

Performance Management as a Tool for Accountability in the Local Government Sector: A Case of Enoch Mgijima Municipality, Eastern Cape

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at investigating performance management as a tool for Accountability in local government sector. It touched on aspects such as the nature of performance management systems (PMS), challenges associated with PMS implementation and sought to develop a framework for effective implementation of PMS at Enoch Mgijima Municipality. Literature examined in the study focussed on the legislative framework governing performance management, conceptualization, historical background and purpose of performance management systems. The research employed qualitative research methodology and has used interviews for senior management and questionnaire to all other respondents including senior management as a data collection method. The analysis and interpretation were chronologically arranged according to thematic analysis procedures. The shortfalls were identified as being among others lack PMS knowledge, lack of resources, and non-compliance with the submission dates and incomplete documentation (Portfolio of Evidence). The research also revealed that there are no proper considerations of training needs. Therefore, there is a need for the municipality to do audit of the Workplace Skills Plan of senior managers and middle managers so that they can receive proper training.

Keywords: Performance Management, Accountability, Local government, Performance appraisal, Performance Reward System

INTRODUCTION

Democratic South Africa has introduced two important changes at local government level that have defined the process of service delivery and accountability. Secondly, in terms of Section 152 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA 1996), one of the objects of this new system of local government is “to promote social cohesion, economic development and promoting accountability.” Subsequently, the White Paper on Local Government was introduced in 1998, which deals with two interrelated and equally important aspects of developmental local government. The first concept that it deals with is Integrated Development Planning (IDP), which facilitates integrated and co-ordinate service delivery within the local government sphere (RSA 1998, p. 19). The IDP also included the concept of Performance Management that ensures that IDP is being implemented and monitored, and that municipalities are having the desired development impact.

The South African democratic government introduced transitional local councils which

became local municipalities and formed the local government sector. Local government was established with the intent of ensuring that there is sphere of government that is close to the communities (Manhall & Wood 2016, p. 25). It ensures that services are accessible to the communities and also enables municipalities to be accountable to communities through public participation programs. The programs include municipal roads shows and other forums that invite public to publicise municipal projects and programmes and the budget for the year (Harrington & Lee 2015, p. 86).

According to Benson, Mcdermott and Sitzman (2016, p. 123) performance management is considered as being an instrument that is useful in attaining national development goals. The Public Service Commission (2002, p. 3), notes that in year 1999, the ushering of performance management to government departments marked the beginning of significant improvement in the way public servants conduct themselves. Manyaka & Sebola (2012, p. 300), emphasised that the South African local

government implemented performance management system as a mechanism to enhance service provision and accountability in the country. In the same vein, the Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000 stipulates that in the local government sector all municipalities must implement performance management system for Senior Managers appointed in terms of section 56 of the Municipal Systems Act.

In South Africa, municipalities are categorised into metropolitan municipalities, local municipalities and district municipalities. Municipalities have been categorised into different classes depending on their size and geographic situation. The common primary objective of municipalities is to service the communities of the area with basic services such as road infrastructure, water, electricity, sanitation, housing and to provide conducive environment for economic development (Haizam & Saudi 2014, p. 96). The RSA Constitution, on objects of local government requires that local government must be accountable to communities and provide services in a consistent manner to communities. Constitutional obligations of municipalities include the provision of, water and electricity, roads infrastructure and (Manhall & Wood 2016, p. 275).

The Eastern Cape Province of South Africa is one of the largest provinces in terms of land space. The central coastal part of the province is largely occupied by the Amatole District Municipality (ADM). The ADM covers an extensive area which includes eight local municipalities (BCM Municipality 2017, p. 54). Performance management can be uniformly applied across all municipalities in South Africa as development goals are set nationally and all municipalities comply with the prescripts of the Municipal Systems Act. According to the handbook for Municipal Councillors (BCM Municipality 2017, p. 58), the implementation of performance management facilitates the creation of a culture of good performance. Therefore, municipalities are legally required to develop PMS that monitor and assess performance for all municipal employees.

z municipality is one of the several municipalities formed in South Africa with the focus on decentralisation meant to afford municipal more managerial authority and responsibility (Manhall & Wood 2016, p. 145). Local government further introduced budget reforms which focused on three-year budgeting

plan which emphasis was on input and rules to output and responsibility (DPSA 2004, p. 5). Professionalization of local government was one of the characteristics of NPM reform adopted by South Africa. Although PMS has been integrated in the local government sphere to accelerate the delivery of services to communities, development and performance management is still a concern in the local government sphere (O'Callaghan 2015, p. 289). There is greater emphasis on the management of PMS in the local government to enhance service delivery.

The Main Research Question of this Study was Highlighted as Being

To investigate performance management as a tool for accountability in local government sector.

The Sub-Objectives were Identified as Follows

- To examine the nature of performance management systems in Enoch Mgijima Municipality;
- To examine challenges associated with PMS implementation for Senior Managers and middle managers of Enoch Mgijima Municipality;
- To propose mechanism for successful implementation of PMS at Enoch Mgijima Municipality.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

From the two broad research paradigms, this study followed the interpretivist paradigm. The interpretivist paradigm allows researchers to make sense of the social world surrounding around them (Quinlan 2011, p. 125). Based on the nature of the research situation at hand, the interpretivist paradigm was suitable for this study. Bryman & Bell (2011), notes that when applying the exploratory research design, unstructured methods are combined with informal techniques for data collection (Creswell., 2013). The exploratory research design was followed, and interviews were used.

This study chose the qualitative approach, the approach best works with the interpretivist paradigm and exploratory research design. For this study, purposive sampling technique was used. Hallbone & Priest (2013, p. 32), emphasise that in purposive sampling, the researcher selects individuals with the relevant knowledge and skills. The researcher identified 12 participants that provided detailed

responses that were relevant to the study. The research data was collected through primary data which constituted interviews. Creswell (2013, p. 32), describes the process of data analysis permits researchers to infer findings from one study to the other, in the case of quantitative studies. For the purpose of this study, thematic analysis was employed which paved way for the development of a frame works.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Performance Management as a Concept

Bagerkord (2012, p. 176) states that “performance management is actually a broad term that was initially used in the 1970’s to depict a technology-science based on application methods intended to assist the institutional management to manage both results and behaviour, which are two vital aspects of what is commonly identified as performance”. Aslam & Sarwar (2010, p. 30) indicate that “performance management is neither a nor a single process, it can be considered as a set of process, or a concept, a holistic philosophy that includes motivation of employees, to employees performing well, employee knowledge about what their managers expect of them, the development of employees, monitoring and measuring performance to know what areas are to be improved”.

Ranjan& Mishra (2017) emphasise that “performance management is a systematic process of setting out goals, continually monitoring performance, developing capacity to perform and evaluating performance as a basis of rewarding good performance and developing action plans for poor performance”. Performance management system can be defined as a strategic tool for management, which capacitate political leaders, senior management, employees and other stakeholders from various sectors with tools and mechanism to plan regularly, monitor, regularly measure and evaluate performance of employees in terms of set targets.

Aguinis, Joo and Gottfrdson (2012), describe performance management as continuous process of planning and target setting, identifying, and evaluating the performance of individuals and teams, and align performance scorecards individuals with strategic objectives of the institution. Aguinis (2012, p. 2), indicated that “performance management is a continuous process of planning, identifying, evaluating and developing performance management in organisations by linking each individual

performance scorecard and objectives of the organisation to the overall mission and goals”. Performance management can be described as a mechanism for monitoring, evaluating and enhancing the performance of individuals and contribute to the overall performance of the organisation and necessitates routine reporting of performance by different departments.

Sajjad & Amjad (2012, p. 32), regard “performance management as a systematic approach by which the overall organisational performance can be improved, by improving the performance of individuals within the team”. Performance management can also be regarded as an integrated approach and mechanism to measure and evaluate of section within the organisation and align objectives to the individual’s performance scorecards to monitor achievements of the objectives. Gaffoor & Cloete (2010) regard performance management as an essential aspect of municipal effectiveness because as it is a critical process through which performance of individuals is monitored and accomplishment of organisations goals. Performance management can be uniformly applied across all municipalities in South Africa as development goals are set nationally and all municipalities comply with the prescripts of the Municipal Systems act.

Performance Management Challenges in Municipalities

Despite performance management systems in local government as regulated by various pieces of legislation and performance regulations, PMS processes in municipalities require significant improvement. PMS in municipalities can assist to address the challenges faced by municipalities. Below are several challenges:

Lack of Resources to Perform

According to Public Service Commission (2007, p. 28) lack of resources refers “the ability to manage performance management is undermined by lack of adequate resources available to employees to meet set targets”. Providing the tools to employees to implement their set targets such as technological training, budget, human resources, and management support is key to PMS.

Lack of Accountability

Mark and Nayyar-stone (2000, p. 22), highlights that “senior management have the perception that there are more important matters that the

municipalities must address, and performance management is not a priority”. Van der Waldt (2006:138), maintains that “what makes employees to perform is the maintenance of leadership from top down and the ability of government leadership to instil appropriate principles of responsible and moral and ethical behaviour, to inspire and motivate individual and group efforts”.

Lack of Understanding

Performance management should be the driver of service delivery and accountability of the use of public resources. Brown (2008, p. 34), indicates that “executive and management confuse performance appraisal to performance management, they regard it as an annual event of looking back at past performance, other officials consider PMS as money making tool”. Manyaka (2007), highlights that effective implementation of PMS may overload managers with work therefore management must understand the framework as it will allow them to cope, rather than not support it.

Inadequate Implementation

Pulakos (2011, p. 34), highlights that “if PMS is implemented inadequately its impact may harm employee confidence and damage employer-employee relationship and instances of failed attempts to improve performance management indicate its inherent difficulties”. Municipalities have established measurable scorecards to help in overall institutional performance, but the actual conversion of the measuring instruments into senior management performance agreements is often not realised.

Lack of Management Commitment

Leadership both political and administratively are the key human factor in performance management system, their quality guidance, motivation and support by the senior management cannot be over emphasised. Cloete (2010, p. 38), states that “the most difficult aspect facing municipalities in achieving organisational set targets on PMS is obtaining leadership support”.

Legislative and Policy Framework of PMS

The performance management is essential in municipalities to encourage that the set-out goals and objectives are achieved and enhance efficient utilisation of public resources. Therefore, for the public resources to be efficiently utilised people anticipate proper

implementation of various forms of law notably, labour, environment, health and safety laws to be respected. Notshikila (2014) evaluating the performance management of the local government is of paramount important in the sense that resources can be wasted if there is no proper performance management. To curb the problems faced by the municipalities in South Africa, the White paper on Local Government (1998) come out with performance management systems to encourage and improve service provision.

The White Paper on Local Government 1998

White Paper on Local Government (1998) necessitated the introduction of PMS in local government, as an instrument to achieve developmental goals of local government. It highlights the developmental goals, proper planning, and budgeting and effective performance management as key elements which can assist local government to build up a coordinated view point to achieve better delivery of services and accountability of public resources.

Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations (2001)

The Local Government: Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations (2001) issued in terms of Municipal Systems Act, 2000, stipulates in more detail in terms of what is expected from municipalities in implementing its PMS, represents how the Municipalities cycle and processes of performance planning, monitoring, measurement, evaluation, reporting and improvement will be conducted, organised and managed, including determining the roles of the different role-players and the local community, in the functioning of the system. It also regulates the establishment, composition and functioning of a Performance Audit Committee (PAC). The audit committees have a major responsibility in municipalities that centres around providing assurance on the adequacy, reliability and accuracy of financial reporting and information for purposes of oversight, decision-making and accountability.

Municipal Systems Act, (2000)

Municipal Systems Act, 2000, contains performance regulations for municipal managers and managers directly accountable to the municipal managers. The regulations include the terms of conditions of employment of these persons and set out how the performance of municipal managers and their direct reports

must be planned, reviewed and improved. It sets a much firmer and clearer base for the mentioned personnel and aims to limit grey areas open to mismanagement such as the distribution of performance bonuses. This regulation provides for the conclusion of performance agreements and personal development plans. Nevertheless, Co GTA (2009) indicated that many municipal managers do not have signed performance contracts. Failure to sign a performance agreement is a breach of contract and the employing municipality may terminate the employment contract of a manager unless good cause for non-compliance shown. In principle, the no performance agreement, no performance bonus principle, should be applied. Therefore, this is also a fact that many municipalities do not adhere to regulation 5 of the Municipal Performance Regulations which state that municipalities must submit copies of signed performance agreements to the MECs responsible for local government in the relevant province.

Labour Relations Act (LRA)

The Labour Relations Act (LRA) of 1995, through the Code of Good Practice, provides guidelines on the management of poor performance and consequences thereof. The Act provides management and council with development ways of management poor performance without resorting to dismissal as the first option. It provides steps to be followed for corrective measures for poor performance which include proper investigation to establish the causes of poor performance. Munzhedzi (2011, p. 25), indicate that “dismissing an employee because of underperformance should be the last option after all improvement plans such as coaching, counselling and training have been exhausted”.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Performance Management Information

The findings of the study on the understanding of performance management system as applied in Enoch Mgijima municipality revealed the following. 45% of respondents in Enoch Mgijima municipality have a common understanding of what PMS is. 55% displayed a lack of knowledge or understanding about what PMS is by responding that a Performance Management System is a Performance Management System. Enoch Mgijima Municipality have adopted Performance Management System as a tool to measure performance and achieve effective service delivery. This is because effective PMS

needs to have a well-articulated process for accomplishing service delivery targets, with defined roles and timelines for senior managers. Capacity building training will be provided for each director in line with their training needs. There is a training committee in place and that committee resides in HR section and is comprised of representatives from the entire departments within the municipality and there is an annual training schedule that is comprised of inputs from departments and research reports conducted by the skills development facilitator when identifying the training needs.

Senior managers also indicated that the municipality have training programmes in place, which covers a range of issues such as financial management, PMS, supply chain management, strategic management and furthermore there are other programmes rendered by South Africa Local Government Association (SALGA) that are aimed to make senior managers understand what local government must do from their own portfolios. There are also other short courses that senior management are enrolled in through the local skills development facilitator. Therefore, this indicate that municipalities take initiative in supporting the training and development of senior managers because without training, senior managers will not be equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge and competencies which are needed for them to deliver effective and efficient services

Senior management are aware that they need to submit quarterly performance reports and annual report but will wait for the PMS coordinator to ask them to submit as the due date has passed and end up submitting reports without the portfolio of evidence for achievement of target. Therefore, this means that management are not adhering to the system as it is put and it is important to emphasize that there is no legislative requirement covering the PMS of other employees within municipality except for the Senior managers as prescribed by the Systems Act, meaning that senior managers must not try to justify their failure to perform based on the fact that the system is not cascaded to the rest of the staff.. Therefore, from the above analysis the system is not effective because senior management are waiting for the system to be rolled out to the rest of the staff so that it can be effective.

All the respondents in Enoch Mgijima Municipality mentioned that PMS is measured

on quarterly basis as per the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP) of a municipality. In every quarter senior managers are supposed to be subjected to performance assessment and evaluations whereby their performance for that quarter is looked at and each have to report on how far the set targets have been achieved, in cases where the targets are not met a senior manager is expected to provide reasons as to why targets are not met. Most of the respondents 65% indicated that performance assessments are not conducted quarterly. The system is monitored by the Municipal Manager (MM) as the accounting officer of the municipality, the Mayor and the Council. The measurement criteria have two areas which are Key Performance Areas (KPA) and Core Competency Requirements (CCR) with the weighting of 80:20. The 80% is allocated to KPAs accounting to the main area of work and the 20% is allocated to the core competency requirements which include managerial attributes or competencies such as strategic leadership, financial management skills, project management skills, people management, honesty and integrity, communication and knowledge of developmental local government.

The findings of the study on key performance indicators that are used to measure performance in Enoch Mgijima Municipality by the respondents are as follows: 80% of the respondents are aware that there are five developmental priorities for local government which Basic service delivery, Sound financial management, Good governance and public participation, Local economic development and Organisational transformation and capacity. While 20% of the respondents were not sure or clear of the developmental priorities

PMS IMPLEMENTATION AT MGIJIMA MUNICIPALITY

A good performance management system enables a municipality to understand how its employees are currently performing, and to identify those employees that contribute most, or least. It is therefore for that reason that necessitates the researcher to probe the level of implementation of performance management on Section 57 managers and middle managers at the municipality. More than half of the respondents, 52% agreed or strongly agreed, that regular discussions are held with the municipal manager / supervisor about their personal development. 30% of the respondents

disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, and 18% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. This is a positive finding; however, the municipality must ensure the needs of the remaining respondents are addressed. The municipal manager/Director need to hold meetings to discuss the employees' personal development.

A high percentage of 56% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that in their last review, they were given the chance to say everything they wanted to say regarding performance management. However, 28% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 16% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. The results indicated a positive finding since employees are given an opportunity to raise any matters regarding performance management. These will enhance their confidence in a sense that they can make recommendations on areas of improvement. More than half of the respondents 60% agreed or strongly agreed that performance appraisals are handled in a professional manner. It is only a small percentage of 20% of the respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 20% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. There is a need for the municipality to address the concerns of the other half that is not so sure if the performance appraisals are handled in a professional manner, because the process need to be fair and transparent for all employees.

The majority of 45% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that managers / supervisors in this Municipality motivate staff to develop and achieve their goals. 50% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, and another 5% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. A low percentage of the respondents did not comment on the statement. Therefore, the municipality is facing a probability of poor performance due to lack of motivation of staff to achieve their goals. Most of the respondents 70% agreed or strongly agreed, with the statement. Only 15% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 15% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. A low percentage of 30% of the respondents disagreed with the statement however the overwhelming majority stated that their jobs offer them an opportunity to use their own initiative.

More than half of the respondents 44% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. 48% of

the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, and only 8% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. A high percentage of the respondents are not happy that senior managers and supervisors are not telling employees when they do their job well. This demotivates staff to perform at their best. The results indicate that 36% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that monitoring standards of performance are a regular management duty in the municipality. However, a higher percentage of 52% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, supported by 12% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. This is a negative finding since more than half of the respondents disagree that monitoring standards of performance is a regular management duty in the municipality, thus prohibits management of the municipality to track each employee's performance on a regular basis and propose interventions where problems prevail.

Over two third of the respondents 72% disagree or strongly disagree that their managers coach them to improve their performance, a lower percentage of 18% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed, and while 10% of the respondents did not comment on the statement. Managers or supervisors at the municipality are not doing a good job by providing coaching and mentoring of the subordinates. This is a signal for poor performance in the municipality to achieve its targets or to improve the employee's performance. More than half percentage of the respondents 62% disagree or strongly disagree that employees in the municipality receive feedback on how they are performing against targets. A low percentage of 38% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, with the statement. A high proportion of the respondents are not happy that they don't receive feedback about their performance. It is extremely important for management to provide feedback to employees this will enables them to know areas requiring improvement.

Accountability of PMS Results

The findings of the study on the effectiveness of Performance Management System revealed that 55% of managers of Enoch Mgijima Municipality are of the common view that PMS is not effective in the municipality. However, they stated that it does enable the Council to hold each senior manager accountable for deliverables of targets set for his or her

directorate. But for it to be fully operational it must be cascaded to the lower level so that all employees can focus on a similar goal. This is because the overall achievement of the municipality does not depend on the performance or achievement of senior management only but the performance of all the employees at large. While 55% of managers indicated that PMS is not effective, and it is just done for compliance and as basis for rewarding senior managers with performance bonuses. It is important for municipalities to continuously monitor their performance in fulfilling their developmental mandate they must address the challenges they are facing, in probing this the researcher probed the following, the challenges of PMS in municipality:

Cascading of PMS to Staff

All respondents agree that PMS is not cascaded to the rest of the staff and that's makes it difficult for senior managers to achieve high performance. Because the performance of an institution constitutes by individuals meaning if individuals are not assessed they become demotivated because their performance is not measured, and their effort are not recognized. There is a delay in supply chain management and lack of PMS knowledge, the municipalities indicated that they are still on the learning curve, so some aspects of PMS are still not yet understood by senior managers.

Lack of Resources

Perception drawn from the respondents on the challenges is that there is lack of resources in the municipality as such currently the municipality do not have dedicated and qualified personnel to perform the function of PMS. The function is performed by the IDP manager assisted by the intern and it causes problems because it is work overload and a municipality can't really hold someone accountable because he or she is not appointed for PMS function.

Confused Institutional Reporting

Senior managers report on all things and all over, for example they report on PMS, to Treasury, to COGTA then they tend to weigh the two and end up saying PMS is internal if they don't report external for example Treasury will not release their funds. Directors don't make time to prepare their reports for PMS as such their reports are not consistent, no quality assurance they just send because the report is due.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, analysis and conclusion of this research study, the following recommendations are made:

Proper Consideration of Training Needs

Equipping the senior managers with skills and knowledge through training will enhance capacity development which will enable them to develop innovative and appropriate technologies for managing the performance of their units and for delivering services efficiently and effectively. Many times, senior managers are sent for training without consideration for the relevance to present job or future appointment. The researcher therefore recommends that proper consideration of training need take place through a skills audit on a quarterly basis before municipalities can send a senior manager to train. Senior managers must not attend training for the sake of attending but they must attend when the training is necessary.

Resources must be Provided for the Municipality

There are four main factors of production namely, natural resources, labour, capital and entrepreneur. From the information obtained in chapter four it was clearly stated that Enoch Mgijima Local Municipality is not a water authority and they are also neither a housing authority nor a provider. The municipalities only assist in the coordination of the provision. Therefore, the municipality must be provided with the necessary resources to continue coordinating the provision of services. Another important factor is labour, goods and services cannot be produced without human effort. The researcher recommends that additional skilled qualified and competent senior managers be appointed where posts have been vacant to speed up the process of service delivery. For the municipality to run its services smoothly it must also have capital. Capital is comprised of all manufactured resources such as machines, tools, money and buildings that are used in the production process. The researcher recommends that the municipality must control public money whereby economy, efficiency and effectiveness are promoted.

Continuous Evaluation of Senior Manager's Performance

The researcher recommends that the accounting officer of the municipality ensure that there is a

continuous evaluation or assessment of all senior managers' performance to achieve organisational goals and objectives. The assessments must not be done at the end of financial year but must be done on quarterly basis so that a municipality can be alerted where underperformance is experienced which will allow for relevant intervention for improvement. Performance management system must not be a punitive activity and it must not be done just for compliance sake. Senior managers need to understand and be encouraged to take full ownership of the performance management processes.

Provision of Rewards

Performance management system will not only improve the service delivery and accountability, but it will also benefit senior managers, in that senior managers who perform their duties above the expected level should be rewarded to ensure that they maintain a high level of performance. Therefore, the researcher recommends that the municipality must offer incentives in a form of financial rewards such as performance bonuses and non-financial rewards such as individual recognition to encourage high performers to continue with the good work.

Compliance with Regulations

For Enoch Mgijima local municipality to improve their performance the researcher recommends that they must adhere to the requirements of administration outlined in the Municipal System Act, 32 of 2000 which among others include to ensure that managers and other staff members align their roles and responsibilities with the priorities and objectives set out in the municipal IDP this is to avoid finding municipal employees being busy all day but not delivering the set targets, provide an equitable, fair, open and non-discriminatory working environment this is significant because when employees are treated fairly they will be motivated to perform above the expected level, maximize efficiency of communication and decision making within the administration. Compliance should also be strengthened in ensuring that senior managers submit the required reports together with the Portfolio of Evidence within the prescribed time frame and disciplinary measures must be taken for non-compliance particularly regarding late submissions.

Improve The Level of Implementation of PMS

The management needs to ensure that supervisors should have the basic knowledge of

subordinates' duties, to enable them to monitor their performance and to provide coaching and support where necessary. Managers need to coach employees to improve their performance. It is extremely important for managers to provide feedback to employees this will enable them to know areas requiring improvement. The municipality needs to employ a tool to measure employees' performance that is appropriate for the organisation and it should be reliable to measure its intended purpose. The Municipality must ensure that (Performance Management System) PMS should be linked to producing sustainable long-term performance of the organisation. The municipality should maintain the development programme to improve skills. It is imperative for the PMS to involve the Municipality goals which will be reduced to the strategic plans, annual performance plan and later into individual performance agreements. Ensure that employees are correctly placed in positions where they are using their skills. Performance appraisals are handled in a professional manner and performance rating gives the true reflection of the employee's performance.

CONCLUSION

The main objective of this study was to investigate performance management as a tool for accountability in local government sector. Research questions touched on aspects such as the nature of performance management systems (PMS), challenges associated with PMS implementation and sought to develop a framework for effective implementation of PMS at Enoch Mgijima Municipality. The Goal Setting Theory was applied as the underpinning theory of this study. Literature on the implementation of PMS in Enoch Mgijima municipality was explored, examining the policy documents and implementation plan sources. The exploratory research design was applied in this study and this informed the selection of the sample size and procedure, data collection methods, data analysis methods, validity and reliability and the ethical considerations. Owing to the selection the choice of using the interpretivist approach, the qualitative method was employed, and respondents were interviewed using a questionnaire. The study area was Enoch Mgijima Local Municipality and the research population been the Section 57 managers and middle managers in each department within the municipality.

The analysis and interpretation were chronologically arranged according to the sequence of questions in the interviews and questionnaires. The data that was collected analysed and presented through the descriptive interpretative analysis and through the use of charts and tables in accordance with the analytical approach used. Data was analysed according to the objectives of the study. From findings, PMS shortfalls identified as being among others include lack of PMS knowledge, insufficient resources, and non-compliance with the submission dates. Some senior managers indicated that they have limited knowledge on PMS mainly because they see PMS as a function of the Monitoring and evaluation section. The research also revealed that there are no proper considerations of training needs, in most cases senior managers and middle managers were sent to training not because training needs were assessed and identified but mainly because they must attend trainings for the sake of attending. Therefore, there is a need for the municipality to do audit of the Workplace Skills Plan of senior managers and middle managers so that they can receive proper training which will in return improve service delivery and accountability to the communities and municipality

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