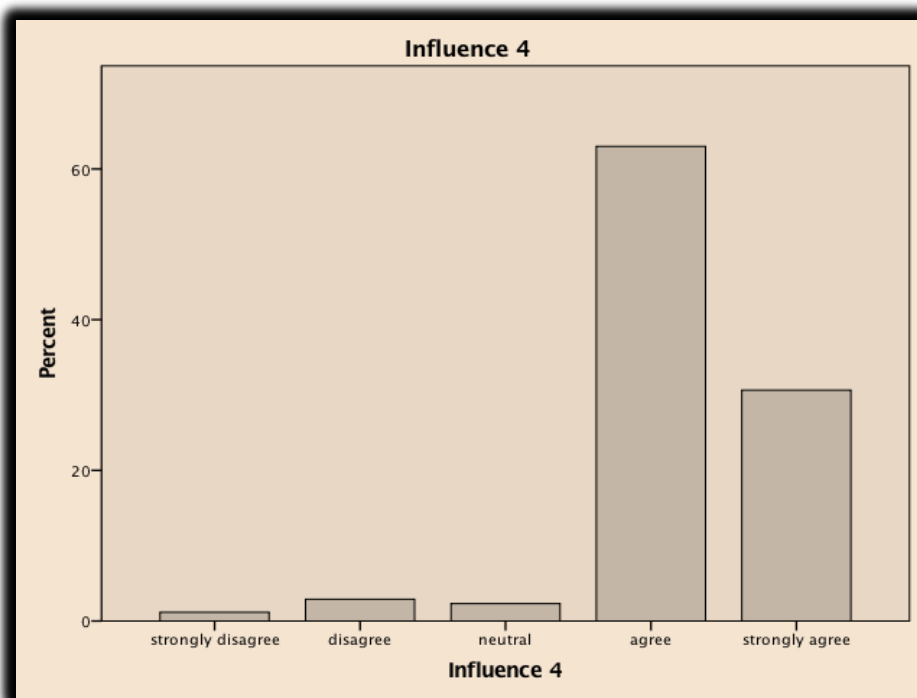


**Figure 4.18: Senior management always demonstrate ethical conduct**

Figure captures responses pertaining to perceptions towards the ethical conduct of senior managers. There are two contradicting views to this statement. Forty two percent (42%) of the respondents agree with the statement whereas 30% of them do not agree that senior management demonstrates ethical conduct. Twenty one percent (21%) of the respondents neither agree nor disagree. The findings can be explained by drawing from Boartright (2010) who views morality as an ethical element. According to Boartright (2010) managers can display three different moral viewpoints based on their individual outlooks. By focusing on moral, amoral and immoral behaviour, two managers in the same company can react very differently to the exact same set of circumstances. While it may be easy to grasp the concept of a moral and immoral manager, the amoral manager may be more difficult to envision (Raphael, 2009). As a result, it is important to highlight the potential ethical problems with an amoral manager (Boartright, 2010). By not including ethical values in the decision making process, an amoral manager exposes him or herself to potential problems.

The differences in stakeholder interaction among the moral, amoral and immoral managers is important to consider. One thought provoking question which you could ask

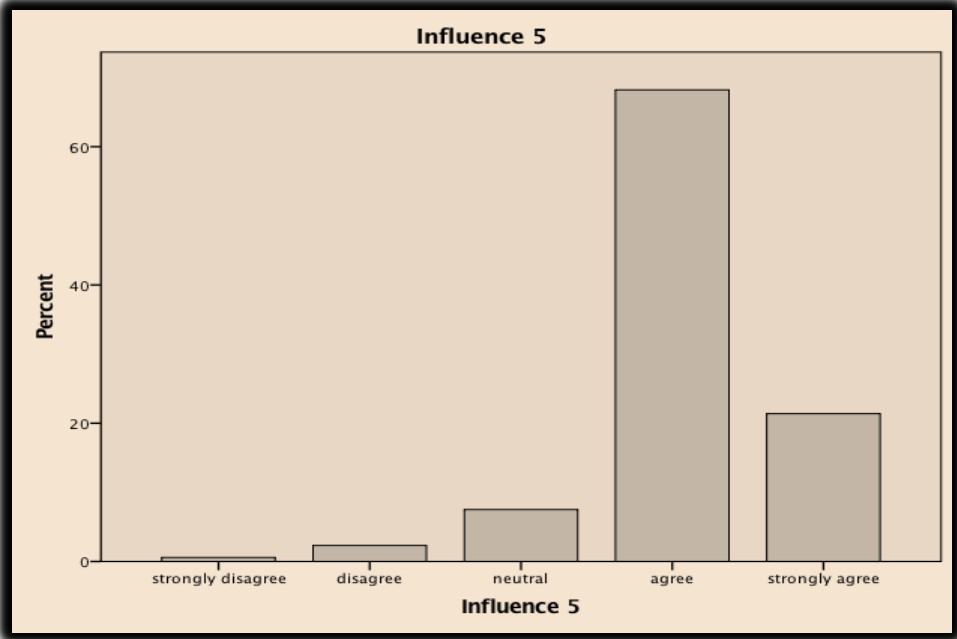
is whether a manager has a “hybrid” relationship with stakeholders. In other words, could a manager act as an “immoral” manager with the local community, act as an “amoral” manager with their customers and act as a “moral” manager with the organisation’s stockholders. Managers may not be consistent in their moral values. The manager may not even be aware of his or her inconsistent actions (Boartright (2010)



**Figure 4.19: Doing the right thing as an indicator of good ethical conduct**

Responses to questions pertaining to perception 4 and perception 5 are positively skewed. This implies that respondents agree that when leadership does the right thing, their behaviour influences others to also do the right thing. Likewise, respondents agree with the view that management always makes an emphasis of the importance of ethical conduct in service delivery. Sixty eight percent (68%) of the respondents agreed with the statement and 21% strongly agreed (see Figure 11). The dissenting voice with regards to the statement is less than 3%. These findings concur with Boartright’s (2010) study on managers as role models.

According to Boatright (2010), employees are driven or motivated by a role model in an organisation. To live a life free of unethical practices Boatright (2010) argues that employees need to be involved in the learning process, as it relates to corporate ethics but critical to this, managerial modelling of the behaviour employees are expected to exhibit has proved to be very helpful.



**Figure 4.20: Emphasis on the importance of ethical conduct in service delivery processes**

This question attempted to analyse views on the importance of ethical conduct. It is clear that ethics is viewed as being important with 91% agreeing with the statement followed by 5% who gave a neutral response with only 4% disagreeing with the statement. This is backed by Carey (2007) who emphasised that the concern for business should be the fact that unethical and immoral activities are not a good development for business. Carey (2007) argues that business worldwide, therefore, face specific ethical issues and dilemma in the business activity they undertake. The risk exists for business institutions, government and society in pursuit of providing efficient service.

## **4.5 CONCLUSION**

This chapter addressed the objectives of the study. It started by analysing the demographic profile of the respondents in the questionnaire. Findings were presented in line with the objectives and the respective research questions. The results showed a very weak relationship between leadership and employee work ethics. Whilst employees generally agreed that they understood the ethical conduct expected of them and the importance of ethical conduct in the service delivery process. A number of them believed that the behaviour exhibited by management has an effect on the ethical conduct of employees, yet senior management was not consistent in the application of ethics. In the following Chapter, conclusions and recommendations are presented.

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In chapter 5, Research results are evaluated in relation to the study objectives as outlined in Chapter 1. The objectives of this study were to explore management's perception of employee's work ethic, assess employee's perception of the effect the leadership style has on employee's work ethic. To ascertain management's perception of employee's ethical behaviour as well as exploring the relationship between employee's work ethic and the effect the leadership style has in public sector organisations. Finally, the study sought to recommend an appropriate leadership style that promotes the creation of a high work ethic in public sector organisations.

### **5.2 CONCLUSIONS IN RELATION TO THE FIRST OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The first objective was to explore management's perception of employee's work ethic in public sector organisations. Under this objective the following conclusions were drawn:

- a. Employees working for the library and heritage department were aware of the expected ethical conduct as they were generally ethical;
- b. The majority of employees were aware of the Batho Pele principles – that put “people first”;
- c. Unethical activity was perceived as a bad practice and should be reported, even if practiced by a colleague;
- d. The study revealed that employees should not accept gifts for service rendered.

### **5.3 CONCLUSIONS IN RELATION TO THE SECOND OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The second objective was to assess employee's perception of the effect the leadership style has on employee's work ethic in public sector organisations. For this objective the following conclusions were drawn:

The leadership style was generally consultative in nature as employees were consulted on several issues and through the consultative leadership style;

- a. Managers were clear on decisions made, as they communicated every decision to the department ironing out issues which were unclear;
- b. The vision of the department was co-created and shared across the department which helped to advance the ethical climate needed in the organisation;
- c. The managers were employee development oriented, a move which demonstrates that the organisation takes its employees seriously through a specific career growth path;
- d. Despite a positive outlook on how employees perceived leaderships influence towards creating a positive ethical culture, the study revealed that there were no rewards given to employees who demonstrated or exhibited good ethical conduct. Statistically the relationship was deemed insignificant. However, the relationship was not too strong. This means that although employee's work ethic is linked to leadership in an organisation, leadership is not the only factor influencing work ethic

#### **5.4 CONCLUSIONS IN RELATION TO THE THIRD OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The third objective was to ascertain management's perception of employee's ethical behaviour. Under this objective the following conclusions were drawn;

- a. Managers shared confidential information with employees, signifying some form of trust in the employees and in situations where confidential information is shared especially from the top to the bottom, chances are that an ethical culture is created;
- b. Employees in the department had knowledge of the Batho Pele principles;
- c. Employees in the department were intolerant of unethical practices;
- d. Upholding ethics was a very important aspect in the department
- e. However, people are people – they are naturally unethical

#### **5.5 CONCLUSIONS IN RELATION TO THE FORTH OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The fourth objective was to explore the relationship between employee's work ethic and the effect of a particular leadership style. A summated interval scale was developed for the two variables: (1) ethics and (2) leadership, thereafter Pearson correlations was used to analyse the relationship between the variables. As illustrated in chapter 4, the results

showed that there was a positive relationship between leadership and employee work ethics.

## **5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the above conclusions which translate into employees and management considering ethics, employee work ethic and ethical behaviour in the workplace seriously, the following recommendations were determined:

- a. Public sector organisations should find a way of rewarding a good work ethic, demonstration of appropriate ethical behaviour by employees and managers who demonstrate or exhibit the desired ethical practice. This could be in the form of factoring ethical items/aspects into the performance management system or criteria;
- b. Public sector organisations should also show their commitment to upholding ethical values, by creating a position for an “ethical officer” in each department to take care of all ethical matters across the departments, with a view to improving customer service which will ultimately enhance the image of public sector organisations;
- c. Public sector organisations should also provide avenues for reporting unethical practices committed by frontline employees, through the use of anonymous suggestion boxes or free telephone line where the public can call to express their feelings regarding unethical practices by public officials
- d. Through the recruitment and selection process, the human resource managers or directors should ensure that prospective employees are tested, measured or assessed in terms of “ethics”. In other words, a question meant to assess the work ethic and employee ethical behaviour should be one of the interview or selection items.

## **5.7 SCOPE FOR FUTURE STUDIES**

Being mindful of the fact that the study was conducted on the library and heritage department of eThekweni Municipality, there is a need to conduct a similar study across the entire municipality in order to have a balanced view of the perception of ethics across the full spectrum of local government. Utilising the findings of only one department may



not present a convincing argument or capture an accurate enough snapshot of the entire situation of the topic under study.

## **5.8 CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between leadership and employee's work ethic in the public sector within the eThekweni municipality libraries and heritage through the collection of data from employees and management. The purpose of the study and the study objectives were achieved through the findings and recommendations given.

The study revealed that employees and management were aware of the importance and value of ethics in a public sector organisation such as a municipality and that as public servants, they were supposed to demonstrate the appropriate ethical conduct and behaviour. Despite the awareness, the study revealed that people are people as they are naturally unethical, suggesting that certain employees may be involved in various unethical practices, although indications were that employees were seen to be intolerant to unethical practices.

The study recommended that public sector organisations may need to consider rewarding employees who exhibit acceptable ethical behaviour, with the entire recruitment process to include "ethics" as part of the selection criteria that should be considered prior to appointment. But more importantly, the study recommended the creation of an "ethics officer" to champion all matters of ethics in the organisation going forward.

Furthermore, the study suggests the need for a similar study to be conducted in other departments within the municipality in order to establish a balanced view of the ethics related challenges.

Though this study may have successfully achieved its purpose and objectives, it only provided the basis and recommendations for ensuring an ethical climate within the municipality. Therefore, there is still a need for a concrete and scientifically sound framework regarding successful implementation of an ethical culture in public sector organisations.



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Participant Information Letter

Dear Participant

I am a Master's student at the Durban University of Technology conducting research on the impact of leadership on front line employees' ethical behaviour: eThekweni Municipality, Libraries and Heritage Department case study. Employee work ethics relates to a combination certain standard (formal and informal) generally used by people to guide their behaviour within the workplace. Poor employee work ethics has been a growing concern in Public Sector organisations over the past decades. It is the researcher's hypothesis that Leadership has a direct impact on employee behaviour in general and this would not be different when it comes to work ethics. This research aims to identify the link Leadership style and ethical values at the eThekweni Municipality Libraries and Heritage Department has on Employee ethical behaviour.

Confidentiality: Please note that any individual information obtained in this questionnaire will be kept strictly confidential and will only be aggregated with all other responses for data analysis.

Your participation: There are 4 parts to the questionnaire which should not take longer than 10 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary but will be appreciated.

The deadline for completion is 30 June 2016. For any queries regarding this questionnaire please contact Kwenza Madlala at [kwenzo.madlala@durban.gov.za](mailto:kwenzo.madlala@durban.gov.za), 084 7327 368 or 031 311 1181.

Printed copies are available for participants who do not have internet access.

Thank you for your valuable time and cooperation in completing this survey.

Yours Sincerely,

Kwenza Madlala

## Appendix 2: Gate keepers' letter



### **PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURE Executive Office**

10th Floor, 75 Dr Langalibalele/Dube (Winder) Street, Durban, 4001  
PO Box 5426, Durban, 4000  
Tel: 031 311 4506, Fax 031 3374598  
[www.durban.gov.za](http://www.durban.gov.za)

Attention to: Mr Kwenzo Madlala

#### **PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY: LIBRARIES AND HERITAGE DEPARTMENT**

Your email correspondence in respect of the above refers. The EThekweni Municipality, Libraries and Heritage Department is pleased to grant you full permission to conduct your research, titled: "The relationship between leadership and employee work ethics in the public sector: eThekweni Municipality, Heritage and Libraries Unit case study".

We would be grateful if a summary of your key research findings can be submitted to the department on completion of your studies.

Yours sincerely



Heritage Department



### Appendix 3: Final Questionnaire

I am a Masters student at the Durban University of Technology undertaking research on “the relationship between leadership and employees’ work ethic: eThekweni Municipality case study”. It would be highly appreciated if you can take a few minutes of your time to sincerely answer the questions contained herein.

Be assured that all Information will be treated with utmost confidence and will be only used for the purpose of this study.

Please tick the suitable box as your response below.

#### Section A: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

	Sex	Age	Marital status	Service in the organisation	Position in the organisation
Male					
Female					
Married					
Single					
18-25 years old					
26-35 years old					
36-45 years old					
46-55 years old					
56 years old and above					
0 -1 years of service					
1 -3 years of service					
3 – 5 years of service					
5 -10 years of service					
10 years of service and above					

Management					
Employee (not in management)					

**Section B: EMPLOYEE WORK ETHICS**

Please answer by ticking the column that represents your answer in terms of Strongly Agree, (SA), Agree (A), Neither Agree Nor Disagree (N), Disagree (D) and Strongly disagree (SD).

No.	Question	SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	I have a full understanding of ethical behaviours expected from me.					
2.	If i am on lunch and there is an old person requiring assistance in my department, I kindly ask him/ her to wait until I am done eating.					
3.	When a customer gives you an attitude, it is okay to retaliate.					
4.	If i saw a colleague engaged in an unethical activity at work, I would report him/her.					
5.	It is okay to accept money from a public member requesting a service.					

**Section B: Employee perception on Leadership**

No.	Question	SA	A	N	D	SD
6.	I am always consulted by my superiors prior to the effect of decisions relating to my job.					
7.	Those to whom I report are able to take decisions and communicate a clear direction forward.					

8.	The vision of our department is clearly communicated.					
9.	My supervisor inspires me to develop.					
10.	There is no reward/ recognition for ethical behaviour.					

**Section C Management perception of employee ethical behaviour**

No.	Question	SA	A	N	D	SD
11.	If i share confidential information with my subordinates/ colleagues, they will never share it with someone else.					
12.	My employees/ colleagues know about Batho Pele and are able to translate it into their day-to-day activities.					
13.	Some people are naturally unethical.					
14.	My subordinates/ colleagues are intolerant to unethical practises.					
15.	Ethics are important in the service delivery process.					

**Section D: Influence of ledareship on employees**

No.	Question	SA	A	N	D	SD
16.	Employees emulate conduct from management					
17.	Management has no influence on the ethical conduct of staff.					

18.	Senior management always demonstrate ethical conduct.					
19.	It is possible to influence someone's behaviour by doing the right thing.					
20.	Management always makes an emphasis of the importance of ethical conduct in service delivery processes.					