

**ROLES OF LEADERSHIP AND RULES OF CONDUCT  
IN INSTILLING ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR:  
CASE OF CITY OF TSHWANE METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY**

by

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## DECLARATION

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### **ROLES OF LEADERSHIP AND RULES OF CONDUCT IN INSTILLING ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR: CASE OF CITY OF TSHWANE METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY**

I declare that the above mini-dissertation is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



**SIGNATURE**

17 August 2021  
**DATE**

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to the memory of my late parents, Dr. S.A Adeoye and Mrs. E.O Adeoye. Also, to the memory of my dear sister, late Ms. Adeduntan Adeoye and lastly to my friend, late Mrs. Vivien Onyejose is this work dedicated. I wish you were all here to celebrate with me. I miss and love you always. Rest on, you are never forgotten.

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## ABSTRACT

This research set out to find out what factors drive the ethical conduct of municipal staff members in general, with the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (CTMM) as a case study. The rules as well as the conduct of the leaders under which the officials serve may influence the standard of ethics attainable. An understanding of what factors influence the choices made by individual officials is imperative for the attainment of good ethical standard of behaviour. This will help the CTMM to understand what exactly drives their staff members to act and behave ethically at their job, especially when dealing with the public.

The study started with an exploration of the different leadership styles that exist and how such may influence the organisation that is led, after which it discussed how rules are developed, codified in the system and translated into organisational culture. Pertinent questions about the importance of rules of conduct and styles of leadership were then formulated and posed to the officials and the leadership of the municipality in order to understand their perception of the influence of these factors on maintaining high ethical standard. The case study approach was adopted and respondents were selected with the assistance of the information officer of the municipality. Responses were obtained within the constraints imposed by the COVID-19 restrictions on business operations and the data collected was coded using ATLAS.ti. The codes were analysed and grouped to extricate the embedded themes and deductions were made from the evolution of the themes.

The research revealed that leadership seems to play a more significant role in influencing the behaviour of staff members. In as much as staff members are aware of the rules of conduct, and have even been made to sign the rules, it was revealed that these rules are just guiding principles on paper. The behaviour and guidance of their leaders tend to influence staff conduct more than the rules and it needs leadership attitude to legitimise the rule itself. This suggests that while it is important for the CTMM to give attention to its rules, it will, however, achieve a lot more in driving ethics in its organisation by giving more attention to how leadership with ethical values are recruited, trained, retained and encouraged to influence the commitment of the officers of the municipality to maintaining a high standard of ethics in the municipality.

## TRANSLATION OF ABSTRACT (Northern Sotho)

### **SETSOPOLWA**

Dinyakišišo tše di nyaka go tseba mabaka ao a hlohleletšago maitshwaro a makaone a maloko a bašomi ba masepala ka kakaretšo, go lebeletšwe Masepala wa Toropokgolo ya Tshwane (CTMM) bjalo ka ntlha ya dinyakišišo. Melawana, gammogo le maitshwaro a baetapele bao bahlankedi ba šomago ka fase ga bona, e ka huetša maemo a go fihlelela maitshwaro a makaone. Go bohlokwa go kwešiša gore ke mabaka afe ao a huetšago dikgetho tša motho go fihlelela maitshwaro a makaone. Se se tla thuša CTMM go kwešiša gore gabotse ke eng seo se hlohleletša bašomi ba ona go dira le go itshwara gabotse ka mešomong ya bona, kudukudu ge ba šoma le setšhaba.

Ka fao, dinyakišišo tše di thoma go kwešišo ya mekgwa ya boetapee yeo e fapafapanego le ka fao e ka huetšago setheo, gammogo le ka fao melawana e hlangwago ka gona, e beakanywago ka tshepedišong, le go fetišetšwa ka go setlwaedi sa setheo seo. Dipotšišo tša maleba ka ga bohlokwa bja melawana ya maitshwaro le mekgwa ya boetapele le tšona di ile tša hlangwa gomme tša botšišwa bahlankedi le baetapele ba masepala go nyaka go tseba ka fao ba bonago khuetšo ya mabaka a ka ga go tšwetša pele maitshwaro a makaone. Mokgwa wa dinyakišišo tša seemo o dirišitšwe gomme baarabi ba ile ba kgethwa gotee le bahlankedi ba masepala ba maleba. Diphetolo di ile tša hwetšwa ka go obamela melawana ya Covid-19 mabapi le go šoma ga dihlongwa, gomme tshedimošo yeo e kgobokeditšwego e ile ya fiwa khoute ya ATLAS.ti le dingwalwa tša maleba tšeo di kgethilwego, gomme kwešišo e hweditšwe go lebeletšwe merero yeo e bakilwego ke dikhoute.

Dinyakišišo di utollotše gore boetapele bo bonala bo kgatha tema ye bohlokwa kudu go huetša maitshwaro a maloko a bašomi. Ka ge bašomi ba tseba melawana ya maitshwaro ebile ba kgopetšwe gore ba saenele melawana ye, go utollotšwe gore melawana ye ke fela ditlhahli tšeo di ngwadilwego pampiring. Maitshwaro le tlhahlo ya baetapele ba bona di fela di huetša maitshwaro a bašomi kudu go feta melawana gomme se se nyaka maikemišetšo a baetapele go dira gore melawana e phethagatšwe ka semolao. Se se šišinya gore le ge CTMM e swanetše go fa šedi go melawana ya yona, e tla fihlelela tše ntši kudu go hlohleletša maitshwaro a makaone ka setheong sa yona. Go fa šedi ye ntši mabapi le ka fao baetapele ba go ba le maitshwaro a mabotse ba thwalwago ka gona, ba hlahlwago, ba tšwelago pele go šoma ka masepaleng le go hlohleletšwa go huetša boikgafo bja bahlankedi ba masepala, go tla tšwetša pele maitshwaro a makaone kudu ka masepaleng.

## TRANSLATION OF ABSTRACT (IsiZulu)

### **ISIFINYEZO ESISUKETHE UMONGO WOCWANINGO**

Ucwaningo belufuna ukuthola ukuthi ngabe yiziphi izindlela zokuziphatha ngokwama-ethiki eziqhuba ukusebenza kwabasebenzi ngokubanzi, kanti kusetshenziswe i-City of Tswane Metropolitan Municipality (CTMM) njengesifundo sokubonisa i-case study. Imitheshwana yolawulo, kanye nokuziphatha kwabaholi izikhulu ezisebenzela bona, kungaba nomthelela ngezinga lama-ethiki okufinyelelwa kuwo. Kubalulekile ukuqondisisa ukuthi ngabe yiziphi izinto ezinomthelela kulokho okukhethwa zikhulu ngokufinyelela amazinga ama-ethiki ngokuziphatha. Lokhu kuzosiza abe-CTMM ukuqondisisa kahle ukuthi yini okunomthelela ngokusebenza kwabasebenzi ukuthi benze ngendlela ethile nokuziphatha okuthile ngokwama-ethiki emisebenzini yabo, ikakhulukazi lapho bebhekana nabantu.

Lolu cwano, ngakho-ke luqhubeka ngokusekela ekuqondisiseni izitayela zobuholi obehlukene kanye nokuthi ngabe zinomthelela kanjani kwinqubo, kanye nokuthi imitheshwana yolawulo (rules) yenziwa kanjani, ifakelwa kanjani kwinqubo, kanti futhi yenziwa kanjani ukuthi ibe yingxenye yosiko lwenhlangano. Imibuzo ebalulekile mayelana nokubaluleka kwemitheshwana yolawulo yokuziphatha kanye nezitayela zobuholi kwenziwa kwase kunikezwa izikhulu kanye nobuholi bukamasipala ukuthi bachaze ukuthi ngabe babona kanjani umthelela walezi zinto ekusebenzeni ngokulandela amazinga ama-ethiki aphezulu. Inqubo ye-case study yiyo eyenziwa kanti abaphenduli kucwaningo bakhethwa kanye-kanye ngokusebenzisana nezikhulu zikamasipala ezifanele. Izimpendulo zatholakala noma kunezihibe ngenxa ye-Covid-19 ngokusebenza kwebhizinisi, kanti ulwazi olwaqoqwa lwahlelwa ngokulandela i-ATLAS.ti kanti imibhalo ethize yafundwa, kanti kwafinyelelwa ukuqondisisa ngezihloko ezavela kumakhodi.

Ucwaningo luveze ukuthi ubuholi bubonakala budlala indima ebalulekile ekubeni nomthelela ngokuziphatha kwabasebenzi. Njengoba abasebenzi bazi ngemitheshwana yolawulo yokuziphatha kanti futhi kwenziwa ukuthi basayine lemitheshwana yolawulo, kwavela ukuthi le mitheshwana yolawulo iyizimiso nje zemikhombandlela ezisemaphetheni kodwa engasetshenziswa ngokwempela. Ukuziphatha kanye nobuholi babaholi yibona obunomthelela kakhulu ukwedlula imitheshwana yolawulo, kanti kudingeka ukubona kobuholi ukuze imitheshwana yolawulo isebenze kahle. Lokhu kuphakamisa ukuthi ngisho noma abe-CTMM kumele baqikelele ngemitheshwana yolawulo, kodwa kungafinyelelwa okuningi uma kungaba nokuqhuba ama-ethiki kakhulu enhlanganweni.

Ukubonelela kakhulu ukuthi ngabe ubuholi bubona ama-ethiki ebaluleke kangakanani lapho kugqugquzelwa abazosebenza, kuqeqesho, kanye nasekugcineni abasebenzi kanye nasekukhuthazeni ukuba nomthelela ukuzimisela kwezikhulu zikamasipala, yikho okungenza ukuthi kulandelwe amazinga aphezulu ama-ethiki kumasipala.



## **KEY CONCEPTS**

Leadership; Rules; Codes of Conduct; Ethics; Ethical Behaviour; Ethical Conduct; Municipal Government; City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality; Municipal Leaders; Municipal Officials

### TRANSLATION OF KEY CONCEPTS (Northern Sotho)

#### **MAREO A BOHLOKWA**

Boetapele; Melaotshepetšo ya Maitshwaro; Melawana ya Maitshwaro; Maitshwaro; Maitshwaro a Makaone; Maitshwaro a Mabotse; Mmušo wa Masepala; Masepala wa Toropokgolo ya Tshwane; Baetapele ba Masepala; Bahlankedi ba Masepala

### TRANSLATION OF KEY CONCEPTS (isiZulu)

#### **AMAGAMA ABALULEKILE**

Ubuholi; Imitheshwana yolawulo yokuziphatha; Amakhodi okuziphatha; Ama-ethiki; Ukuziphatha ngokulandela ama-ethiki; Ukuziphatha okulandela ama-ethiki; Uhulumeni kaMasipala; I-City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality; Abaholi bakaMasipala; Izikhulu zikaMasipala

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| ACRONYM /<br>ABBREVIATION | DESCRIPTION   |
|---------------------------|---|
| ACIIA                     | Association of Certified International Investment Analyst |
| ANOVA                     | One-way Analysis of Variance                              |
| CAQDAS                    | Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software         |
| CTMM                      | City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality                 |
| HAIR                      | Helicopter, Analysis, Imagination and Reality             |
| HR                        | Human Resource  |
| IMF                       | Integrity Management Framework                            |
| LMX                       | Leader-Member Exchange                                    |
| NPM                       | New Public Management                                     |
| OECD                      | Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development     |
| PSM                       | Public Service Motivation                                 |
| UNCAC                     | United Nations Convention Against Corruption              |

## CHAPTER 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

*“The most important human endeavour is the striving for morality in our individual actions. Our inner balance and even our very existence depend on it. Only morality in our actions gives beauty and dignity to life.”*

(Albert Einstein)

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Municipalities at the local sphere of government are the closest of the three spheres of the executive arm of government to the citizens, therefore, their effectiveness has a significant impact on the citizen’s perception of government performance. Municipal officials are employed to serve members of their communities and not their personal interests, however, unethical and unprofessional behaviour, non-compliance to rules, lack of leadership and unethical behaviour are perceived to be widespread amongst public officials, and municipal officials are no exception (Madonsela, 2010:3 & Coetzee, 2016).

Ethics and integrity are important elements of government and democracy (Belle & Cantarelli, 2017:3). Ethical practices and consideration span across many offices within public administration, from the front desk officer communicating with the public to the background supervisors and decision makers. Ethics in the public sector refers to its moral standards (Chapman, 2000:1) and all public and municipal officials have a role to play. In essence, it is everyone’s personal and individual choice, reflected in words, actions, decisions and behaviour (Schoeman, 2014:3). An understanding of what drives the choices made by individual officials is imperative for the attainment of good ethical standard of behaviour. This is beneficial for individual officials, government institutions and the society at large, especially for a country dealing with the antecedents of apartheid. The apartheid history of South Africa and the attendant backlog of infrastructure gaps it created accentuates the imperativeness of efficient municipalities in bringing development to communities. Communities interact with local government officials through the services rendered by this arm of government with oversight from National and Provincial governments. Such services include, amongst others: municipal health services (municipal clinics), municipal public



transport, electricity reticulation, water and sanitation services, municipal parks and recreation, municipal roads, regulation of street trading, parking and traffic (Republic of South Africa, 1998).

Many factors have been considered to influence the standard of ethics upheld in particular government establishments, some of which include the leadership, availability, enforcement of rules of conduct and guiding principles, and the standard of moral and ethics shown by the leadership of the establishment - which to a large extent has psychological effects on the behaviour of the lower staff members. The standard of ethics, thus, upheld will have an influence on the manner in which services are provided (Downe, Cowell & Morgan, 2016:898; Hira & Shiao, 2016:17).

This study sought to evaluate how leadership and rules of conduct drive individual and organisational ethical behaviour in maintaining a high ethical standard of operation in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (hereafter referred to as the CTMM). The focus was on individual staff members and the managers at the CTMM where the control of government establishments recently changed from the national ruling party, the African National Congress, to the official opposition party, the Democratic Alliance. The CTMM is a Category A metropolitan municipality in South Africa with large, densely populated areas and strong local economies with exclusive executive and legislative powers (Statistics South Africa, 2016:1). This makes the CTMM one of the most important municipalities in South Africa.

Against the brief introduction, this chapter provides the background and rationale for the study in order to contextualise it within the discipline of Public Administration. Also provided are the problem statement, guiding research question, secondary research questions, and the study objectives. The methodological approach in terms of the research design, research method and data collection method are also provided. In addition, concepts that will be frequently used in the mini-dissertation are defined. The chapter concludes with ethical consideration and the outline of the mini-dissertation. The following background and rationale for this study gives an indication of why this study was necessary.

## 1.2. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 (hereafter referred to as the Constitution of 1996), as the supreme law of the Republic, lays the background for the legislative framework that guides public administration in all the municipalities of the Republic. The Constitution of 1996 states, amongst other stipulations, that local governments are to ensure the provision of services to communities, promote social and economic development and encourage the involvement of communities in matters of governance (Constitution, 1996: Section 152(1)). These responsibilities, and more, show the importance of the local government for community development. As public institutions, the Constitution makes it clear that the local governments should be governed by democratic values and principles, with a high standard of professional ethics, efficiently and effectively use resources, provide services impartially, fairly and without bias, and respond to people's need (Constitution, 1996: Section 195(1)).

Furthermore, in line with the Constitution of 1996, the White Paper on Transforming Public Service delivery was adopted in 1997. In this document, called the *Batho Pele* ("People First") principles, eight (8) cardinal principles were adopted to guarantee and to improve the quality of services that the public servant should provide to the public (Republic of South Africa, 1997). These principles require public officials to be courteous, transparent, and deliver good service to the public. The principles aim to ensure that customers of public services are treated with dignity and respect. The White Paper states that the principles are about improving the efficiency and effectiveness of how services are delivered.

The Constitution of 1996, the *Batho Pele* principles, and other regulatory frameworks aim to promote ethical and professional practices and to ensure a uniform standard of services is provided by public officials. Different frameworks and policies guide the activities of each public entity, including municipalities. Within the CTMM, there are different rules and policies meant to guide the actions and decisions made by individuals. These policies and rules of conduct are, themselves, guided by the Constitution of 1996. Professional behaviour and effective leadership within this environment are indispensable. Leadership has been known to play a crucial role in public administration by giving directions, making innovative decisions, enforcing rules and managing diversity. A leader is someone who can influence others to achieve

individual and organisational goals and has the managerial authority to do so (Robbins, DeCenzo & Coulter, 2015:359). The Path-Goal Theory of the influence of leaders states that 'the leader's job is to assist followers in attaining their goals and to provide direction or support needed to ensure that their goals are compatible with the goals of the group or organisation' (ibid). This definition and theory highlight the importance of leaders in ensuring the highest standard of ethics in municipalities, like the CTMM. However, leaders, as individuals, also have different values. It is therefore worth exploring the ethical values of leaders at the CTMM. This study, thus, in addition to leadership, considered the effects of rules in driving the standard of ethical practices of individuals in the provision of services at the local government level, specifically the CTMM.

Municipalities are important government units for the study of ethics, however, only a few studies have been conducted at different levels of government on ethical and unethical conducts. This study benefitted the CTMM and added to the existing body of knowledge on ethics within the discipline, Public Administration.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Unacceptable, unprofessional, unethical and ill-disciplined behaviour is believed to be preponderant amongst public office holders at the CTMM. Unethical practices at the CTMM range from corruption to lack of responsiveness to the needs of clients, misuse of public property, non-compliance with policies and rules, racial discrimination, inefficiency, and ineffectiveness. All these result, not only in the waste of public resources and lack of service delivery, but also undermine public trust in the CTMM (Mafunisa, 2000:5).

A scandal was reported all over the media earlier in 2018 over the appointment of the chief of Staff at the CTMM. The appointed candidate did not meet the minimum requirement, but the municipality did not apply for a waiver from the Department of Cooperative Governance as required by the Local Government Act before hiring the staff. During the appointment into this senior level position within the CTMM, proper processes in terms of verification of qualifications were not followed by the Human Resource (HR) division, the division tasked with upholding ethical principles, which ultimately led to the resignation of the said Chief of Staff (Mahlatshe, 2018). In another incident, Mayor Msimanga noted that municipal officials were stealing from the poor

and benefitting from services meant for the poor in the CTMM. Civil servants' names appeared on the database of those that qualify for free water and electricity, and exemption from rates and taxes (Ngoepe, 2016). This type of unethical behaviour robs the poor of entitled benefits.

With this background information and the clarification from the brief literature review, the problem statement is formulated as follows:

**The roles of leadership and rules of conduct in promoting ethical behaviour at the CTMM, are yet unclear.**

There is, therefore, the need to research and promote leadership and rules of conduct as factors that can drive ethical practices and behaviours in the CTMM. Staff members from the Human Resource Division and the Operational Division of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM are specifically targeted.

### **1.3.1 Research questions**

The study posed a variety of questions in its pursuit of answers to the research problem. The main research question is:

What are the roles of leadership and rules of conduct in instilling ethical behaviour of the staff members of the Human Resource Division and the Operational Division of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM?

Further supplementary questions are:

- What does the literature say about ethical and unethical behaviour in the municipalities of South Africa?
- What is the most appropriate research design and methodology to study the roles of leadership and rules of conduct in encouraging ethical behaviour?
- What recommendations can be made to the CTMM in respect of the enhancement of ethical practices?

What, then, are the purpose and objectives of the study, or the rationale behind all the above-listed questions?

## **1.4 PURPOSE AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

Municipal officials, as individuals, have a constitutional mandate of providing basic municipal services to the relevant community (Constitution, 1996: Section 152(1b)). Nonetheless, there is little hope for effective service delivery if their employees lack moral and ethical conduct (Thozamile, 2012:27). Therefore, the main purpose of the study was to evaluate the roles of leadership and rules of conduct as factors driving ethical behaviour among staff members of the Human Resource and the Operational Divisions of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM.

Secondary objectives included the determination of what the literature reports about ethical and unethical behaviour in the municipalities of South Africa, and establishing the most suitable research design and methodology to investigate the role of these two variables, namely leadership and rules of conduct, on the ethical practices at the CTMM. Another objective was to present the research findings and recommendations in respect of leadership and rules of conduct as factors to enhance the ethical behaviour of the employees of the CTMM, to the City.

## **1.5 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW**

Lynch and Lynch (2009:6) define the concept 'ethics' as the study of the right conduct. It means what is right and wrong, what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour; which Thozamile (2012:26) believes is in the eye of the beholder or individuals. Ethics in government, according to Chapman (2000:1), refers to the moral standards in public service. The Association of Certified International Investment Analyst (ACIIA) describes values that are ethical and highlight that such values set standard and integrity for everyone in a profession. Such principles include honesty, integrity and fairness; reasonable care, prudence and diligence; interest of clients first; independence, objectivity and fair judgement; professional competence; prevention and disclosure of conflict of interest; and preservation of client confidentiality (ACIIA, 2005). These principles of ethical behaviour are fundamental for professionalism (Gilman, 2005:5).

Unethical behaviour or conduct goes against all these aforementioned principles of integrity. It has been outlined by Mafunisa (2000:5) to include the protection (or covering up) of incompetence; lack of responsiveness; moonlighting; and general

corruption. It can also include lying, stealing, fraudulent timekeeping and dishonesty in reports (Naude, 2004:38). Corruption is broad and can include the unethical use of public office, subjective and arbitrary decision making, unauthorised disclosure of confidential information, nepotism, bribery, fraud and theft, misuse of public property, victimisation, and sexual harassment. The list is almost endless, and Mafunisa mentions that this behaviour undermines public trust in the public service and holds local governments back from fulfilling their constitutional mandate. The definition of ethical conduct in this study refers to all types of good conduct among the officials of the CTMM. Ethical conduct or behaviour includes all factors contrary to unethical behaviour.

Downe, *et al.* (2016:898) described the influence of good leadership and formal ethical regulations in shaping the conduct of local councils in England. They did a qualitative study. Their goal was to move away from the statistical approach that uses patterns of associations, to an approach that seeks to understand factors driving behaviours. They adopted an interviewing approach that was agnostic about what shaped conduct and did not assume a priori that particular actors or ethical codes were the main drivers. They examine how personal and managerial factors together influence ethical conduct of the institutions. It was found that in local government, organisations that exhibit consistently good conducts have leaders who demonstrate good conducts. Such leaders, they claim, pre-empt abnormal situations and thereby minimise the use of ethics regulations. Such leaders are multiple, made up of both managers and politicians, and thereby, are able to exercise influence on the whole organisation.

Furthermore, Hira and Shiao (2016:17), did a study on the possible cultural changes that led to the transformation of the civil service systems of selected countries from being corrupt to being ethical. They studied three countries that are believed to have transformed and two that are believed not to be transforming as at the time of publication. They adopted the four-factor acronym, HAIR (Helicopter, Analysis, Imagination, and Reality) in their study. They sought how patterns of cultural beliefs and norms affect the sustenance of fight against corruption and ethical transformation, using case-based approach and interviewing people in a structured manner in the selected countries. They concluded that culture clearly plays a role in terms of the inflection points and the endurance in fighting corruption. Hira and Shiao (2016:39)

also stated that there is a need to incorporate cultural and belief issues into the design of an effective instrument for the control of unethical behaviours.

Kaptein (2015:215) studied the relationship between ethics programmes in organisations and the ethical behaviour of the staff. In conducting the study, He developed questionnaires and polled randomly from shared databases of companies employing 200 people or more across the United States of America. He used the measurement scale developed by the Kaptein (2008:978-1008) and found that unethical behaviour occurs less in organisations that have an ethics program than in organisations that do not have an one. There was a study of nine ethical programmes and their effects on ethical behaviour within an organisation. Kaptein finally stated that out of the nine ethics programmes considered, pre-employment screening seems to have the least effect on staff ethical behaviour while organisational accountability has the greatest.

Wright, Hassan and Park (2016:647) studied the possible effect of Public Service Motivation (PSM) on an organisation's ethical behaviour. They developed questionnaires that were administered to 477 employees and performed the One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) with supervisors as the predictor and willingness to report ethical problems as the dependent measures. They also used Structural Equation Modelling to analyse the relationship among variables. They argued that government employees with higher PSM are not only more likely to internalise values that support public interests, but they also are less likely to be concerned about the potential consequences that they may experience by reporting unethical conducts within their agencies.

Thaler and Helmig (2015:1365) sought to understand the role of ethical leadership and code of conduct on the ethical behaviour of public sector employees. They found that ethical leadership has a positive effect on an employees' organisation-related attitudes. In addition, codes of ethics are meant to guide those in managerial and leadership positions and remind them of their responsibilities to the public. Generally, institutions with a code of conduct tend to have employees with a greater sense of ethics and integrity, as well as commitment. However, ethical codes will only be effective when enforced with suitable penalties for non-compliance. Belle and Cantarelli (2017) also studied the drivers of unethical behaviour using a laboratory and

field experiment. They investigated how individual's unethical behaviour and preferences to engage in dishonest activities are influenced by ethical leadership, task performance, external regulations and pro-social impact. They found that ethical leadership and visibility did not affect preferences to be unethical. However, financial gain and an opportunity to improve the life of many people amplified the willingness to be unethical.

The studies and findings described above were used as bases in this study to explore the driving factors of ethical practices at the case under study.

## **1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

This section deals with the approach used to conduct a valid, reliable and objective study, which is a necessary condition for the attainment of truth (Mouton, 2014:104).

### **1.6.1 Research methodology**

Research methods or approaches are either qualitative or quantitative, or mixed (where blends of both methods are involved). The quantitative method, as observed by Coghlan and Brannick (2005:4-6), is characterised by the view that there is an external reality, and there is an independent, value-free and neutral researcher to examine this reality. This method aims to create generalisable knowledge, and research findings are validated by logic, consistency of prediction and control (Wessels & Thani, 2014:159). Quantitative research primarily follows a confirmatory scientific method, a positivistic paradigm with its focus on hypothesis and theory testing, based on precisely measured numerical data (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:82). The qualitative method, as defined by Bogdan and Taylor (1975), refers to research procedures which produce descriptive data; that is, people's written or spoken words and observations. This method produces non-numerical data about the objects of study and is more sensitive to the social context in which data is produced (Wessels & Thani, 2014:161). Qualitative research is generally used to understand people's experiences and to express their perceptions (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:82), and it typically assumes a constructivist or interpretative paradigm (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012:52).

Comparing these two methods, Paton (1990:169) points out that qualitative inquiry focuses on relatively small samples selected purposefully, while quantitative methods



typically depend on larger samples selected randomly. Generalisation and predictability are part of the objectives of quantitative methods, and probability (i.e. random) sampling helps to achieve these. Qualitative and quantitative methods differ in their view of human behaviour. While quantitative research assumes that behaviour is predictable and explainable, qualitative research views human behaviour as fluid, dynamic and ever changing, and hence, qualitative research is not interested in generalisation (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:85). This research will adopt a qualitative approach because it is more suitable for this study which seeks to evaluate the drivers of ethical behaviour of individuals since behaviour is dynamic and not static or predictable as assumed in a quantitative approach. Qualitative research also helps to produce rounded understanding on the basis of rich and detailed data, and the researcher is usually an integral part of the research process (Wessels & Thani, 2014:161). This study adopted an intrinsic case study, which is a single case interpretive research, where an understanding of what drives ethical practices among individual staff at the CTMM was studied, specifically of the Human Resource and the Operational Divisions of the Department of Public Works (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012:56).

### **1.6.2 Population and sampling**

For research purpose, the total group is the population. It is the complete set of elements that the researcher is interested in, and the part of the total group that will be selected to represent the group is the sample. Sampling the population helps in facilitating research efforts, it must, hence, be representative of the total group (Naude, 2004:20).

There are different methods of sampling. Since the aim of this research was to evaluate the roles of leadership and rules of conduct as driving factors of ethical and professional behaviour among staff members of the CTMM, a nonprobability purposive sampling method was used to select the participants who had extensive knowledge of the workings of the system. The characteristics of the participants included specified minimum number of years of service, namely five years; the type of duties involved in (some duties were more exposed to the possibility of being unethical); knowledge of the code of conduct or rules; role or level within the municipality and other relevant characteristics.

Purposive sampling, also called judgemental sampling, is defined by Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016:2) as the deliberate choice of a participant due to the qualities possessed by the participant; that is, the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can provide the information. Patton (1990:169), also writing on purposive sampling, elaborates that the logic and power lies in selecting information-rich participants or cases where one can learn about the issues central to the purpose of the research. The notion is choosing participants on the basis of their knowledge and relevance of information in relation to the study's research questions (Gentles, Charles, Ploeg & Mckibbon, 2015:1778).

Qualitative methods and purposive sampling place emphasis on saturation, which is an indicator that sufficient data collection has been achieved, and additional data collection contributes little or nothing to the study. This study will have a sample size it intends to attain for each department under study, but will also leave room for the saturation of data collected so as to ensure that sufficient sample size is reached (Gentles, *et al.*, 2015:1781).

### **1.6.3 Data collection instrument and analysis**

McNabb (2010:8) notes that structured interviews follow script that is prepared for all the participants, while unstructured interviews use open-ended questions, with the interviewer probing for additional responses. Semi-structured interviews fall between these two, in that questions are planned ahead of time, but will not necessarily be asked as rigidly as prepared. There will be room for following up on interesting or lacking responses (Blandford, 2013). Writing on semi-structured interview and interpretative research, Mabry (2008:8) notes that these two techniques facilitate infiltration of the unknown, and researchers are expected to notice opportunities and to follow data wherever they lead. Semi-structured interviews may be conducted to obtain the ideas and opinions of individuals about the influence of the two identified variables (leadership and code of conduct) on the ethical conduct of the staff. The way data is collected and analysed in a qualitative research is not restricted to any single method (McNabb, 2010:8). In this study, non-statistical, online semi-structured interviews was the main instrument used to collect the data. This enabled an understanding of the participants' perspectives and experiences about the ethical practices at the CTMM (Blandford, 2013).

The interview respondents were divided into the following categories to establish precise ethical behaviour at the CTMM. (Refer to Annexure F for the complete interview schedule).

- Supervisors
- Operational managers
- Human resource managers

Data was gathered via audio recording and taking of notes as the participants responded to questions asked. The audio recordings and notes gathered during the interviews were transcribed and coded. Codes were created based on pre-determined keywords and concepts. Moreover, it is generally accepted that qualitative case researchers may improve on the original blueprint as information emerges during data collection. There was, thus, also room for more codes after more information emerges (Mabry, 2008:5).

The content of the data collected was analysed using Atlas.Ti. The analytical tools of Atlas.Ti was used extensively to identify word dependencies, co-occurrences, and weak and strong network of words from the inter-relationships amongst the codes, so that further insights were derived from the contextual interpretation of the case texts and audio recordings. The complete data analysis and findings are presented in Chapter 4.

## **1.7 RESEARCH ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Ethical issues in research is concerned with the avoidance of harm to the researcher, participants and the relevant institutions (Blandford, 2013), and to safeguard all collected data (Fisher & Anushko, 2012:2). To ensure a responsible research project, permission was obtained from the CTMM before conducting the research; and moreover, this research was conducted for a mini-dissertation and is considered to be of low risk. The only foreseeable risk of harm was the potential for minor discomfort or inconvenience from the participants, hence, the study was not expected to pose a risk above the everyday norm. The benefits of the study are more than any discomfort that was possibly experienced during the interviewing process.

Each participant received a “participant information letter” that explained the research purpose, procedures and duration. The participants were requested to electronically sign an informed consent letter prior to the interview. Participation was voluntary, and the participants were allowed to withdraw from the research at any stage without giving reasons for doing so. The research also ensured confidentiality of information given by participants, and their privacy was respected. Only authorised individuals had access to the data and information derived from the data. A confidentiality agreement was signed with the transcriber.

## **1.8 DEMARCATION AND LIMITATIONS OF STUDY**

Only employees from the Human Resource Division and the Department of Public Works of the CTMM were targeted during this research. HR managers, whose responsibility it is to enforce the code of conduct; operational managers, who promote ethical practices, give directions and make decisions within the municipality; supervisors, who oversee the work ethics of employees; and front desk officers, who carry out the designated jobs; were interviewed on ethical behaviour at their workplace. The findings of the research were, thus, based on data collected from employees of the CTMM. The recommendations are, therefore, only applicable to the CTMM and cannot, necessarily, be generalised to other municipalities.

## **1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

According to Bartels (1967:23), cited in Naude (2004:2), an individual’s sense of ethical conduct influences her or his professional behaviour and personal actions. That is, individuals have a role to play in how they respond to codes, rules and behaviour of leaders within an organisation. This research has the potential to show how important each of the factors, i.e. leadership and rules of conduct, are influencing the ethical decisions of individuals, hence, controlling the epidemic of corruption, perceived lack of ethics, and unprofessional behaviour that seem to have been permeating the CTMM. While a number of similar studies have been done in the United States and European countries [Thaler & Helmig (2015); Downe, Cowell & Morgan (2016)], there seems not to have been any published study that has considered the interactive influence of these two main factors of ethical management on individuals in South African municipalities in general, and at the CTMM in particular. An

understanding of the role each of these factors play in driving ethical practices is important towards the fulfilment of service delivery promises at the CTMM.

The research also contributes to the body of knowledge on ethics, most especially at the CTMM, municipalities in general, and the academic community. The research also provides a better understanding of what drives or influences proper conduct among their employee. This might help the management of the CTMM in making better decisions that would benefit the community of the CTMM at large.

## **1.10 STRUCTURE OF MINI-DISSERTATION**

This mini-dissertation is structured as follows:

### **Chapter One: General Introduction**

This introductory chapter elaborated on the background of the study. The problem statement and the research questions were formulated. The purpose and objectives, research design and methodology, the significance of the study and ethical considerations were also described in this chapter.

### **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

Ethical and unethical behaviour were conceptualised and contextualised within municipalities in South Africa. In addition, rules (including the Code of Ethics of the CTMM) and different types of leadership were elaborated on as measures that improve ethical behaviour at the CTMM. This chapter also looked into work that has been done by other researchers on ethical practices and behaviour in municipalities.

### **Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology**

In this chapter of the mini-dissertation, the qualitative research design, the interviewing process, as well as the data collection instruments were elaborated on in detail. The site population and the sample size at the case under study (the CTMM) were also described. A critical evaluation of the historical development of the relevant leadership structure and rules of conduct at the CTMM, were also provided.

## **Chapter Four: Research Findings and Analysis**

In Chapter 4, the collected data was analysed by using appropriate techniques and tools, including AtlasTi. Also, the research findings in respect of leadership and rules of conduct as measures to enhance ethical behaviour of the employees of the CTMM were concretised and presented in this chapter.

## **Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations**

Based on the literature review and the empirical findings, recommendations were made to the CTMM in respect of the enhancement of ethical practices by means of rules, leadership, or a combination thereof as was deduced from the study.

### **1.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter provided the background to the study by stating the research problem as ethical behaviour are lacking at the CTMM due to the absence of proper rules and exemplary leadership. The main research question was subsequently formulated as: *What are the roles of leadership and rules of conduct in instilling ethical behaviour of the staff members of the Human Resource Division and the Operational Division of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM?* It was envisaged that the study has the potential to show how leadership and rules of conduct are influencing the ethical decisions of staff at the CTMM, hence, ameliorating the lack of ethics and unprofessional behaviour that seem to have been permeating the municipality. The aim of the study was, thus, set to evaluate the roles of leadership and rules of conduct as driving factors of ethical behaviour among staff members of the CTMM.

In addition, qualitative research design was identified as the preferred method to conduct the study. The CTMM was studied as a case and two departments were included in the sample frame, namely: the Human Resource Department, being the back-end unit that is tasked with upholding rules; and the Department of Public Works, being the front-end unit that relates with the public. It was highlighted that semi-structured interviews were conducted, and that the data was analysed using AtlasTi. Ethical considerations were also expounded upon. Following an explanation of the significance and the contribution of the study, the structure of the mini-dissertation concluded the chapter.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

*“It is impossible to construct enough laws and rules to check the behaviour of human beings both in and out of government. Thus, self-constraint is thought by many to be the answer to ethical governance”.*

(Menzel, 2012:3)

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Reports of unethical practices by municipal officials being made by several media outlets is preponderant. Recent examples include 14 municipalities depositing an estimated R1.5 billion in the Venda Building Society Bank, despite not being allowed to do so by the Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003 (Section 7(3b)), that prohibits municipalities from investing in a mutual bank (Ensor, 2018). In 2019, charges of fraud and corruption were brought against the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality mayor and a senior councillor. They were charged to court on cases of fraud, corruption and racketeering. The charges relate to a dodgy R208 million tender within the Durban Solid Waste Department (IOL, 2019).

Also, at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (CTMM), there were reports of unethical and corrupt conduct. In a *News24* article, it was reported that the CTMM would be spending R15 million on work it already had paid a contractor to do. The Auditor-General found the procurement process to be irregular (Evans, 2019). Furthermore, in 2013, *Corruption Watch*, an independent organisation, declared the local government establishments to be the most corrupt institution in the country. In the report, their spokesperson said ‘*we receive too many reports about maladministration, mismanagement of public funds, and abuse of resources by officials at local government levels*’ (Businessstech, 2015).

It is, therefore, expected that the volume of literature on local government ethics should be on an increase. Indeed, the wide-ranging availability and accessibility of literature on ethical behaviour at municipalities in South Africa made it possible to conceptualise ethics, leadership and rules of conduct and to contextualise these aspects within the local government sphere. To address the research problem that the roles of leadership and rules of conduct in promoting ethical behaviour at the CTMM,

are yet unclear, this chapter builds on the preliminary literature review that had been presented in chapter one, section 1.5. The chapter looks closely into ethics and its theories and describes typical ethical and unethical practices found at the local government sphere in South Africa, to answer the research question 'What does the literature say about ethical and unethical behaviour in the municipalities of South Africa?'. Leadership and rules are described as factors that affect ethical behaviour in the workplace. The main purpose of this chapter is, therefore, to explore the roles of leadership and rules of conduct as driving factors of ethical behaviour among public and municipal officials. The chapter commences with a conceptual analysis of ethics.

## **2.2 CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF ETHICS**

This section looks closely at the meaning of the concept of ethics. It describes ethics as a moral principle, ethical behaviour in the public sector as well as ethics and ethical practices at the local government sphere. The link between ethics and public administration is also attended to.

### **2.2.1 Ethics as moral principle**

Ethics is a topic that has been of interest to both scholars and the public since time immemorial. Man has always questioned the ground upon which s/he acts or makes decisions. Some actions are seen as morally praiseworthy, while others are viewed as contrary to the standard of 'right conduct' (Martinez, 2009:1). The concept of ethics, generally defined as moral principles that control or influence a person's behaviour, is derived from the Greek word '*ethos*', meaning moral character. The concept morality comes from the Latin word '*mos*', which means custom (Tzafestas, 2016:13). The moral principles that form the subject matter of ethics are about the acceptable ways for people to behave, or ways people ought to behave, in terms of commitment to their work, their relationships with teams, integrity and being self-disciplined (Adeyeye, Adeniji, Osinbanjo & Oludayo, 2015:268).

Ethics has also been described as a phenomenon that has a social connotation. It is not only about the self, but also about behaviour towards others; about relationships (Vyas-Doorgapersad & Ababio, 2010:413). Copp (2006:3) notes that as people go about their lives, there is always the need to make decisions. Some of those decisions have personal implications, while many others concern responsibilities on jobs,



relationship with the State and others. Ethical consideration is seen as decent human conduct when making such decisions; that is, conducting oneself appropriately in relations with others and the environment. Ethics includes considering others' human and natural rights, obedience to the law of the land, and concern for health and safety. Ethics is what is considered right (or wrong) for oneself and for the person with whom one interacts (Naidoo, 2015:288).

Adeyeye, *et al.* (2015:268) further describe ethics as a normative science, as distinct from descriptive and empirical sciences, because it deals with the norms of conduct to which human actions ought to conform. It is about making choices among competing set of principles, values and belief. Sindane (2011:754), also writing on ethics, tries to make a connection between ethics and values in the public service. He mentions that values determine what is 'right' and what is 'wrong', while ethics is doing what is right or what is wrong; and to behave and act ethically is to behave in a manner consistent with what is right or moral.

Against the above conceptual analysis of ethics, ethics in this study means all types of good conduct among the officials of the CTMM. A standard of professional ethics, thus, means a high standard of work and adherence to certain principles pertaining to work to be done by the CTMM (Thozamile, 2012:26).

### **2.2.2 Ethical behaviour and management in the public sector**

The description of ethics as a moral principle highlights the importance of ethical behaviour in the public sector, and particularly in the local government sphere. This is because local government is a sphere of government whose officials deal directly with the public. Examples include local government electrical officials being able to conduct themselves ethically when they are in the field to disconnect debtor's, or local clinic nurses treating all patients fairly and professionally.

It is a truism that putting in place an ethics framework does not guarantee ethical conduct (Lawton & Macaulay, 2009:107), and there might be universal elements of ethics, but developing effective management tools remain unique for each organisation (McNab, MacLean, Brislin, Aguilera, Worthley, Ravlin, Galperin, Tiessen, Jenner, Bess, Lituchy & Turcotte, 2007:6). Ethics management in the public sector is important because without it, provision of common good and increasing the wellbeing

of citizens will be almost impossible. Many organisations have the flaw of focusing their ethics programme only on unethical conduct. The aim of ethics management system should, however, be to create an ethical culture, by focusing on promoting ethical conduct and reducing unethical conduct (Schoeman, 2014:94).

McNab, *et al.* (2007:6) defines ethics management as the artefacts, tools, activities and concepts that are used to influence moral climate or direction of organisations. Menzel (2012: xiii) relating ethics management to public administrators notes that it is about leading and cultivating organisations of integrity. Integrity is often characterized by moral principles, which are characteristics of ethics. The Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) have an Integrity Management Framework (IMF) and ethics infrastructure respectively, while South Africa has the Public Service Integrity Management Framework as management tools put in place to manage and promote ethical conduct (Maape, 2017:13). To date, the OECD's IMF is one of the frameworks most advocated by academics and practitioners for the management of public sector ethics (Tremblay, Martineau & Pauchant, 2017:221).

Maesschalck (2004:21) writes that in recent years there has been increased interest in public sector ethics management. This, he mentions, is due to public management reform in general and more specifically due to the New Public Management (NPM). These reforms and the NPM are alleged to have changed public sector values, and ethics management is seen as an appropriate reaction to complement these reforms (OECD, 2000:23). In this regard, there has been two approaches to the management of ethics, namely compliance and integrity. These two approaches are found in the IMF, each situated at either end of a continuum (Tremblay, *et al.*, 2017:221). On one end is the compliance-based or rule-based approach, which focuses on external controls imposed on individuals such as codes, rules and monitoring, in order to avoid unethical behaviour (Huberts, 2014). On the other end is the integrity-based or value-based approach, which places emphasis on the importance of internal controls to foster self-regulation and discipline exercised by each individual public servant through interactive training sessions, workshops and individual coaching (Maesschalck, 2004:22). The aim of the value-based approach is to ensure that public servants have a higher degree of personal awareness of ethical issues and are less reliant on

complying with rules. That is, public servants are expected to take personal responsibility for their behaviour in office (Brewer, Leung & Scott, 2015:2).

In bureaucratic organisations characterised by hierarchy, a complex division of labour and heavy reliance on rules, the first point of reference for a public servant seeking ethical guidance is regulations and how these relate to their own roles. The question then becomes delineating where duty (rule-based approach) ends and where discretion (value-based approach) begins, and this has been a recurring and important theme in the public administration literature (Brewer, Leung & Scott, 2015:3). A general consensus reached is that efficient management of ethics in the public sector relies on both the compliance- and the integrity-based approach used in a complementary fashion so as to strike an appropriate balance (Tremblay, *et al.*, 2017:222). In doing this, Menzel (2012:13), writes that there are four key components of ethics management: hiring, performance, training and auditing. That is, the need to hire the 'right' people; factoring ethics into the process of managing performance; continuous training programs because employees are vulnerable to ethics lapses; an audit conducted periodically to let employees know the positive as well as negative effects of their efforts; and according to Snellman (2015:347) to identify risks to integrity at the local government levels.

### **2.2.3 Ethics and Ethical Practices at local government sphere**

The subject of ethics in local government has always aroused a great degree of interest. This is due to local governments being more prone to corruption and other unethical behaviour because, as already mentioned, interactions between private individuals and officials happen at greater levels of intimacy and with more frequency at the local sphere (Vyas-Doorgapersad & Ababio, 2010:414), and the local government is obliged by the Constitution of 1996 in Section 152(1b) to provide services to communities in a sustainable manner; hence, the direct presence of local government in many citizen's lives because they are mostly responsible for maintaining streets, collecting wastes and providing public safety (Dory, 2015:vi). Since ethics is not about the self in isolation, local government officials interact directly with private individuals within the community, hence unethical behaviour negatively impacts citizens' quality of life.

This makes the subject of ethics and its practice an important issue within the local sphere because local officials are more susceptible to unethical practices such as bribery, partiality, lying to the public, direct discrimination and being impatient amongst others. Ethical practices can be seen as the norm within the local government sphere, which ultimately influence individual behaviour; for example, attending to customers on a first come first serve basis, being careful not to keep people waiting unnecessarily, or being mindful of people's emotions. That is, when ethical practice is part of the whole, individuals tend to conform. Such practices may include ongoing ethics training or the employment of an ethics officer, which will benefit the residents of a municipality because they will not need to bribe or wait unnecessarily to get the services they deserve. Ethical practices will also ensure a good work environment among the officials themselves, and hence, benefit the municipality as a whole. Such practices are associated with lower absenteeism, higher organisational commitments and the willingness to report unethical behaviour among officials (Belle & Cantarelli, 2017:5), which as a whole makes the workings of the municipality smoother.

History has shown that ethical conduct and responsibility among local government officials has changed over the years. Corporate accountability has, for example, been replaced with individual accountability (holding officials accountable for their action and making them take responsibility for the decisions they make), and ethical responsibilities have been decentralised (Vyas-Doorgapersad & Ababio, 2010:412), to ensure that each official becomes accountable for his or her action. Local government ethics is essential to ensure that municipal officials are fair, treating people equally and without favouritism; open, freely accessible; and courteous, polite and considerate in manner (Lexico Dictionary, 2019) in dealing with the public or the community they serve. Kuljuk, Stolt, Suhonen and Leino-Kilpi (2016:401). conclude in one of their researches that ethical practices and competence is about the willingness to do good and having the character strength to do so. It includes attributes such as competence, honesty, diligence and integrity, without which the effective delivery of public services is not likely to occur, hence, the costs and consequences are great, especially for the community. In the words of Thompson (1992:255), ethics may be only instrumental, it may be only a means to an end, but it is a necessary means to an end.

Contrary to ethical practices as already described, unethical behaviour is seen as a deliberate or negligent conduct that deviates from the guidelines designed to inform

an expected pattern of behaviour (Mafunisa, 2000:53). Matsiliza (2013:110) writes that the most prominent unethical practices in South African local government include the abuse of trust through lying and deception, mal-administration, where the administrators are always tempted with gifts from the public, and all forms of corruption. One can also add the lack of accountability, as pointed out by President Cyril Ramaphosa when he was responding to the recent municipal audit outcome (Mailovich, 2019). There is therefore the need to improve ethics and its management in the public sector, and local government in particular, through a more ethical and accountable leadership.

#### **2.2.4 Ethics and public administration**

Public administration deals with satisfying the many different needs of society within the borders of a country. It is therefore the vehicle by which the government provides goods and services that advance a variety of socio-economic aspects and the human development of its citizens (Okechukwu, 2012:28). Thus, the quality of public services has a direct impact on the life of the citizens. This makes it important for public administration to be characterized by trustworthy, respectful, accountable, honest and ethical behaviour. These attributes support public officials in taking responsibility for their actions (Hallunovi, Osmani & Bashi, 2014:202,203).

Public officials play a significant role in formulating and implementing public policies that impact the lives of many people. Their decisions and actions carry enormous weight; hence it is expected that they make responsible, careful and ethical decisions within a set legislated framework. The behaviour of public officials impacts the lives of ordinary citizens, and their actions and behaviour towards their clients and the public must be professional and ethical. This makes ethics an important part of public administration (Ayodele & Bolaji, 2007:105).

### **2.3 ETHICS, MORALITY AND LAW**

Ethics, morality and law are concepts that are often interwoven and used interchangeably. It is however important to understand the differences between these three concepts and address them appropriately. The three concepts address issues of right and wrong or good and bad and are therefore related. The main focus of the study is to explore the roles of leadership and rules of conduct as driving factors of

ethical behaviour among staff members of the CTMM, hence emphasis is also on how ethics interplay with morality and law, and *vice versa*.

In the earlier definitions of ethics, it can be noted that morality and morals were used in defining ethics. But morality in itself is different from ethics. Morals are values lived by people, heard from ancestors and passed unto generations (Venkatadurai, Dhyani & Sharma, 2014:35). They are a set of shared rules or principles applicable to a group or society with no reference to the will of any one individual. When people interact in a society, they act the moral script that was developed by that society for its members overtime (Kizza, 2010:17). In the midst of these shared values, however, individuals apply these values personally. That is, one may learn morality from family, religion or community, but individuals apply it personally. Morality is, hence, interpreted and accepted differently by different individuals (Hazels, 2015:78), thus, it is based on personal convictions. That is, in as much as we learn morality from different sources, our application is based on how each individual receives it.

Ethics, which has been earlier defined as moral character, is a broader concept than morality. Morality is seen more at the personal and individual level and is learnt from religion, family and community. Ethics tends to be codified into a formal system or a set of rules which are explicitly adopted by a group of people or institution. These two concepts are however closely associated and difficult to separate. Morality defines the character of a person, and ethics, the system which the person adopts at a given time (Venkatadurai, *et al.*, 2014:35-36). Ethical standards, as found within a group, restrain human behaviour from acts of misconduct such as fraud, rape and stealing. Morality is more of a personalised code of conduct that pertains to one's individual conscience or belief of what is right or wrong, which is developed at each individual's pace (Hazels, 2015:82). For example, the ethics of a public institution such as the CTMM outline the values of the municipality as a whole, it may or may not be in synergy with the official's personal belief or conviction (Kumar, 2012:2). Hence, ethical management applies written and/or unwritten standards by which behaviours are evaluated for their rightness or wrongness within an institution, while morality is evaluated for its rightness or wrongness at a personal individualised level.

The law has been seen to target unethical and immoral behaviour. Kizza (2010:23) writes that the law helps us to make our conduct to conform to the norm of morality

and ethics. Also, according to Hazels (2015:77), the laws that are passed in a society are also based on the ethics of the society or a group as a whole. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines law as the whole system of rules that everyone in a country or society must obey (2006:835). Kumar (2012:2) defines law as a set of universal rules that are framed, accepted and usually enforced. He mentioned that a law, including a set of rules, has to be consistent, equally applicable to everyone, must be published and must be obeyed. Law is written by legislatures, and it is enforceable. The purposes are to maintain order, to punish wrongdoers, to resolve disputes fairly, and to distribute benefits justly (Horner, 2003:269).

Disobeying the law is liable to punishment. Ethics and morality may not be enforced and need not be universal or published. These three concepts, however, serve to channel human behaviour. The law obliges us to make our conduct conform to the norm of ethics and morality and the laws of a society are usually determined by the moral belief of that society. Ethics, morality and law serve the purpose of keeping the society stable and secure (Kizza, 2010:26). Societal moral beliefs tend to influence its ethical standard and law, while laws and regulations are also in place to guide the ethical standard of organisations. Ethics, morals and law are, therefore, important terms associated with the principle of public management.

The management of ethical principles falls on the shoulders of leaders of any organisation. It is, therefore, important to look at leadership and the role it plays in ensuring that ethical behaviour, morals and compliance with the law are pushing organisations forward. A description of leadership is done in section 2.5, *Conceptual analysis of leadership*, however, an overview of theories of ethics is first provided in the following section.

## **2.4 THEORIES OF ETHICS**

When individuals need to make a choice among many alternatives or make a decision, where ethical issues may be involved, there are a number of theories of ethics which may provide guidance to make an ethically correct or the "best" decision. While some decisions or actions are taken by individuals or groups without consideration for how it might impact others or without considering its ethical implications, many decisions are taken with ethical considerations in mind. Ethical theories provide frameworks that help in making decisions that can be more readily adjudged to be acceptable or not.

While there are many theories of ethics, for example Deontology, Utilitarianism (Consequentialism), Rights, Virtue, Ethics of care, Natural law and Social contract theory, only three will be described, namely: Consequentialism, Deontology and Virtue ethics, which have been identified as significant for this study.

### **2.4.1 Consequentialism**

Consequentialism theory is the view that ethics is all about producing the right kind of overall consequence, effects or impact. That is, the impact of decisions made are all that matter (Haines, no date). Kaptein and Wempe (2002:1) also writing on consequentialism note that an action is morally good if its consequences are desirable, and bad if not desirable. Actions are taken to achieve a certain end, and this end is set as a standard for judging the moral content of an action. Consequentialism takes the good to be primary and identifies right action as the action that promotes the overall good. Moral notions, such as duty or virtue, are explained in terms of promoting value and good consequences (Brink, 2006:381).

The consequentialist conception of right action and the overall consequences sounds right for ethical consideration in public administration, and for this study in the CTMM, because the effect of Municipal government would be to satisfy the needs of society. However, it also leaves several questions unanswered. It does not say what kind of consequence is good, nor does it address how to ethically handle those which the consequence was not good for. This leave people agreeing on consequentialism but disagreeing on what kind of outcome is good or bad (Haines, no date). As individual ends or good usually conflict with each other, this raises the question of which consequence should be employed as the standard for moral action (Kaptein & Wempe, 2002:2). This leads to a type of Consequentialism called Utilitarianism, which holds that the common good forms the true end.

### **2.4.2 Utilitarianism**

Utilitarianism, a branch of consequentialism, is also called the Mill's ethical theory. The fundamental principle states that actions are moral to the extent that they are oriented towards promoting the greatest good for the greatest number of people (Tzafestas, 2016:17). This means a higher number will benefit and be happy, as compared to



those who will not benefit and are unhappy. John Stuart Mill, in his brief essay, Utilitarianism, provides an account of the Utility principle as follows (Mulgan, 2013:1):

*“Actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure, and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain and the privation of pleasure.”*

Utilitarianism, hence, supports the consequentialism ideology by proposing that consequence or result of an action determines its ethical value. That is, the greater the good or happiness produced by an action, the more ethical the action. It contends that among the available alternatives, an agent ought to perform that action that produces the greatest pleasure for everyone concerned (Brink, 2006:380).

Public administration, as mentioned, deals with satisfying the many different needs of the society, and Utilitarianism (Consequentialism) aims to satisfy the needs of the greatest number. Local municipalities are to serve all members of a community. Every member of a community must be served, in as much as the needs differ. Utilitarianism ideals will still leave some members of the community out from benefiting; hence it will not be seen as ideal enough for the purpose of achieving a just and fair public administration. For example, the Tshwane Bus Service offer transport to most parts of the city. It however does not cover all parts of the city, which will leave some citizens out of benefiting from this service. The utilitarianism ideal of maximizing happiness and promoting the greatest good has its place in the ethical debate, it however seems to leave out a minority who also have rights to such government services.

### **2.4.3 Deontology**

Deontology, in contrast to consequentialism, contends that all persons have obligations that are non-negotiable, hence, duties must be observed irrespective of their consequences (Kaptein & Wempe, 2002:10). Also called duty-based ethics, deontology claims that the maximization of good is not the only morally relevant consideration; agents may be permitted or even sometimes required not to maximize good (McNaughton & Rawlings, 2006:424). Deontologists focus on the intrinsic rightness of an action; the belief in the absolute necessity of duty, irrespective of its

consequences, rewards or punishments that may follow (Robinson, Van der Mescht & Lancaster, 2003:117), hence sometimes called non-consequentialists.

Deontology from the Greek word, *deon*, meaning duty, holds that some choices cannot be justified by their effects. No matter how morally good their consequences, some choices are morally forbidden. What makes a choice right is its conformity with a moral norm that simply needs to be obeyed. The right is to, therefore, have priority over the good. If an act is not in accord with the right, it may not be undertaken, no matter the good that it might produce (Alexander & Moore, 2016). The emphasis is on the principles upon which acts are based, rather than the result of the act (Tzafestas, 2016:17).

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), the philosopher most closely associated with deontology, believed that some duties are absolute, while others are discretionary. He, therefore, distinguished between two forms of imperative namely; categorical, which is an instruction to act not dependent on anything; and hypothetical, a conditional instruction to act (Robinson, *et al.*, 2003:117). Kant emphasises the principles upon which actions are based rather than the results of the actions or the consequences of the action. This does not necessarily mean that he did not care about the outcome of actions, he is simply pointing out that for the moral evaluation of our actions, consequences do not matter (Tzafestas, 2016:17).

This theory is significant for this study because municipal officials are expected to carry out their duties, however, morality and ethical conduct must go beyond duty. In as much as duty is important, public administrators cannot be completely governed by duty. There must always be room for values and compassion. A municipal official that is only governed by duty, irrespective of its consequence, lacks compassion and the character needed to serve communities. Hence, such an individual lacks ethics. Duty alone cannot promote ethical behaviour, there must be room for conscience, which is about self-introspection, self-assessment and being aware and conscious of our moral behaviour towards ourselves and others (Giubilini, 2016).

#### **2.4.4 Virtue ethics**

A good way of understanding virtue ethics is to contrast it with consequential and deontological ethics. Unlike these two previous theories that focus on consequences

and actions respectively, virtue ethics focuses on the individual municipal officials, and what they need to have (virtues) to achieve a goal (Gronum, 2015:1). Virtue ethics emphasises the role of character rather than acting to bring about good effects or doing one's duty. It is a theory that defines the right action as the action which a virtuous administrator would choose in a given circumstance (Horn, 2010:34). Virtue comes from the Latin word "*virtus*" meaning excellence of a person. Virtue ethics is thus concerned with building good personality and character by creating traits such as prudence, compassion, wisdom, fortitude and justice (Tzafestas, 2016:16).

Virtue ethics was originally found in the writings of ancient Greeks. The classical Greek philosophy saw virtue as a person's capacity to perform what is expected of her or him. Virtue ethics takes its inspiration from Aristotle, who declared that a virtuous person is someone who has ideal character traits. These traits, he mentioned, derive from natural internal tendencies that need to be nurtured, and once established will become stable (Athanasoulis, no date). Hence, a virtuous person derives pleasure from acting virtuously. A person is virtuous when acting correctly has become a habit, and virtues are, hence, developed by using them (Kaptein & Wempe, 2002:22). Virtue ethics was, however, ignored or trivialised by analytical ethical philosophy for over a hundred years, only to re-emerge during the last forty years (Annas, 2006:515).

Virtue should be an important character of every public and municipal official; someone who is driven by duty, but also by good character and compassion for the needs of society. For such an individual, the consequences of an action cannot be overlooked. Such an official in carrying out her or his duty, is also looking out for the individual circumstances and dealing with such appropriately. Virtues here will then be seen as qualities or traits that make officials act in ways that are appropriate within the context of a particular situation (Molina, 2015:51). Aristotle might have put a virtuous public administrator as someone that acts on the right values, at the right time, for the right reasons, and in the right way (Ibid:67). This makes virtue ethics the most suitable ethics theory for this study because municipal administration must be driven by values and virtues that have positive influence on their behaviour towards the communities they serve.

The importance of leadership in ensuring that ethical behaviour, morals and compliance with the law are advanced in any public organisation has been raised in section 2.3. Leadership concepts are now discussed in details in the following section.

## **2.5 CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF LEADERSHIP**

In many organisations, leaders are usually in a position to steer the organisation in the right direction and to control outcomes. Employees rely on their leaders for guidance when faced with ethical dilemmas (Brown & Mitchell, 2010:583). Leadership is seen as the ability to decide what is to be done and getting others to want to do it. A leader is also seen as someone who has the ability to get other people to do what such people don't want to do and make them like it (Dartey-Baah, 2015:100). Leadership can be conceptualised as having to do with the process of inspiring and influencing others to work hard to accomplish important tasks (Schermerhorn, 2002:336). These definitions show that leadership involves relationship between the people (or followers) and their leaders. It is an understanding of the relationship among a leader, a follower and a specific situation (Henrico & Visser, 2013:166). Leadership is then a social influential process in which the leader seeks the participation of subordinates in an effort to reach organisational goals (Nanjundeswaraswamy & Swamy, 2014:57). In addition, leadership cannot survive without followership because it is the willingness of people to follow that makes a person the leader (Ray & Ray, 2012:2).

It is important to note that leadership in its most basic form has been in existence since the first family unit, clan, village and other organised groups came into existence (Martin, 2017:15). These groups and organisations of all types develop and succeed under an effective leadership (Ray & Ray, 2012:2). As centuries passed, however, leadership has evolved from a practice to a defined process of research that has produced numerous leadership theories and styles. In essence, leadership comprises those activities that give direction and guidance and are aimed at influencing and utilising the staff of an institution to the best of their physical and mental abilities. In the public sector, it includes activities such as staff motivation, communication with and between staff members, stimulating and implementing change, and resolving conflict (Martin, 2017:16). These responsibilities are required of public managers, who attempt to utilise human and material resources as efficiently as possible so as to realise the institution's objectives.

Managers are, hence, seen as leaders within organisations and differ from operational officials. For the purpose of this study, it is important to differentiate between these two. Operational officials are people who are directly involved in performing a task and do not have the responsibility of supervising the work of others. For example, employees who process applications for car license renewals are officials. By contrast, the management of an institution refers to the individuals who guide the tasks performed by others. Managers are people who have subordinates and are responsible for ensuring that the activities of subordinates are aimed at realising the objectives of the institution. According to Feldmand and Khademian (2016:305), the objective of a public institution is to serve the general public. Public managers, therefore, oversee people and programs that offer services to the public. (Skripak, 2016,161) added that the tasks of a public manager can be divided into five basic functions, namely leadership, planning, decision-making, organising and control.

### **2.5.1 Types of leadership**

To thoroughly address the research problem that ethical behaviour is lacking at the CTMM due to the absence of proper rules and exemplary leadership, the different types of leadership are elaborated on in this section. Types of leadership are described in relationship with the public sector and especially municipalities. This is important because public sector leadership is especially relevant, as their influence extends beyond the employees to the whole country. Hence, whether leadership is good or bad, it has the potential to impact huge numbers of people (Schoeman, 2014:54).

#### **2.5.1.1 Autocratic leadership**

The autocratic style of leadership is often considered as the classical approach to leadership. Here, the leader retains as much power and decision-making authority as possible (Khan, Khan, Qureshi, Ismail, Rauf, Latif & Tahir, 2015:87). Gent and Kempster (2002) note that an autocratic leader is high-handed in administration. An autocratic leader is the centre of all activities and all authority begins and ends with him. Autocratic leaders make vital decisions on their own and prefer to establish strict regulations, control processes, and remain in formal, professional relationship with their subordinates (Dyczkowska & Dyczkowski, 2018:195). This leadership style has the disadvantage of opportunities being missed and risks underestimated due to lack of consultation with subordinates. The Canadian Association of Student Activity

Advisers (2004), opined that autocratic leadership can be effective when time is limited, but should not be used when developing a strong sense of teamwork (Akor, 2014:149).

This type of leadership is not encouraged anymore unless in exceptional circumstances. The workplace, and especially the public sector, has been so much transformed. Municipal officers are not only skilful but knowledgeable and self-learning (Awad & Gharizi, 2004). They look forward to having better work responsibilities, autonomy and empowerment (Jayasingam & Cheng, 2009:56). Millennial employees have proven to be highly resistant to this leadership style (Khan, *et al.*, 2015:87).

### **2.5.1.2 Democratic leadership**

The democratic leadership style is a very open way of running a team. Also known as participative leadership, members of the group take a more participative role and ideas move freely amongst the group (Ray & Ray, 2012:3). The definitions conceptualised by White and Lippitt (1960) highlight group participation and group decisions encouraged by the leaders, and that the leader tries to be a regular group member. Democratic leadership is associated with increased follower productivity, satisfaction, involvement and commitment (Hackman & Johnson, 1996).

Kuczmarski and Kuczmarski (1995) cite the characteristics of a democratic leader as knowledgeable, influential, stimulating, encouraging, permitting of self-determination, a good listener, respecting, and situation-centred. These are the types of characteristics needed in a public service to promote productivity. These characteristics strengthen the role of public officials for creating public values (Choi, 2007:258). Dyczkowska and Dyczkowski (2018:195) also note that democratic leaders involve employees in discussions, hence, employees are more committed to their work and willing to release creativity as a result of the confidence entrusted. They, however, note that this style of leadership has a disadvantage of decision time being extended.

### **2.5.1.3 Laissez Faire leadership**

Linge, Shikalieh and Asiimwe (2016:241) define Laissez Faire leadership as leadership that sets the direction of what is to be accomplished by followers with little or no supervision. Also referred to as 'hands-off' or 'let things ride' approach to influencing individuals (Tosunoglu & Ekmekci, 2016:90), it is one in which the leader

provides little direction and gives employees as much freedom as possible (Khan, *et al.*, 2015:89). This style looks simple and easy-going between leaders and subordinates (Tarsil, Kassim & Nasharudin, 2014:3), however it only works well when subordinates are experts and well-motivated specialists (Chaudhry & Javed, 2012:259), or as Khan, *et al.* (2015:89) mentioned, when employees are highly skilled, experienced and educated, or when outside experts such as consultants are being used.

Generally, this leadership approach is seen in a negative light. Tosunoglu and Ekmekci (2016:90) called it a special type of destructive leadership since these types of leaders show no interest in subordinates' needs, take decisions, or give feedback on time.

#### **2.5.1.4 Bureaucratic leadership**

Baton (2019) defined bureaucracy as systems and procedures designed to maintain uniformity, structure and control within an organisation. The bureaucratic leadership style was first defined by Max Weber (Rouzbahani, Alibakhshi, Ataie, Koulivand & Goudarzi, 2013:1293). It has been described as leadership where the leader manages 'by the book' or by the established structures; where everything must be done according to procedure or policy. The leader enforces the rules (Khan, *et al.*, 2015:90). Idrus, Sudiro and Rohman (2015:14) state that bureaucratic leadership generally has low task-orientation and weak relationship due to its focus on rules and procedures. This type of leadership is associated with the red tape theory of rules. (Refer to section 2.8.1 *Red tape theory* for more detail.) In their study, Idrus, *et al.* (2015) concluded that bureaucratic leadership negatively and significantly affects organisational commitment in local government financial management. That is, greater bureaucratic leadership causes lower organisational commitment.

#### **2.5.1.5 Ethical leadership**

Brown, Trevino and Harrison (2005:120) define ethical leadership as the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through a two-way communication, reinforcement and decision making. Such leadership is correlated with behaviour such as honesty, fairness and consideration. Thus, ethical

leaders are perceived as caring, honest and principled individuals who make fair and balanced decisions (Jordan, Brown, Trevino & Finkelstein, 2013:662).

A qualitative research by Trevino, Brown and Hartman (2000, 2003) revealed that ethical leaders are best described along two related dimensions: moral person and moral manager. The moral person refers to the qualities of the ethical leader as a person. A strong moral person demonstrates a concern for other people and has a reputation for being fair, honest and trustworthy. The moral manager dimension demonstrates how the leader uses the tools of position of leadership to promote ethical conduct to work. Such leaders make ethics salient by modelling ethical conduct to others (Brown & Mitchell, 2010:584).

According to Toor and Ofori (2009:536), ethical leadership is distinct from the other types of leadership because it emphasises internalised moral perspective, moral person, moral manager and idealised influence. These characteristics are particularly important for leadership in the public service because, according to Trevino, Hartman and Brown (2000:140), if there is no observed ethical leadership at the top, one will not find it in the organisation. These characteristics are also associated with what virtue ethics stand for. This shows that an ethical leader carries value and virtues needed to lead successfully.

As municipalities provide services to communities, they need leaders that take ethics and its practice seriously; leaders who genuinely have the communities' interest at heart. The former Deputy Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs also reiterated the importance of this, by saying that "*ethical leadership is important as it can lead to good governance, whilst also ensuring efficiently and effectively functioning municipalities*" (South Africa, 2019). Given these values of justice, honesty, leading by example, respect for others and reliability characterised by ethical leaders, it follows that developing and nurturing more ethical leaders in the public sector and municipalities is desirable and necessary (Schoeman, 2014:58). In a Unisa/Mail & Guardian critical thinking forum on ethical leadership held on the 8<sup>th</sup> of July 2016, Rabbi Gideon Pogrand, quoting Dan Ariely, mentions that an unethical virus has taken root in societies and our greatest danger is our leaders; not in terms of cost, but in their enormous capacity to spread this virus in the most dramatic way (Haynes, 2016).



The following **Table 2.1** summarises the types of leadership by listing the main characteristics and the possible effects of each type of leadership on the ethical behaviour of municipal officials:

**Table 2.1: Effects of types of leadership on ethical behaviour**

| Type of leadership | Main characteristics   | Effect on ethical behaviour   |
|--------------------|--|---|
| Autocratic         | Leader retains most power and is high-handed in approach.          | Rebellious behaviour and resistance to ethical codes, especially when officials are not consulted |
| Democratic         | Leader is open and encourages group participation                  | Municipal official satisfaction, hence more committed to their work and ethical behaviour         |
| Laissez Faire      | Leader provides little or no guidance, and lets things ride freely | Employees not fully committed to ethical behaviour since they are not held accountable            |
| Bureaucratic       | Leader manages by the rules of the institution                     | Strict rule adherence, hence low morale within organisation                                       |
| Ethical            | Moral and honest leader with good interpersonal relationship       | Positive and cooperative ethical behaviour from municipal officials                               |

**Source:** (Author's summary)

## 2.6 THEORIES OF LEADERSHIP

Having described different types of leadership, this section will be looking at the different theories of leadership relevant for this study. Theories of leadership are important because it gives a better understanding of how research has been conducted into the different styles of leadership. Different theories of leadership have been researched, but for the purpose of this study, only six will be described.

### 2.6.1 Behavioural theories

The behavioural era was between 1948 and 1967 (Clinton, 1992:11). This era recognises task and relationship as two important dimensions of leadership behaviour (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969:144). It focuses on the actions of the leader and not on the intellectual qualities or internal states. For these theorists, people can learn to become leaders through training and observation (Amanchukwu, Stanley & Ololube, 2015:8).

These theories also bring to light the dual nature of leadership behaviour of being able to focus on the work and focusing on the employees (Robbins, *et al.*, 2015:362).

Under the behavioural theories, three leadership studies were conducted by the University of Iowa, Ohio State and the University of Michigan. The University of Iowa found that between the democratic, autocratic and laissez-faire leadership practices, the democratic was the most effective (Ibid). The research done by Stogdill (1950) identified two main elements associated with leadership practices, namely: initiating structure and consideration (Martin, 2017:17). That is, structuring work and work relationships to meet job goals, and being considerate of followers' ideas and feelings respectively (Robbins, *et al.*, 2015:362). Consideration was seen to be the most effective element related to follower commitment and performance satisfaction (Martin, 2017:17).

A third research on behavioural theories was conducted in the 1960s by the University of Michigan, similar to the Ohio State studies. The research produced production-centred and employee-centred types of behaviour from a leader (Ibid). The employee-oriented leaders were associated with high productivity and higher job satisfaction (Robbins, *et al.*, 2015:362). However, the relationship between performance and leadership behaviour or style alone was never strong. Hence leadership scholars turned to contingency models (Allio, 2013:7).

## **2.6.2 Contingency theory**

Contingency theory was developed in 1967 by Fred Fiedler. It was a departure from the behavioural and trait leadership models into recognising that specific situations would dictate the type of response and leadership required to address the situation successfully (Martin, 2017:22). According to this theory, no single leadership style is appropriate across all situations (Amanchukwu, *et al.*, 2015:8). There is no single right way to lead because the internal and external factors of the environment will require the leader to adapt to that particular situation. For these theorists, there is no one finest way of leading, and the style of leadership that is operative in some circumstances may not be effective in others (Khan, *et al.*, 2016:2).

The contingency theories express the need for a leader to adjust behaviour based on a rational understanding of the situation and assume a leadership style appropriate for

the occasion. It expels the belief that there are better and worse leadership styles, and that there is a 'one size fits all' approach to leadership (Vidal, Campdesuner, Rodriguez & Vivar, 2017:2).

### **2.6.3 Situational theory**

Situational leadership theory is a contingency theory developed by Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard that focuses on followers' readiness (Robbins, *et al.*, 2015:364). This theory asserts that leaders have to adapt their leadership method based on the level of individual follower development (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). Leaders match their style with the competence and commitment of followers, and they recognise what employees need, then adapt to meet those needs (Northouse, 2013:99,100). Hence, a leader applies different leadership styles according to a follower's maturity level or readiness. These terms have changed over time to developmental level and performance level. This has helped the theory evolve further (Meier, 2016:25). As followers reach higher levels of readiness, maturity, performance or development, the leader responds not only by decreasing control over their activities, but also increasing the relationship behaviours (Robbins, *et al.*, 2015:365).

### **2.6.4 Leader-member exchange theory**

Most leadership research focus on identifying best practices for optimizing organisational outcomes. Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), however, focuses on the quality of interactions and opportunities surrounding the relationships between leaders and followers (Barbuto & Bugenhagen, 2009:136). The theory conceptualises leadership as a process that is founded on the interaction between leaders and followers (Northouse, 2013:161).

Before the LMX theory, leadership theories assumed that leaders treated followers as a collective group. The LMX theory however challenged this and directed researchers' attention to the differences that might exist between leaders and different followers (Northouse, 2013:161). According to Lunenburg (2010:1), LMX theory emphasises a dyad, that is, the relationship between a leader and each subordinate considered individually, and not on the relationship between the leader and the group. Leaders develop different relationships with each subordinate, leading to an in-group and out-group relationships (Barbuto and Bugenhagen, 2009:136). Members of the in-group

are trusted and given greater responsibilities, more rewards and attention. They work within the inner circle of the leader. Out-group members on the other hand are outside the inner circle, are managed by formal rules and receive less rewards (Lunenburg, 2010:2).

Research in LMX suggests that the relations between the employee and his or her superior is the key determinant of employee behaviour (Wayne, Shore & Linden, 1997:103). That is, the enhancement in dyadic relationship between leaders and their subordinates has the ability to invoke organisational citizenship behaviour, hence gear up local government towards improvement of operational efficiency (Ibrahim, 2016). Local government managers must, hence, as much as possible, endeavour to maintain an in-group relationship with their subordinates.

### **2.6.5 Transactional theory**

The 1960s saw a change from trait and situational leadership to something more dynamic; that involved a transaction or exchange between the leader and the led (Bass, 1990:53). The transactional leadership theory is also seen as the exchange leadership theory. It is considered a transaction between the followers and the leader (Khan, Nawaz & Khan, 2016:25). These exchanges or transactions allow leaders to accomplish their objectives and motivate followers through contractual agreement that focuses on improving organisational efficiency (McCleskey, 2014:122). Bass and Avolio (1994:4) explain it as a type of contingent-reward leadership that had active and positive exchange between leaders and followers, whereby followers were rewarded or recognised for accomplishing agreed upon objectives. Transactional leaders find means of introducing rewards and punishment for task performance assigned to followers (Khan, Nawaz & Khan, 2016:25-26). A combination of such incentives and sanctions are needed to encourage the achievement of tasks and professional standard of conduct among followers (OECD, 2000:23).

The transactional theory is based on the mutuality that leaders not only influence followers but are also under the influence of followers (Khan, Nawaz & Khan, 2016:3). To accomplish tasks, leaders depend on followers and hope that tasks are accomplished irrespective of rewards or punishments. The transactional leader is, hence, focused on goal accomplishment. Transactional leaders have been criticized for a tendency towards shallow temporary exchanges of gratification and often

creating resentments among participants. It also employs a one size fits all approach to leadership with disregard for situation and context (McCleskey, 2014:122). There is, therefore, the need to progress from the transactional to the transformational theory.

### **2.6.6 Transformational theory**

While transactional leaders emphasise tasks, transformational leaders on the other hand is more concerned with empowering and motivating followers to go beyond what they would have done ordinarily (Adanri & Singh, 2016:672). The transformational leader encourages followers to transcend their own self-interests for the good of the group and to look beyond their need of the moment by becoming aware of what is really important (Bass, 1990:53). Such leaders stimulate and inspire followers to achieve extraordinary outcomes, by paying attention to the concerns and developmental needs of individual followers (Robins, *et al.*, 2015:369).

Writing on transformational leaders, Liu (2018:374), remarks that through the strength of their vision and personality, transformational leaders are able to inspire followers to change their expectations and motivate them to work towards common goals. This, he mentions, is not based on a 'give and take' relationship, but on the leader's ability to make a change. Such leaders hold a positive expectation of followers, believing they can do their best, by nurturing and supporting them till they become high performers and leaders themselves. In the book, *Laying Ghosts to Rest*, Ramphele describes transformational leadership in the post-apartheid public service. She writes that success in transformative leadership entails taking people to places they may not have known existed or to places they would otherwise not have wanted to go. She mentions that it is about mobilising effective management of public resources to achieve set goals in every government establishment (Ramphele, 2008:296).

According to Van Wart (2003), three factors are generally accepted as standard for what transformational leadership is: idealised influence, which involves modelling behaviours consistent with the stated vision, and building employee confidence and pride in the organisation; inspirational motivation, which involves articulating an appealing vision of the organisation's mission, and giving confidence and direction about the future of the organisation; and lastly, intellectual stimulation, which challenges followers to question old assumptions about organisational problems and

practices and look for new ways to solve problems (Moynihan, Wright & Pandey, 2012:317).

It's worth mentioning that transactional and transformational leadership should not be viewed as opposing approaches to leadership. Transformational developed from transactional (Robbins, *et al.*, 2015:369). Adanri and Singh (2016:672) write that both have been found to be effective leadership approaches and have been found to be ethical in orientation. Transactional leadership can be observed at a time of stability in an organisation, while transformational emerges in times of distress and change. Bass (1990:53) propose that transformational leadership expands the effects of transactional leadership, and that many great transformational leaders like Abraham Lincoln and Nelson Mandela did not shy away from being transactional as well as transformational, by being able to move the nation and play petty politics.

In a study conducted by Adanri and Thakker (2016), it was concluded that transformational leadership predicts organisational outcome better than transactional, and that transformational practices can make local governments more effective and efficient in its service delivery and be more responsive to the public.

## **2.7 RULES OF CONDUCT**

Besides leadership, another mechanism used in regulating conduct and influencing behaviour is the rules of conduct, synonymously called the codes of conduct, regulations, or in some instances, the standard operating procedures. Rules are used to specify and shape what is regarded as an appropriate conduct or procedure. To evaluate the role of rules as a driving factor of ethical behaviour, this section elaborates on rules of conduct, its conceptualisation, perception, development and enforcement.

### **2.7.1 Conceptual analysis and types of rules**

Many societies and organisations are guided by rules, generally referred to as the rules of conduct, or ethical codes. Many scholars have argued for or against such codes of conduct. To the supporters, they are a means of providing guidance to public officials on doing good and avoiding evil (Rohr, 1991). Opponents, however, see it as counter-productive because it narrows decision making options (Dzansi and Hoeyi, 2013:240). Whatever the case, rules have been seen as a means to sanction behaviour or prohibit it. They also protect liberty and restrict it. Rules are essential

within organisations, especially in public institutions. They limit and guide human behaviours and regulate organisational activities (Weber, 2007. In Demirkasimoglu, *et al.* (2012:236)). According to Dehart-Davis (2017:1), public organisations use rules to set behavioural expectations, signalling the culture of the organisation. Employees also use rules to engage with citizens and manage their workload. According to Demirkasimoglu, Aydin, Erdogan and Akin (2012:236), the importance of rules stem from its being the symbolic artefacts of collective life. They are components of social life which provide order and help set acceptable universal standards.

In a similar vein, Kaptein and Schwartz (2008:113) define a set of rules as a distinct and formal document containing prescriptions developed by and for an institution to guide the present and future behaviour on multiple issues of the managers and employees towards one another, the institution, external stakeholders and society in general. Such sets of rules reveal a broad range of contents, including general values like transparency, integrity, fairness and confidentiality, as well as legal and technical requirements (Thaler & Helmig, 2016:1367).

Rules and regulations are however not always formal. They can be in written (formal) and unwritten (informal) forms. North (1990:36) called them formal and informal constraints. Formal rules, sometimes seen as rule formalisation, is seen as the process of putting rules in writing to convey their legitimacy (DeHart-Davis, Chen & Little, 2013:332). They include constitutions and laws enforced by the State. Many of these rules are created through a process of bargaining and political conflicts between individuals and organisations (Greif & Kingston, 2011:14). Not all guidelines can, however, be formulated in advance for every situation. That is, written texts cannot resolve every conflict (Lang, Rengger & Walker, 2006:276), hence, informal rules. Informal rules are the unwritten, yet agreed upon codes of behaviour, that take the form of norms, customs and conventions (Pedro, 2018:80). They are seen as requirements for specific organisational behaviours under particular circumstances, but are spread verbally and stored in memory (DeHart-Davis, *et al.*, 2013:333). North (1990:37), writes that informal norms are a part of the heritage or culture of an organisation.

### **2.7.2 Development of rules of conduct**

Aristotle's thought on ethics stresses the importance of character traits in guiding behaviour. That is, good character ensures good behavioural patterns (Dzansi & Hoeyi, 2013:239). This is synonymous with the value-based ethics discussed earlier. However, different scandals and misbehaviour found among municipal officials show that trusting people's character to prevail in critical decision making is not enough.

Tradition also has it that individuals should interact with others as they would want to be dealt with, but there have been many exceptions. Individuals have not acted in response to constraints of their conscience and values. Hence, they have broken trust with their fellows (Back, 2006:7). People have shown selfishness, lack of integrity, greed and lack of moral value. The reaction by society is the introduction of rules and legislation to curb excesses of human nature (Ibid). Also agreeing with this, Dzansi and Hoeyi (2013:241) writes that if a society cannot trust moral values to get its members to be ethical, rules will have to be applied.

Demirkasimoglu, *et al.* (2012:236) write that employees are mostly eager to follow rules within the organisation, but undesired behaviours are also seen. Every organisation therefore needs to have effective standardised procedures of enforcing rules to guide its employees.

### **2.7.3 Rule enforcement and compliance**

Within organisations, the enforcement of rules is considered as a separate issue from the formation and the content of the rules themselves (Greif & Kingston, 2011:14). That is, making rules and getting people to comply with the rules are two different things. Defined as the process of compelling observance or compliance with a law, (Lexico Dictionary, 2019), rule or obligation enforcement involves the need to explain rules, monitor compliance, and the administration of non-compliance consequences (DeHart-Davis, 2017:62). Compliance is particularly important for public institutions because rules symbolise the delivery of values such as equity, fairness, transparency and accountability. Effective public institutions require compliance with rules and procedures (Borry, DeHart-Davis, Kaufmann, Merritt, Mohr & Tummers, 2016:3), hence enforcement strategies need to be put in place. North (1990:48) highlights the importance of enforcement, saying that rules are generally devised with compliance



costs in mind. Methods must be devised to ascertain that a rule has been violated, ascertain the extent of violation, and apprehend the violator.

Enforcement and compliance to rules are usually described and analysed from the perspective of formal and informal rules. Formal rules tend to rely more on the coercive apparatus of the State for their enforcement, and when State enforcement is effective, heavy costs become associated with the violation of rules. This, then, tends to produce rule conforming behaviour (Pedro, 2018:81). Also, lending to the written nature of formal rules, compliance is increased. This written nature focuses organisational attention on significant issues and conveys their legitimacy in ways that unwritten rules cannot (DeHart-Davis, Chen & Little, 2013:332). In the study conducted by Borry, *et al.* (2016), it was found that people comply more with rules when they are written, legitimate and consistent. Legitimacy, according to Tyler (2006:375), makes voluntary cooperation easier because it carries the notion that rules are appropriate and just.

By contrast, unwritten rules fail to provide evidence of legitimacy because they are communicated verbally. They tend to originate from individual sources and not from the organisation as a whole (DeHart-Davis, 2017:46). Unwritten rules, therefore, leave room for different interpretations and greater opportunity for deviation from compliance requirements (DeHart-Davis, Chen & Little, 2013:336). They also have no clear-cut guidelines on how rules are formed or how they are enforced, which leads to two interrelated problems. The first problem is the issue of rules not being collectively adopted, while second is that of how compliance is promoted (Pedro, 2018:81).

North (1990:53), however, wrote that looking at only formal rules gives an inadequate and misleading notion about rules. A mixture of both types of rules and their enforcement defines the choice set and results in appropriate outcomes. Portillo (2012:89) also noted that public officials prefer to rely on informal rules, personal relationships and personal authority, only enforcing rules as last resort, when they have lost control of the situation. Formal structure takes power out of the hands of officials. In such situations, there are regulations theories that help guide the official.

## **2.8 THEORIES OF RULES OF CONDUCT**

Public organisations are stereotyped for being sources of bad rules. Rules are perceived as being ineffective, voluminous and restrictive (DeHart-Davis, 2017:127).

This is, however, not always the case, and whatever the view, rules are important for an effective public institution. Three theories will be described for the purpose of this study.

### **2.8.1 Red tape theory**

The theory of red tape has always been that of contention among public administration researchers. While most see it in a negative light, others try to bring out its positive side. A good starting point is the definition by Bozeman (1993:283). He defined red tape as rules, regulations and procedures that remain in force and entail compliance burden for the organisation, but have no efficacy for the rules' functional object. Here, Bozeman sees red tape as rules that remain, although they have become burdensome and have no value. Before giving this definition, he acknowledges many definitions that had been given by scholars before him. For example, red tape usually implies excessive or meaningless paperwork (Bennett & Johnson, 1979); and most importantly the one by Herbert Kaufmann who published *Red Tape: Its Origins, Uses and Abuses* in 1977. Kaufmann sees red tape as being subject to too many pointless constraints. The origin of the red tape was the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Under the reign of Henry VIII, Cardinal Wolsey's administration produced scrolls bearing government edicts and tied them with red tape. The recipients of these edicts then began using the term 'red tape' to refer to the complex and unwieldy government rules and pronouncements (Bozeman & Feeney, 2011:20).

A fundamental assumption of the red tape theory is that red tape can occur as the rules are being created, and it can also evolve over a period of time. When it is seen at the beginning of a rule as it is being created, it is referred to as a 'rule inception' red tape (Bozeman & Feeney, 2011:52). These are rules that are dysfunctional at their origin (Bozeman, 1993:285). Such rules are those usually designed to serve individual self-interest rather than organisational goals (Bozeman & Feeney, 2011:56). However, when red tape occurs as rules are implemented and used, it is referred to as 'rule evolved' red tape (Ibid:52). Here, functional rules change into dysfunctional rules. That is, 'good rules gone bad' (Bozeman, 1993:287); rules that become irrelevant overtime due to flawed implementation or shifting circumstances (Dehart-Davis, 2017:129). Such rules have stopped maintaining their effectiveness but are still in use (Bozeman & Feeney, 2011:61).

A study of literature shows a domination of the work of Bozeman on the red tape theory. Red tape emerged as a Public Administration research topic in the 1990s when Barry Bozeman wrote about his observations of ineffective rules in the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (DeHart-Davis, 2017:128). Kaufmann, DeHart-Davis and Borry (2018:236) acknowledge this, writing that most organisational red tape studies have followed Bozeman's definition, where red tape is considered a pathological subset of formalisation (written rules) within an organisation, which implies a higher level of formalisation means more red tape. Red tape emanates from the desire to provide formal control of organisational activities (Bozeman, 2000). Scholars have made a distinction between formalisation and red tape. Formalisation pertains to written rules, regulations and procedures, while red tape is about ineffective written rules, regulations and procedures (DeHart-Davis, 2008:367).

This distinction between formalisation and red tape has, hence, made red tape to become an umbrella term covering almost all the imagined short falls of bureaucracy (Bozeman, 1993:275). In a study by Pandey and Kingsley (2000), it was found that a higher level of red tape is associated with a higher level of being alienated from one's work. Another study by Scott and Pandey (2005) notes that public employees are often frustrated by high levels of procedural constraints especially when viewed as red tape. These studies show that red tape can impact negatively on the behaviour of public officials. Kaufmann (1977) however highlights that if we decide to do away with red tape, we would be shocked by the resurgence of the irregularities and dishonesties it currently prevents. He also notes that one man's red tape is another's treasured procedural safeguard (Ibid,279).

### **2.8.2 Green tape theory**

The green tape theory was developed after the red tape theory. It evolved out of the search for effective organisational rule. The theory argues that an organisational rule's effectiveness, i.e. the extent to which rule achieves its intended purposes, depends on two conditions; technical proficiency and stakeholder cooperation. That is, the capacity of the rule's design and implementation for achieving rule objectives, and the cooperation of individuals who must explain, enforce and comply with the rules (DeHart-Davis, 2009:901,902). The theory developed after a research was conducted by DeHart-Davis (2008). Using both quantitative and qualitative data, DeHart-Davis

studied employees of four local governments in the United States. The elements of effective rules were then identified using grounded theory approach. The green tape theory is a grounded theory of effective organisational rules based on the lived experiences of public employees and their encounters with rules (DeHart-Davis, 2017:112). The theory asserts that the combined presence of five rules attributes increases the probability of rule effectiveness. They are: 1. Written requirements, 2. Valid means-ends relationships, 3. Consistent application of rules, 4. Optimal controlling, and 5. Understood by Stakeholders (DeHart-Davis, 2008:377).

These five attributes are briefly described. Written rule speaks to the formalisation of rules. This stands in common with the red tape theory. Participants of the green tape research appear to agree that rules documented in writing are perceived as being effective because they are seen as more logically designed and legitimate, hence higher compliance (DeHart-Davis, 2017:114). Rules that rationally connect with its ends is an important part of the green tape (DeHart-Davis, 2009:903). Rules are good when they serve their purposes; that is, rules being logically connected to their ends (DeHart-Davis, 2008:368). Consistency is an integral part of effective public organisations. It is viewed as a mechanism for positive outcomes within the organisational structure, because it promotes procedural fairness and makes behaviour predictable (Borry, DeHart-Davis, Kaufmann, Merritt, Mohr & Tummers, 2016:10). It is about the application of rules in a consistent, non-partial manner. Optimal control, the fourth attribute of green tape, is just the right amount of control. Optimally controlling rules are reasonable, flexible and communicate organisational trust (DeHart-Davis, 2008:369,370). Control are thought of as residing on a continuum, where you can either under-control or over-control (catalyst for red tape). Between these two extremes lies optimal control, which shows rule followers they are trusted enough not to be micromanaged (DeHart-Davis, 2017:119). The last attribute of the green tape is the importance of stakeholders understanding the rules. Freeman and Reed (1983:91) give a good viewpoint of stakeholders, defining stakeholders as individuals or groups who can affect the achievement of an organisation's objectives, or is affected by the achievement of the organisation's objectives. In relations to this study, this will be municipal officials who contribute to the municipality's objectives to satisfy the needs of the community that the municipality serves. Understanding of rules

by stakeholders is thought to increase stakeholder cooperation and hence abidance (DeHart-Davis, 2009:904), which are essential for effective rules.

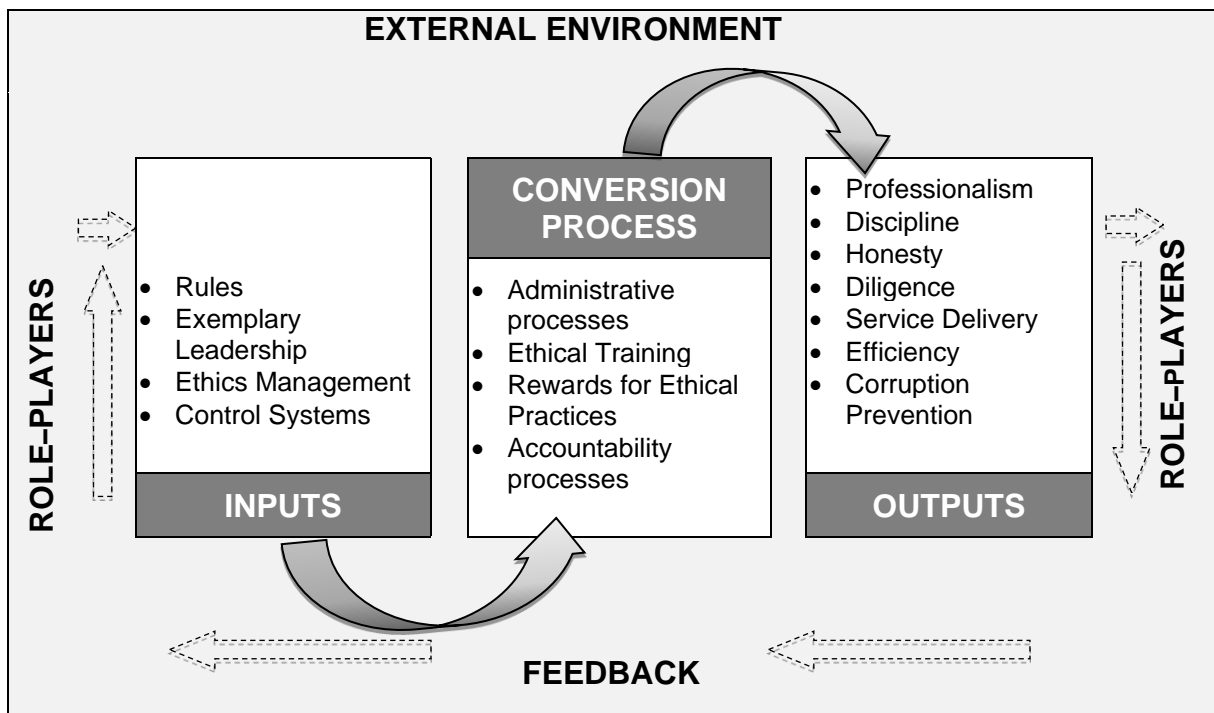
The green tape theory shares similarities with the red tape theory in that the effectiveness of rule is of interest to both, and without compliance, both are non-existent (DeHart-Davis, 2017:129). They however also differ in many ways.

### **2.8.3 Integrated systems theory**

Systems theory has its origin from multiple disciplines. It comes from a shift in attention from the part to the whole, and the focus is on the interactions and relationships between these parts in order to understand an entity's functioning and outcomes (Mele, Pels & Polese, 2010:127). According to this theory, different components or structures within an organisation are in hierarchical ordering, and components are interdependent on one another, such that one component cannot function without the support of the other components (Lai & Lin, 2017:3). The interdependence of structures within organisations act as a control system to minimize risks. Rules serve as control within a public organisation, so do systems. As already mentioned, they are put in place to guide behaviour, regulate organisational activities and for reducing vulnerabilities and exposure to risks.

In this study, the systems theory will be applied to the CTMM that is a complex organisation due to, *inter alia*, the range of activities, complicated structures and demanding needs of its residents. The integrated systems theory provides a firm foundation for the development of rules because it allows input, output, feedback and evaluation from various role-players.

The following **Figure 2.1** is a simplified illustration of the integrated systems theory.



**Figure 2.1: Simplified schematic illustration of the systems theory**

**Sources:** Adapted from Von Bertalanffy (1972:410 & 417).

## 2.9 INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP AND RULES OF CONDUCT ON ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR

The aim of this section is to summarise how leadership and regulatory aspects jointly influence ethical conduct among the municipal managers and officials. The section, thus, evaluates the effect of leadership and rules of conduct on the standard of ethics maintained by municipal officials. In addition, this section determines the degree of influence of these two factors, viz leadership and rules, have on the ethical behaviour of individuals.

Despite the importance of rules of conduct for all organisations, it has been seen as insufficient in achieving change or governing conduct all by itself without other social processes like the culture of the organisation, of which leadership plays a significant role in helping to set this culture (Downe, Cowell & Morgan, 2016:898). Setting up rules is, therefore, a first step in giving guidance to staff. Employees need to understand that the organisation is serious about the purpose of each rule (Back, 2006:9). Codes or rules need to be interpreted and enlivened into actions by human agents (for example municipal managers and other government officials) who have to take responsibility for this. Rules of conduct act as guidelines that leaders need to

internalise. Leaders also decide whether to introduce ethics codes or not, and what their form or content will be (Downe, Cowell & Morgan, 2016:900). This should be done in consultation with the employees and other stakeholders. In other words, how public employees interpret principles and codes and how they understand their meaning depends on the ethical culture of the particular public institution. These ethical cultures, codified in rules, only have practical significance when they are exemplified in the behaviour of ethical role models, which are the people who hold positions of responsibility or leadership (Mafunisa, 2008:85).

Hence, leadership is widely recognised as one of the most influential factors shaping and influencing behaviour. It exerts the greatest impact on organisational ethics, and should leadership commitment to ethics code be lacking, it will negatively affect the realisation and maintenance of an ethical culture (Schoeman, 2014:98). For example, the code of ethics of the CTMM highlight the following important conducts within the municipality:

A staff member of the municipality must at all times:

- Loyally execute the lawful policies of the municipal council;
- Perform the functions of the office in good faith, diligently, honestly and in a transparent manner;
- Act in the best interest of the municipality and in such a way that the credibility and integrity of the municipality are not compromised;
- Act impartially and treat all people equally without favour or prejudice;
- Foster a culture of commitment to serving the public;
- Promote and seek to implement the basic values and principles of Public Administration described in section 195 of the Constitution of 1996.

(City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (2014))

If leaders or managers within the CTMM fail to adhere to this code, other members may not feel obliged to keep the code. According to Adamaechi and Romaine (2002), cited in Akor (2014:148), leadership is very essential in any kind of group. It is one of the most important variables affecting employees in organisational life (Mahdi, Mohd

& Almsafir, 2014:1076). Napoleon once wrote his feelings on the importance of leadership, that he would rather have an army of rabbits led by a lion, than an army of lions led by a rabbit (Bass, 1990:6). This supports the contention that leaders make a difference in the conduct of their subordinates and how seriously rules are taken in an organisation.

In a research conducted by d'Adda, Darai, Pavanini and Weber (2016), which studied whether leaders influence the unethical conduct of followers or not, they found that leaders influence the ethical conduct of followers both through their statements and through the use of incentives. In their conclusion, they wrote that the main finding is that unethical leaders produce unethical behaviour on the part of followers. In another research by Ogunfowora (2014) on the relationship between ethical leadership, unit-level organisational citizenship behaviour and individual level job satisfaction using the social learning theory and the social identity theory, the result showed a positive effect of ethical leadership on citizenship behaviours and individual level job satisfaction. In Sweden, Westerlund (1952) observed that high-quality performance of supervisors improved the attitudes and performance of telephone operators (Bass, 1990:9).

Leadership, often regarded as the single most critical factor in the success or failure of institutions, (ibid:8) has been said to influence people towards the achievement of goals. Hence, leaders are seen to exercise positive (and negative) influence on others. Leaders impact on the attitude of subordinates and on the ethical conduct of subordinates. This implies that leaders can influence group members by their own example (ibid:14).

Regarding the effect of codes of ethics without other social influences, literature has shown both positive and negative influences. Two studies show that codes of ethics might have a positive impact on the ethical behaviour of individuals (Ashkanasy, Falkus & Callan, 2000; Pelltier & Bligh, 2006); while another study classifies codes of ethics as poor predictors of ethical values (Callan, 1992). This shows that leadership interacts with codes of ethics or policy frameworks within an organisation to influence the behaviour of others. As role models, leaders set the ethical standards and policies of an organisation by the values they demonstrate. Without ethical leadership and appropriate frameworks or codes of ethics in place, it will be difficult to identify right and wrong behaviour (Schoeman, 2014:58). A saying in the Bible also states that



where there is no law, there is no sin. It suggests that everyone may do as they please because they are not breaking any rule. However, when leaders lead by example, because their behaviour will influence the behaviour of others, positive behaviour is promoted within a public institution.

## **2.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter reviews the literature relevant to ethics, leadership and rules. It started with a discussion of the definition, meaning and effectiveness of ethics. Ethics, morality and law were compared and contrasted. While they all seek to delineate right from wrong, it was shown that moral is personal and generally influenced by a person's upbringing, while ethics creates the organisational standard of right and acceptable behaviours. It was discussed that emphasis has been shifting to the exercise of self-restraint, hence, the trend towards emphasising individual accountability over corporate restraint.

Ethical theories were discussed, starting with consequentialism which focuses on producing the right kind of result. Utilitarianism, also known as the Mill's theory, was discussed, and how it supports consequentialism by emphasising how the value of an ethical action is consequent to how much the benefit outweighs the pain. Deontology was contrasted to consequentialism as being duty-based while virtue theory emphasises individuality and how the actions of such contributes to the corporate goal.

Leadership was presented as being important in driving ethical behaviour, hence, leadership styles and theories were then discussed. Leadership styles may be autocratic, democratic, laissez faire or bureaucratic, and the characteristics of these styles were contrasted with their effects on the ethical behaviour of the organisation presented. Leadership theories discussed include behavioural, which focuses on tasks to be done and the relationship among people to achieve such; the contingency theory, emphasising the importance of situational context in the evolution of leadership; and situational, which is based on contingency and seeks to match styles with what is available in the followers. Others include the LMX theory (Leader-member Exchange) that focuses on identifying best practices for optimizing organisational outcomes; transactional, which believes more in some sort of contractual relationship between the leaders and the followers; and transformational, which is more concerned with empowering the followers.

The literature progressed to consider rules and reviews the types of rules (written and unwritten) and the effectiveness of each type. It discussed the importance of leadership in the enforcement of rules, and then progresses to the theories of rules. The red tape theory generally focuses on the burden of compliance to rules, but some authors have also written in its support. The green tape theory is built more around technical competencies and cooperation from stakeholders.

The literature goes on to discuss the systems approach to ethical management, and the goal is to consider system paradigm in the deployment of ethical values in organisations. System thinking considers the effects of the whole as being more than the sum of the contribution of the individual components, and as such, seeks to understand how all different aspects might be considered together in the ethical management of an organisation in order to achieve better result. This then leads to the final part, which is the consideration of the joint effect of leadership and rules on the level of ethical behaviour of organisations. The next chapter will address the design and methodology most suitable for this research.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

*“Live a good honourable life. Then when you get older and look back, you will be able to enjoy it a second time.” (The Dali Lama)*

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the first chapter, a preliminary description was provided on the research design, methodology, the preferred instrument for data collection and the data analysis process. A justification of why this study chose the qualitative research design was also briefly outlined. In the second chapter, a review of the literature on ethics, leadership and rules was undertaken as one of the methods to address the research problem that ethical behaviour is lacking at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (CTMM) due to the absence of proper rules and exemplary leadership. This chapter elaborates in more detail, the research design and methodology, population and sampling techniques, and the data gathering instrument. The data analysis cycle and qualitative soundness are also addressed. A section on ethical considerations concludes the chapter. It is also important to have an overview of the case study; hence, the chapter starts by introducing the leadership structure and rules of conduct within of the CTMM.

### **3.2 CITY OF TSHWANE METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY**

This section provides a general background about the work environment in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality which is the focus of this study. This will be done by looking into the history of the municipality, its leadership structure and the code of conduct of the municipality.

#### **3.2.1 Background information**

As at 2019, South Africa is divided into 257 municipalities based on three constitutional categories, which are eight (8) Metropolitan Municipalities, twenty-five (25) Local Municipalities and forty-four (44) District Municipalities (Yes! Media, 2019:16). These municipal categories are also known as category A, B and C respectively. Category A municipalities have exclusive executive and legislative authority in its area, which is vested in the municipal council. Such areas, according to the Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998, must have high population density, intense movement of people, goods

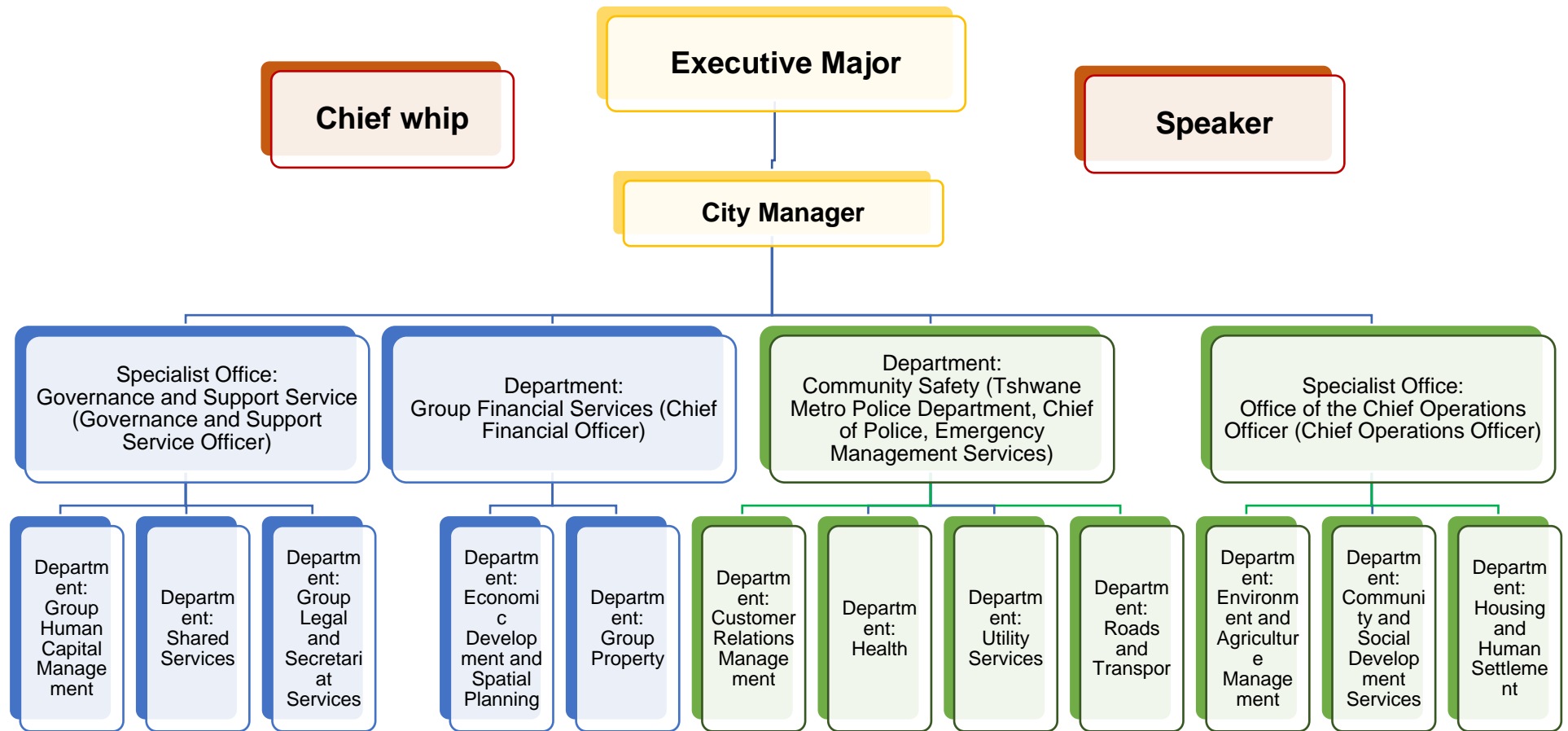
and service and be a centre of economic activities and extensive development. Areas in South Africa that does not comply with these requirements are divided into district municipalities (category C). Districts are further divided into local municipalities (category B). They share legislative and executive authorities (ibid).

The City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (CTMM), located in the Gauteng province in South Africa, was established on 5 December 2000 through the integration of various municipalities and councils (City of Tshwane, 2019a). It is a category A municipality and the single largest metropolitan municipality in the country with 7 regions, 105 wards and 210 councillors (Yes! media.2019:90). The City of Tshwane is the administrative seat of the South African government and hosts many embassies. It is home to about 2.5 million people and stretches about 121km from East to West and 108km from North to South in landmass. This makes the city the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest city in the world after New York and Tokyo (City of Tshwane. 2019a).

### **3.2.2 Leadership structure of the CTMM**

The CTMM's political head is an executive mayor with the mayoral committee while the administration is led by a city manager who has four deputies. They, altogether, constitute the top management of the municipality. The city manager is also the accounting officer responsible for managing the financial affairs and the delivery of services in the municipality (South Africa. City of Tshwane, nd:4). The focus of the study is on the ethical conduct of the administrative arm of the municipality.

**Figure 3.1** shows the organisational structure of the CTMM. It must be noted that local government functions in an environment that change constantly, hence, its structures and leadership are also subject to changes (South Africa. City of Tshwane, nd:5).



**Figure 3.1:** Organisational structure of the CTMM

**Source:** South Africa. City of Tshwane (2017:73)

### **3.2.3 Rules of Conduct within the CTMM**

The Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 states that the municipal manager of a municipality must provide a copy of the code of conduct to every member of staff of the municipality, and also provide amendments to such codes. Some aspects of these codes are stated in chapter 2 of the Municipal Systems Act of 2000 and it applies to all municipal administrative staff members nationally.

Within the CTMM, there is indeed a code of conduct for staff member in terms of the Municipal Systems Act. This code deals with different aspects of conducts that are deemed important by the municipality. There is, for example, a section on general conduct that deals with staff members working in good faith, impartially and staff acting in the best interest of the municipality. In the code, staff are also expected to serve the public interest by promoting basic values and principles of public administration described in section 195(1) of the Constitution, which include amongst others efficient and effective use of resources; being development oriented; providing services impartially and fairly; and being accountable. The code also deals with the importance of staff members not abusing their positions for personal gain or improperly benefiting themselves or family members and not using their positions to influence the municipal council for personal advantage. They are also not allowed to solicit or accept any gift in the performance of their duties to the public, the municipal council or colleagues. This code of conduct cannot address or deal with all possible unethical conducts, but it will serve as a guide to staff members in carrying out their daily duties (City of Tshwane, 2014).

Furthermore, the CTMM embraces the following core values:

- Professionalism: this includes characteristics such as respect, approachability, responsiveness, transparency and accountability;
- Development: that is, systems within the municipality should be continuously reviewed to ensure communities' needs are addressed;
- Commitment: which means each role player needs to be committed to the vision of the municipality;

- Integrity of the CTMM in taking responsibility for its promises, valuing customers and taking ownership of challenges; and
- Leading through example to ensure communities receive basic services, which will in turn improve the quality of life (City of Tshwane, 2019b).

All these values are meant to ensure the proper functioning of the municipality with a heart for the community they serve. This has however not always been the case; hence, ethical behaviour is lacking at the CTMM.

### **3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

Kumar (2014:122) defined a research design as a roadmap used during the research journey to find answers to research questions. He also explained a research design as a plan that shows how various methods will be applied during the research process. Bryman (2012:45) added that a research design involves the criteria used when evaluating research. Thus, a research design is a framework for the generation of evidence suited for the research questions. The concept of research methodology refers to the methods, techniques and instruments used to implement the research design. After the review of the literature, a case study approach was followed, and an empirical study was conducted through individual interviews conducted through the online platform, MS Teams.

#### **3.3.1 Research Design**

There are mainly three approaches to research, as mentioned in chapter one, namely: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods research designs. A quantitative research design follows a positivist research paradigm that aims for directly measurable data. Quantitative research allows the researcher to be independent, neutral and objective. This research design aims to create generalisable knowledge, and the research findings are validated by logic, consistency of prediction and control (Wessels & Thani, 2014:159). Quantitative research primarily follows a confirmatory scientific method, a positivistic paradigm with its focus on hypothesis and theory testing: it is based on precisely measured numerical data (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:82). A qualitative research design is more concerned with context than measurements and counts. Qualitative research seeks to understand and explore situations, values, perceptions and experiences of people (Kumar, 2014:133). Therefore, qualitative designs are often

based on an inductive process, that is, theory emerging from data collected, rather than a deductive process supporting or rejecting existing theories, as found in quantitative designs. Qualitative research designs study human behaviour in a social context, to understand and appreciate them holistically, giving participants opportunity to contribute thoroughly and make their points known (Eyisi, 2016:93,94).

For a better understanding of a qualitative research design, its characteristics are briefly attended to. A qualitative research studies real life situation in their natural setting and works closely with people's experiences so as to have a critical understanding of the phenomenon (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). It also views events and the social environment from the perspective of the people under study, rather than viewing it as if the people are incapable of their own reflections (Bryman, 2012:399). The environment in which the participants operate is important for a qualitative research because this gives an account of the context within which behaviour takes place. It is, therefore, difficult to have a true understanding of the behaviour outside of the social group or environment within which it operates (Ibid:401). Berg (2001:7) asserts that to study human behaviour in a statistically measurable manner will be arithmetically precise, it may however fail to fit reality. This study, hence, adopted a qualitative approach, where the ethical behaviour of staff of the CTMM was studied within the context of their real working environment.

### **3.3.2 Research approach**

Qualitative researchers usually follow an inductive process and need to be open and flexible to what emerges from the study (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Qualitative research may commence without any pre-existing theory (Cropley, 2019:40); so, theories are derived from the data collected (Bryman, 2012:404). There are different types of approaches found in a qualitative design. Five of these approaches will be briefly defined while also focussing on the approach adopted by this study:

**Phenomenology:** This approach to qualitative research attempts to describe peoples' experiences of an event to understand their personal meaning of a lived experience (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). It, therefore, focuses on what is common to all the participants, thereby reducing individual experiences (Creswell, 2013:82). The researcher conducts investigations through people who have experienced and lived the event (Addo & Eboh, 2014:141). A phenomenology approach focuses on a



phenomenon or event; hence, it is not completely suitable for this research which seeks to understand what drives ethical behaviour at the CTMM.

**Ethnography:** An ethnographic approach describes and interprets cultural behaviour (Jackson, Drummond & Camara, 2007:24). According to Johnson and Christensen (2014), it originated from the anthropology discipline, and it literally means 'writing about people'. It however differs from anthropology in that anthropologists describe small cultures especially in less developed countries, while ethnographers study cultural characteristics of groups that can include teachers, students, medical doctors or even a religious group (ibid). Ethnography seeks to describe and interpret the shared behaviours, beliefs and language of a group (Creswell, 2013:100). This study is not looking into the culture shared by CTMM; and the CTMM is not an organisation built around a particular common culture of people, hence this approach is not suitable for the study.

**Grounded theory:** The first writing on grounded theory was in a book written by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in 1967. It contends that theory should be discovered from social research because research then was too quantitative in nature, hence too distant from the reality it sought to explain (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The grounded theory approach, therefore, seeks to study a phenomenon by simultaneously gathering and analysing data (Addo & Eboh, 2014:141). Various forms of data collection are also used, especially interviews and observation, to get an in depth understanding of the phenomenon under study (Hancock, Ockleford & Windridge, 2009:12). It, therefore, moves beyond description of common experiences as found in phenomenology to the development of theories grounded on the interpretations of many participants (Creswell, 2013:90). This research about ethical practices in the CTMM is not aimed at generalising its findings by developing a theory from the study, hence grounded theory is not the most appropriate for this study.

**Narrative research:** A narrative research approach focuses on people's experiences and stories about themselves or an event. It does not look for themes or commonalities that emerge as found in phenomenology, but concentrates on the successive unfolding of the story (Hancock, *et al.* 2009:14). Creswell and Poth (2018:112) outlined a few elements found in a narrative research, stating that the researcher gathers stories from individuals about their lived life experiences; these stories occur within

specific places and situations; the stories or data are gathered through mainly interviews, but also through observations, documents and pictures. Johnson and Christensen (2014) highlighted that while story telling is not new, the emergence of narrative methodology was articulated in 1990 by Connelly F Michael and Clandinin J Dean. According to Creswell (2013:280), a good narrative study focuses on one to three individuals, collects stories about an important issue related to the individual, and connects different aspects of the story to develop a chronology and reports on what was said. For this research, municipal officials can tell stories when answering questions posed to them to justify what drives their ethical values, however, the focus of this research does not lie on the individual stories. This made this approach not suitable for the study.

**Case study:** This is the methodology adopted in this research. A case study research approach involves gathering information about a person, social setting, event or a group to ensure the researcher understands how it operates or functions (Berg, 2001:225). Kumar (2014:155) noted that a case can be an individual, a group, an organisation or an event, and that the case selected is the basis of a thorough and in-depth exploration of what one wants to find out. In this research, there is a thorough and holistic exploration into what drives ethical behaviour in the CTMM as a case, and as already mentioned, this study adopted an intrinsic case study approach. The intrinsic study is undertaken because the case is of interest to the researcher (Stake, 1995). The purpose is not to generate theory, but to better understand the case (ibid). Such research is also embarked on, according to Zainal (2009), for the sake of the case under study. That is, it is expected that the case under study will benefit from the research. This research is also single case study interpretive in that the aim is to understand the CTMM as it is from a subjective point of view within the frame of reference of the participants (Ponelis, 2015:538). Interpretivism encourages the researcher to be the main data collection agent to enhance consistency of data collection. It also reinforces the fact that no absolute truths are expected from only the research questions, hence, the pursuit of a thorough, holistic and open-ended perspective is encouraged (Chetty, 2013:41).

Having justified the use of case study approach for this study, a look into the sampling technique that is used is described.

### 3.4 POPULATION AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

For research purposes, the total group under study is referred to as the 'population'. The population is, therefore, the complete set of elements that the researcher is interested in, and the part of the total group that will be selected to represent the group, is the 'sample'. In explaining this a little further, Taherdoost (2016:18), wrote that researchers do not have the time or resources to collect data from the entire population, so sampling techniques are used to select the representatives. Hence, sampling is the act or process of selecting a representative part of a population for the purpose of determining the characteristics of the whole population. Gentles, *et al.* (2015:1775), however, notes that this understanding can be true for a quantitative study, but it differs from what researchers in qualitative research hold true. They, therefore, define sampling in qualitative study as the "*selection of specific data sources from which data are collected to address the research objectives*". Kumar (2014:228) also supported this notion that sampling in quantitative and qualitative research are guided by two differing viewpoints. He mentioned that quantitative research attempts to select sample in a randomised unbiased way that represents the population, called 'probability sampling', while in qualitative research, several factors may influence the selection, that is, 'non-probability sampling'. These factors can include the knowledge of the participant about the research topic and the ease of accessing the potential participant, depending on what is being studied and the research questions to be answered.

The aim of qualitative research is to gain an in-depth knowledge about the topic of research, hence, groups and individual participants that can provide an insight into the research problem have to be selected (*ibid*). That means, qualitative researchers select people they think can shed light on the particular issues or concerns the researchers are interested in (Cropley, 2019:75). It is worth noting here, in the words of Marshall (1996:523), that random sampling provides an opportunity to generalise the results of a study. It is, however, not the most suitable approach when attempting to understand issues relating to human behaviour; like when the aim is to understand what drives ethical behaviour among the staff of CTMM as intended in this study. There are, fortunately, different strategies for non-probability sampling in qualitative research, as described below:

**Convenience sampling technique:** This sampling technique concentrates on people or individuals that can be easily enlisted and are willing to participate in the research. According to Johnson and Christensen (2014), convenience sampling involves the selection of the most accessible subjects. It relies on available participants, hence sometimes called 'availability sampling' (Berg, 2001:32). Convenience sampling is also seen as the most affordable. Participants are readily available and neither strategic nor purposeful (Etikan, Musa and Alkassim, 2016:2), hence it cannot be generalised to the population.

**Purposive sampling technique:** Purposive sampling, also called 'judgemental sampling', is defined by Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016:2) as the deliberate choice of a participant due to the qualities possessed by the participant. That is, the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can provide that specific information. The strategy targets or deliberately selects persons or events in order for them to provide information that cannot be obtained from other sources. The researcher believes this set of persons warrant inclusion in the study. Taherdoost (2016:23), also writing on purposive sampling, elaborated that the logic and power lies in selecting information-rich participants or cases where one can learn about the issues central to the purpose of the research. Gentles, Charles, Ploeg and Mckibbin (2015:1778) confirmed the notion of choosing participants based on their knowledge and the relevance of the information they have in relation to the study's research questions.

**Snowball sampling technique:** This is also referred to as 'network sampling' (Omona, 2013:180). A snowball sampling technique initially identifies people with relevant characteristics, interviews them, and then asks them for names of other people who possess same qualities as they do (Berg, 2001:33). That is, participants are asked to identify additional people who meet certain attributes and may be willing to participate in the study. As this happens, the sample becomes larger (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Elder (2009:8) noted that this method works well when members of the population know one another, and the process is stopped when saturation seems to have been reached.

**Quota sampling technique:** In quota sampling, the researcher decides on the characteristics of people to include, and then tries to get the right number of people

(Johnson & Christensen, 2014). The researcher creates a table of these characteristics, which can be based on gender, age, educational level, skills or expert knowledge, then uses a non-random method to fill the cells in the table (Berg, 2001:33). This approach is referred to as quota because there is a selection with controls to ensure that specific numbers are obtained for each selected characteristic (Elder, 2009:5).

Kumar (2014:155) wrote that when a case study is chosen – as in this study, researchers usually make use of a purposive, information-oriented sampling techniques. Qualitative researchers know that some informants are more knowledgeable than others, hence such people are likely to offer better insight into what is being studied. Since the aim of this study is to evaluate the roles of leadership and rules of conduct as driving factors of ethical and professional behaviour among staff members of the CTMM, a case study design was used to reach this purpose, and a non-probability purposive sampling technique was used to select the participants who had extensive knowledge of the workings of the system. The characteristics of the participants include: a minimum of five years of service at the Human Resource Division and the Operational Division of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM; the type of duties involved in; knowledge of the code of conduct or rules; role or level within the municipality; and other relevant characteristics.

Qualitative research methods and purposive sampling technique place emphasis on saturation. Reaching saturation is an indicator that sufficient data collection has been achieved and any additional data collection would contribute little or nothing to the study (Gentles, *et al.* 2015:1781). For this study, the sample size was fixed, but room was also left for possible increase so as to ensure that sufficient number of participants is accommodated. **Table 3.1** lists the target groups, nature of each group, the site population per group as well as the relevant sample sizes.

**Table 3.1: Target groups, population and sample sizes**

| <b>Target group/department</b>                   | <b>Nature of group involved</b>  | <b>Site population</b> | <b>Sample size</b> | <b>Sampling technique</b>             |
|--|--|------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Human Resource Division                          | HR Managers  | 20                     | 2                  | Purposive sampling: 10% of population |
| Operational Division: Department of Public Works | Operational Managers and Supervisors of the Department of Public Works | 40                     | 4                  |                                       |
| <b>Total</b>                                     |  | <b>60</b>              | <b>6</b>           |                                       |

**Source:** (Author's interpretation)

### **3.5 DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENT**

The process of data gathering, according to Lopez and Whitehead (2013:127), is directly related to sampling because data is collected from identified and selected sample. Creswell and Poth (2018:213) conceptualised data collection as a series of activities aimed at gathering information to answer research questions. According to Cropley (2019:82), data collection is the interaction between the researcher and the participants and involves the researcher obtaining information about an event or situation from the participants who are well informed about the situation under study. Lopez and Whitehead (2013:127) and Schepple (2004:401) added that an appropriate data gathering instrument must be able to reveal the lived details of what the researcher is interested in. In a qualitative study, data gathering instrument may include interviews, observations, focus group interviews, documents, photographs and songs. However, qualitative researchers mostly acquire data through interactive contact with the participants. This makes an interview the most common research tool in a qualitative study.

An interview is a data gathering instrument for generating data from individuals or groups in structured, semi-structured or unstructured formats (Jackson, *et al.* 2007:25). McNabb (2010:8) noted that structured interviews follow script as it has been

prepared for all the participants, while unstructured interviews use open-ended questions, with the interviewer probing for additional responses. Semi-structured interviews fall between these two, in that questions are planned ahead of time, but will not necessarily be asked as rigidly as prepared. According to Blandford (2013), a semi-structured interview is more flexible than a structured interview and leaves room for following up on interesting or lacking responses.

In this study, semi-structured individual interviews were conducted online to obtain the ideas and opinions of individuals at the CTMM about the influence of the identified variables (leadership and rules of conduct) on ethical conduct at the CTMM. This research employed a non-statistical, semi-structured interview approach, for collection of data. This enabled an understanding of the participants' perspectives and experiences about the ethical practices at the CTMM.

The interviews proceeded to gather data to address the problem that ethical behaviour is lacking at the CTMM due to the absence of proper rules and exemplary leadership, by posing the following interview questions:

### **SUPERVISORS**

- **In your opinion, is your behaviour or conduct ethical when relating with customers?**

This question served to get a feel of staff members' disposition towards ethics. It is important to know if ethics matter to them at all and if it plays any role in their day to day service to the public.

- **Do you think your manager shows a concern for ethical and moral values?**

A subordinate's response to this question clarifies their perception of their manager's disposition to ethics. Their perception that the managers place appropriate premium on ethical conduct would have significant impact on how they discharge their duties. Hence, this question was posed to the supervisors to get a feel of how they experience leadership behaviour. The effect of the supervisors knowing that their managers take ethics seriously has an impact on how they will consider ethics. Hence, this question was posed to get a feel of the leadership behaviour as well as that of their subordinates.

## **OPERATIONAL MANAGERS AND HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGERS**

- **As a manager or leader within the municipality, do you think your behaviour influences the conduct of other staff members?**

It is important to understand if managers are aware that as leaders, their behaviour does influence those of other staff members within the municipality. Consequently, this question sought to delve into the manager's understanding of the effect of his or her behaviour on the staff's ethical behaviour.

- **Which of the two concepts, leadership and rules of conduct, do you think plays a more significant role in the ethical behaviour of staff members?**

This study's main interest is to find out the effect of leadership and rules of conduct on the ethical behaviour of staff of the CTMM, and to determine the degree of influence each of these factors have on behaviour. It was important to find out from the participants which one of these two probably plays a more significant role in their ethical conduct. This question, therefore, sought to understand the views of the managers on whether rules or exemplary leadership have more impact on the ethical behaviour of staff members. It sought to understand if staff members respond appropriately to rules given to them or more to their managers' behaviour.

## **OPERATIONAL MANAGERS**

- **Do you attend to the needs of your subordinates in an ethical manner?**

Operational managers are expected to lead by example as they play a significant role in steering organisations in the right direction. This question helped to understand the managers' disposition to ethics within the municipality, especially as operational managers. The question, thus, explored the palpable feeling of exemplary leadership, honesty and integrity by operational managers,

- **What role does the code of conduct of the municipality play in encouraging ethical conduct?**

This question was also directed at the operations managers at the CTMM to get to know the effect of the code of conduct on their own behaviour as leaders and



their subordinate's everyday behaviour within the municipality. This question sought to give clarity on whether the code of conduct plays a crucial part in engendering ethical conducts within the management cadre.

## **HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGERS**

- **What role does the rules of conduct of the municipality play in encouraging ethical conduct?**

Human resource managers are usually seen as custodians of the policies and rules of an organisation. The question was directed at all the human resource managers to get a feel of the impact of the municipality's rules on their ethical behaviour. The question would also assist to clarify if the staff members have knowledge of the existence of the rules.

- **As an HR manager, do you think the staff members are aware of the rules of conduct of the municipality?**

This question tested the accessibility and availability of the rules of the municipality.

The framework for the interview questions is summarised in the following **Table 3.2**. Although the framework informed the design and contents of the interview questions, the answers were not limited thereto, and the participants were encouraged to elaborate on their answers.

**Table 3.2: Framework for data gathering**

| <b>GROUP</b>   | <b>INTERVIEW QUESTION</b>   | <b>RESEARCH AIM/<br/>OBJECTIVE</b>  | <b>RESEARCH QUESTION</b>  | <b>SECTION IN LITERATURE REVIEW</b>  |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Supervisors</b>                                     | In your opinion, is your behaviour or conduct ethical when relating with customers?   | To evaluate the roles of leadership and rules of conduct as driving factors of ethical behaviour among staff members of the Human Resource Division and the Operational Division of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM. | What are the roles of leadership and rules of conduct in instilling ethical behaviour of the staff members of the Human Resource Division and the Operational Division of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM? | Chapter 2:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 2.2.4 (<i>Ethics and public administration</i>)</li> </ul>  |
|  | Do you think your manager shows a concern for ethical and moral values?   |   |   | Chapter 2:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 2.3 (<i>Ethics, morality and law</i>)</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Operations managers<br/>Human resource managers</b> | As a manager or leader within the municipality, do you think your behaviour influences the conduct of other staff members?                        |   |   | Chapter 2:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 2.5 (<i>Conceptual analysis of leadership</i>)</li> </ul>   |
|  | Which of the two concepts, leadership and rules of conduct, do you think plays a more significant role in the ethical behaviour of staff members? |   |   | Chapter 2:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 2.7 (<i>Rules of conduct</i>)</li> <li>• Section 2.9 (<i>Influence of leadership and rules on ethical practices</i>)</li> </ul> |

| GROUP                   | INTERVIEW QUESTION  | RESEARCH AIM/<br>OBJECTIVE  | RESEARCH QUESTION   | SECTION IN LITERATURE REVIEW  |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Operations managers     | Do you attend to the needs of your subordinates in an ethical manner?                                   | To evaluate the roles of leadership and rules of conduct as driving factors of ethical behaviour among staff members of the Human Resource Division and the Operational Division of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM. | What are the roles of leadership and rules of conduct in instilling ethical behaviour of the staff members of the Human Resource Division and the Operational Division of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM? | Chapter 2:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 2.5 (<i>Conceptual analysis of leadership</i>)</li> </ul>  |
|                         | What role does the code of conduct of the municipality play in encouraging ethical conduct?             |   |   | Chapter 1:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 1.5 (<i>Preliminary literature review</i>)</li> </ul>  |
| Human resource managers | What role does the rules of conduct of the municipality play in encouraging ethical conduct?            |   |   | Chapter 2:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 2.7.3 (<i>Rule enforcement and compliance</i>)</li> <li>Section 2.9 (<i>Influence of leadership and rules on ethical practices</i>)</li> </ul> |
|                         | As an HR manager, do you think the staff members are aware of the rules of conduct of the municipality? |   |   | Chapter 3:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 3.2.3 (<i>Rules of Conduct within the CTMM</i>)</li> </ul>   |

## 3.6 DATA ANALYSIS CYCLE

During the interview process, data was gathered via audio recording and taking of notes as the participants responded to the questions asked. The audio recordings and notes gathered during the interviews were transcribed and coded. Codes were created based on pre-determined keywords and concepts. For this study, the predetermined keywords used are 'leadership drives ethics' and 'rules drive ethics'. Codes are, hence, allocated using these keywords. The codes are, thus, leadership and rules. The code 'leadership' means leadership drives ethics, and the code 'rules' shows that rules or codes of conduct drive ethics. These two codes will be compared to see to what extent each contribute to ethical behaviour in the CTMM. Moreover, it is generally accepted that qualitative researchers may improve on the original blueprint as information emerges during data collection (Mabry, 2008:5) and room was left for more codes after more information emerges.

The content of the data collected was analysed by using Atlas.Ti. The analytical tools of Atlas.Ti was used extensively to identify word dependencies, co-occurrences as well as weak and strong networks of words so that further insights were derived from the contextual interpretation of the case texts and audio recordings. Atlas.Ti offered an integrated way of working with the data, as illustrated in the excerpt included in Appendix G.

### 3.6.1 Qualitative soundness and trustworthiness

Unlike the conventional technique of measuring trustworthiness found in quantitative research such as internal and external validity, qualitative studies test trustworthiness through credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability (Jackson, *et al.* 2007:26). Trustworthiness or the test of quality of research, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), is a way in which researchers convince themselves and their readers that the research findings are worthy of attention. This study was duly mindful of qualitative soundness. The criteria for trustworthiness applied in the study are now briefly described:

**Credibility:** Credibility ensures that the research findings represents the information drawn from the participants' original data (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). It is a form of internal validity found in a quantitative positivist study, and it is one of the most important factors used in ensuring trustworthiness (Shenton, 2004:64). Tobin and Begley (2004) reiterate that credibility addresses the disparity that may occur between the participants' views and the

researcher's representation of these views. That is, whether the truth of the participants have been correctly interpreted and the findings can be trusted. This will be ensured in this study through long interviews and lasting engagement with the participants, as advocated by Korstjens and Moser (2018:121). Also, scholarly guidance and reviews from peers were sought, as expected by Anney (2014:276). Most importantly, the data was checked for accuracy by requesting the participants to read complex texts to ensure the texts match what they actually intended (Shenton, 2004:68).

**Transferability:** This is a form of external validity, which is concerned with the extent to which the findings can be applied to other situations (Shenton, 2004:69). Also known as the generalisability of inquiry in which the researcher is responsible for providing a thick description of the context of the research so that the transferability of the findings can be judged by outsiders (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017:3). In this study, a rich description of the CTMM and its context is provided, so that scholars in Public Administration may decide the transferability of the findings of the study to other municipalities. However, one of the limitations of the study is that the findings, conclusions and recommendations made in this mini dissertation are limited to the Human Resource Division and the Operational Division of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM and cannot be generalised to the other municipalities.

**Dependability:** Dependability deals with the researcher ensuring the research process is logical, traceable and adequately documented (Tobin & Begley, 2004). It is about consistency throughout the research process, usually done through an audit trail (Korstjens & Moser, 2018:121-122). It involves the keeping of all records, written notes, transcripts and how the data was analysed in decision making (Nowell, *et al.* 2017:3). Shenton (2004:71) also noted that the coverage of the research processes allows scholars, academics and other researchers to assess the extent to which proper research practices have been followed. This study, undoubtedly, ensured that all the electronic and hard copy records associated with this research are kept confidentially for future references.

**Confirmability:** This criterion is closely related to dependability. It checks the extent to which results of a research can be confirmed by establishing that data and its interpretations are actually derived from data and not from the inquirers wishes (Tobin & Begley, 2004:392). This is also achieved through an audit trail and referring back to documents kept by the researcher (Anney, 2014:279). Guba and Lincoln (1989) believed

that confirmability is automatically established when credibility, transferability and dependability are achieved.

Russell, Gregory, Ploeg, Dicenso and Guyatt (2005) added to the criteria for trustworthiness directly described above, writing that in a case study design, researchers have the responsibility to ensure that: a) research question is clearly stated; b) a case study design is suitable to answer the research questions; c) appropriate purposeful sampling techniques have been applied; d) the data are collected and managed systematically; and e) the data is analysed correctly. These responsibilities will, according to Baxter and Jack (2008:556), promote data credibility and trustworthiness.

### **3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Social scientists explore the lives of other human beings; hence, they have a responsibility of ensuring the rights and welfare of the people that form the focus of their studies (Berg, 2001:39). This constitutes ethical consideration during and after data collection. Ethical considerations typically relate to respect for persons and concern for welfare and justice (Creswell & Poth, 2018:215). It is about the avoidance of harm to the researcher, participants and the relevant institutions (Blandford, 2013), and to safeguard all collected data (Fisher & Anushko, 2008:96). Researchers are also expected to explain to the participants that they are part of a research study, clarify the purpose of the study, and not to engage in any form of dishonesty about the nature of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018:215).

To ensure a responsible and ethical research for this study, permission was obtained from the CTMM before conducting the research; and moreover, this research was conducted for a mini-dissertation and is considered to be of low risk. The only foreseeable risk of harm was the potential for minor discomfort or inconvenience from the participants during the interviews. Hence, the study was not expected to pose a risk above the everyday norm. The benefits of the study are more than any discomfort that was possibly experienced during the interviewing process. Each participant received a participant information letter that explained the research purpose, procedures and duration. The participants were requested to sign an informed consent letter prior to the interviews. Participation was voluntary, and the participants could withdraw from the study at any stage without giving reasons for doing so. The research also ensured confidentiality of information given by the participants, and their privacy was respected. Only authorised individuals have access to

the data and information derived from the data. In addition, a confidentiality agreement was signed with the transcriber.

### **3.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The first section of this chapter describes the workings of the CTMM, its leadership structure and its code of conduct. This is done to help understand the environment within which this research is conducted. The chapter then proceeded to present the research design adopted for the study. This is done by first mentioning the different types of design that are possible and then justifying the selected approach. This study selected a qualitative, case driven approach with purposive sampling method, which was done by interviewing people that were considered to be knowledgeable and experienced at the CTMM. Data collected during this interview were then analysed using the analytical tool of Atlas.ti. The next chapter presents the findings of the research.

## **CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

*“If ethics are poor at the top, that behaviour is copied down through the organisation.”*

*(Robert Noyce)*

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study was undertaken to potentially solve the problem that ethical behaviour is lacking at the CTMM due to the absence of proper rules and exemplary leadership. As part of the research, the previous chapter, chapter 4, outlined the qualitative research design adopted for this study by confirming that interviews were conducted through the online platform, MS Teams. This chapter will describe the challenges experienced during data gathering and the effects that the COVID-19 pandemic had on the study. An introduction to ATLAS.ti, a text analysis software, will thereafter be provided as the tool used for analysing the qualitative data, before the research analysis is presented per main themes identified. The chapter is concluded with a detailed description of the research findings to answer the main research question ‘What are the roles of leadership and rules of conduct in instilling ethical behaviour in the staff members of the Human Resource Division and the Operational Division of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM?’. The research findings incorporated in this chapter enabled the conclusions and recommendations made in chapter 5 to answer the research question ‘What recommendations can be made to the CTMM in respect of the enhancement of ethical practices?’.

### **4.2 DATA GATHERING CHALLENGES**

Data collection is an important activity in any research. It is the process of obtaining information that will provide answers to the research of interest (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:312). Data collection or data gathering is common to all empirical studies, although the techniques used may vary, depending on the discipline of interest. However, the emphasis on accurate and honest data gathering pervades all domains (Kabir, 2016:202). Data collection in this study became more complicated when the whole country came to a standstill with the lockdown due to the Coronavirus disease of 2019 (COVID-19) restrictions. Changing from face to face to online appointments and getting appointments with the participants became cumbersome. Despite these challenges, the study remained steadfast to obtain sound and trustworthy data.



### **4.2.1 The effects of COVID-19**

The global emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on the country had vast effects on this study, especially during the data collection processes. The period set aside for data collection, unfortunately coincided with the beginning of the national lockdown period in March 2020 (Ramaphosa, 2020:3). Social distancing had to be maintained, people were encouraged to stay home and to work from home and travelling across provincial borders were prohibited. In addition, the guidelines of the ethics review committees of the University of South Africa's COVID-19 forbade any face-to-face contact during the period (Unisa, 2020:1). Getting responses from the targeted participants became very difficult as the participants were hesitant to respond. The sudden change to the online environment was unexpected and was an unfamiliar environment for most of the participants. As a result, the duration for data collection was extended significantly. In addition, the number of participants was unfortunately jeopardised. The detailed record of the attempts made to collect data is discussed in the following section. This is then followed by a discussion of the approach adopted for analysis of the data.

### **4.2.2 Original research design**

The research was designed to make use of purposive sampling. Participants with expert knowledge of the topic under study were deliberately targeted. Semi-structured face-to-face interviews were originally selected as the suitable data collection instrument to obtain relevant, in-depth and close-up information, and personal opinions from the participants through the use of follow-up questions. Considering that approval has been granted by the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (CTMM), access was gained to the selected participants. Data collection was scheduled to commence in March/April 2020, and the participants were contacted with the permission of the municipality.

### **4.2.3 COVID-19 onset and influence on data collection procedure**

The spread of COVID-19 escalated in South-Africa in March 2020 and national lockdown came into effect on 26 March 2020 (Ramaphosa,2020:3); just before the first scheduled personal interview. Unfortunately, the CTMM no longer welcomed visitors or researchers. Making physical access to any of the staff members impossible. By April 2020, the municipality stated that it would be impossible to talk to the staff members until after lockdown. By May 2020, the CTMM recommended and approved interviews through

electronic platforms. Regrettably, not all their staff members had access to such platforms outside office.

With approval given for online data collection, the list of targeted participants was amended with the assistance from the CTMM research office. This was necessary because not all the participants in the previously approved list of participants had access to online facilities outside their offices. All targeted officials met the required level of knowledge and expertise. The ethical guideline, research introduction and list of interview questions were then emailed to the designated contact in the municipality for onward transmission to each of the selected participants. This was done in May 2020. The selected participants were informed to reply by 29<sup>th</sup> May. Regrettably, no response was obtained on the set date. The CTMM Research Office admitted that it was difficult to get the participants to respond or to even know if they were reading the emails sent to them, especially because they could not be contacted through any other means than emails. Various reminders were sent to all the selected participants by both the researcher and the CTMM contact between May and August 2020. As at August 2020, only one online interview was conducted. A final effort to secure the interviews was made in November 2020. At last another five online interviews were scheduled and conducted. A total of six interviews were thus conducted.

Unfortunately, not a single front desk staff member responded despite all the reminders and requests. The six responses were two HR managers, two operations managers and two supervisors. A review of the quality of the data collection process was done together with the supervisor in January 2021. Based on the identified codes on ATLAS.ti and themes, the quality of the information provided, and the appropriateness of the data to the research questions and outcomes, it was decided that detailed data analysis could proceed with the data collected. The data proved to be sound and trustworthy. Cross referencing to the literature review were undertaken to support the soundness and trustworthiness of the data and research finding.

Atlas.ti software was used during data analysis. A databank was created with all the responses from the participants and supporting literature, as elaborated on in the following section.

### **4.3 INTRODUCTION TO ATLAS.ti**

In the past, researchers analysed data manually relying on pen and paper, highlighters, sticky notes and scissors while trying to make sense of their data (Hart & Achterman, 2017:1). They used colour coding and cut and paste methods. However, today, data can be analysed using computer programs, which helps to bring meaning to the dataset (Smit, 2002:66). Such programmes are called Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS), and they have become essential tools for many researchers (Archer, Janse van Vuuren & Van der Walt, 2017:11). These software programs give users effective tools with which datasets can be categorised, hence assisting researchers to organise and manage dataset, making analysis less burdensome and more detailed (Hart & Achterman, 2017:2). As these software programs only assist in data analysis, the researcher remains the driver of the process (Archer, Janse van Vuuren & Van der Walt, 2017:11). One such CAQDAS is the ATLAS.ti used in this study.

ATLAS.ti was developed in the early 1990s by a German researcher (Hart & Achterman, 2017:7). It is a software program that helps to discover the meaning of the phenomenon hidden in data by analysing qualitative bodies of textual, graphical, audio and video data. It offers tools to support and help researchers manage, compare, explore and extract meaningful pieces from a large body of data. The intellectual process, however, remains the responsibility of the researcher. ATLAS.ti acts as an intelligent ‘vessel’ which keeps track of all the research data by storing the code and code groups developed during the research (Friese, 2019:5&9). The software must be bought and downloaded to run on a device. ATLAS.ti was initially created for use on windows, but it now also runs on iPad and Android (Hart & Achterman, 2017:7).

#### **4.3.1 Motivation for selecting Atlas.ti**

Atlas.ti is one of the most popular text analysis software with a very user-friendly interface and a comprehensive toolset for text analysis. It does not take time to get started and master the software because of the intuitiveness of the user interface. This is a consideration in making it the application program of choice. In addition, additional tools of the package provide functionalities beyond the normal coding and analysis of texts, making it possible to derive further insights beyond coding and interpretation of the qualitative data collected. Such capabilities include word cloud, co-occurrence tool for words, code document tables and others that can help with more insightful and advanced analysis of

the input data. Atlas.ti has visually appealing graphics capabilities that can support the analysis of related text and graphic documents in diverse illuminating ways in order to have deep insight about the data inputs. It gives the big picture of the analysis and reveals meaning and relationship among codes, quotations and input data texts, and drive valuable analysis and insight.

## **4.4 DATA ANALYSIS**

The responses from the participants were interspersed with literature to ensure sound and trustworthy research findings, as elaborated on in Chapter 3, section 3.6.1 Qualitative soundness and trustworthiness.

### **4.4.1 Responses per group of participants**

The following groups of participants from the Human Resource Division and the Operational Division of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM were interviewed:

- Supervisors: two participants
- Operations managers: two participants
- Human resources (HR) managers: two participants

#### **4.4.1.1 Supervisors**

The interpretation of the responses from the supervisors to the following interview questions contributed directly towards reaching the main research objective of the study, namely: to evaluate the roles of leadership and rules of conduct as driving factors of ethical behaviour among staff members of the CTMM:

- In your opinion, is your behaviour or conduct ethical when relating with customers?

The following supporting question was also asked during the semi-structured interviews with the supervisors:

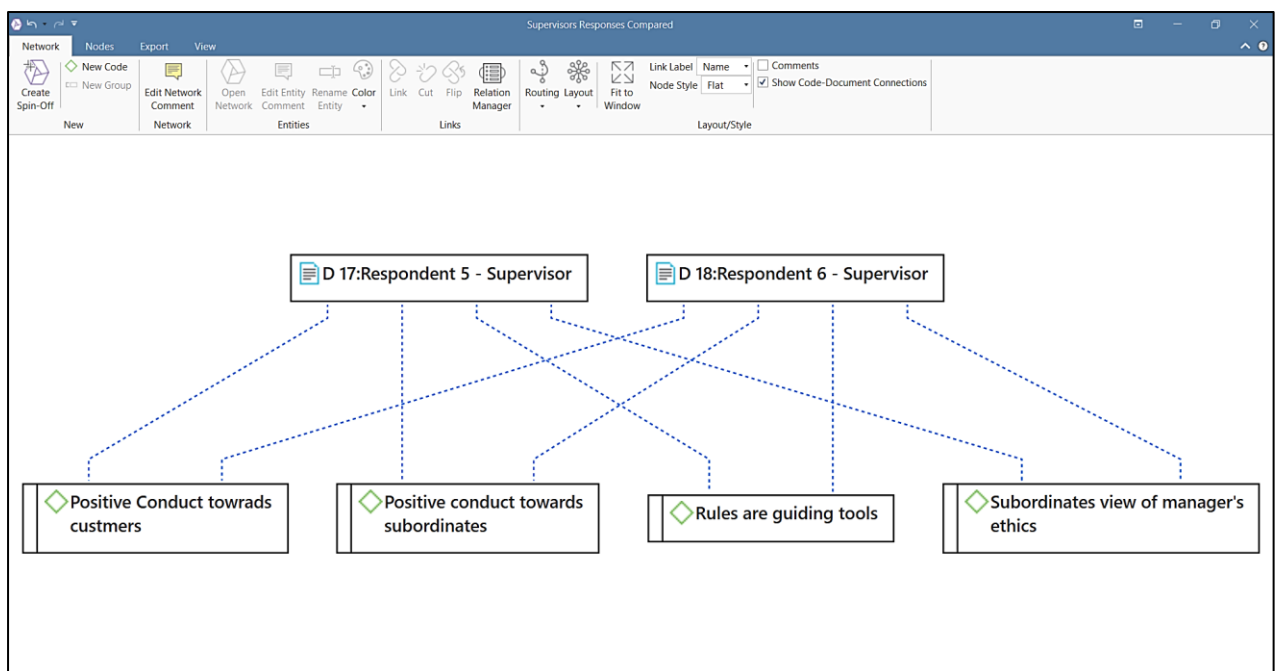
- Do you think your manager shows a concern for ethical and moral values?

As stated in Chapter 2, section 2.2.4 (*Ethics and public administration*), the behaviour of public officials impacts the lives of ordinary citizens, hence, their actions and behaviour towards their clients and the public must be professional and ethical (Ayodele & Bolaji, 2007:105). The interview question 'In your opinion, is your behaviour or conduct ethical when relating with customers?' sought to establish if the behaviour of the supervisors is

ethical, specifically when relating with customers. The responses from the supervisors confirmed that they act in a good manner and with a positive attitude towards their customers. The supervisors also highlighted the importance of how the customers view them. The supervisors are service delivery orientated and often represent the CTMM. They are the image-makers of the municipality and perform their duties with mindsets willing to improve the experiences of the customers. One of the participants confirmed that he looks up to his managers for guidance on how to perform his duties.

When asked if they think their managers show a concern for ethical and moral values, both supervisors agreed without hesitation that ethical conduct is high on the agenda of their managers.

A summary of the responses from the operations managers as captured on ATLAS.ti, is depicted in **Figure 4.1** below.



**Figure 4.1:** Processed data – Responses from supervisors

**Source:** ATLAS.ti

#### 4.4.1.2 Operations managers

The interpretation of the responses from the operations managers to the following two questions contributed directly towards reaching the main research objective of the study, namely: to evaluate the roles of leadership and rules of conduct as driving factors of ethical behaviour among staff members of the CTMM:

- As a manager or leader within the municipality, do you think your behaviour influences the conduct of other staff members?
- Which of the two concepts, leadership and rules of conduct, do you think plays a more significant role in the ethical behaviour of staff members?

The following supporting questions were also asked during the semi-structured interviews with the two operations managers:

- Do you attend to the needs of your subordinates in an ethical manner?
- What role does the code of conduct of the municipality play in encouraging ethical conduct?

It was described in chapter 2, section 2.5 (*Conceptual analysis of leadership*) that managers are people who have subordinates. Managers and leaders are responsible for ensuring that the activities of subordinates are aimed at realising the objectives of the institution. It was also stated that leadership is a social influence process in which leaders seek the participation of their subordinates to reach organisational goals (Nanjundeswaraswamy & Swamy, 2014:57). The main questions posed to the operations managers are: 'As a manager or leader within the municipality, do you think your behaviour influences the conduct of other staff members?'; and 'Which of the two concepts, leadership and rules of conduct, do you think plays a more significant role in the ethical behaviour of staff members?'. These tested their self-confidence and own beliefs in their leadership and the example they set. Insight into whether leadership and rules of conduct play a more significant role in the ethical behaviour, was also sought.

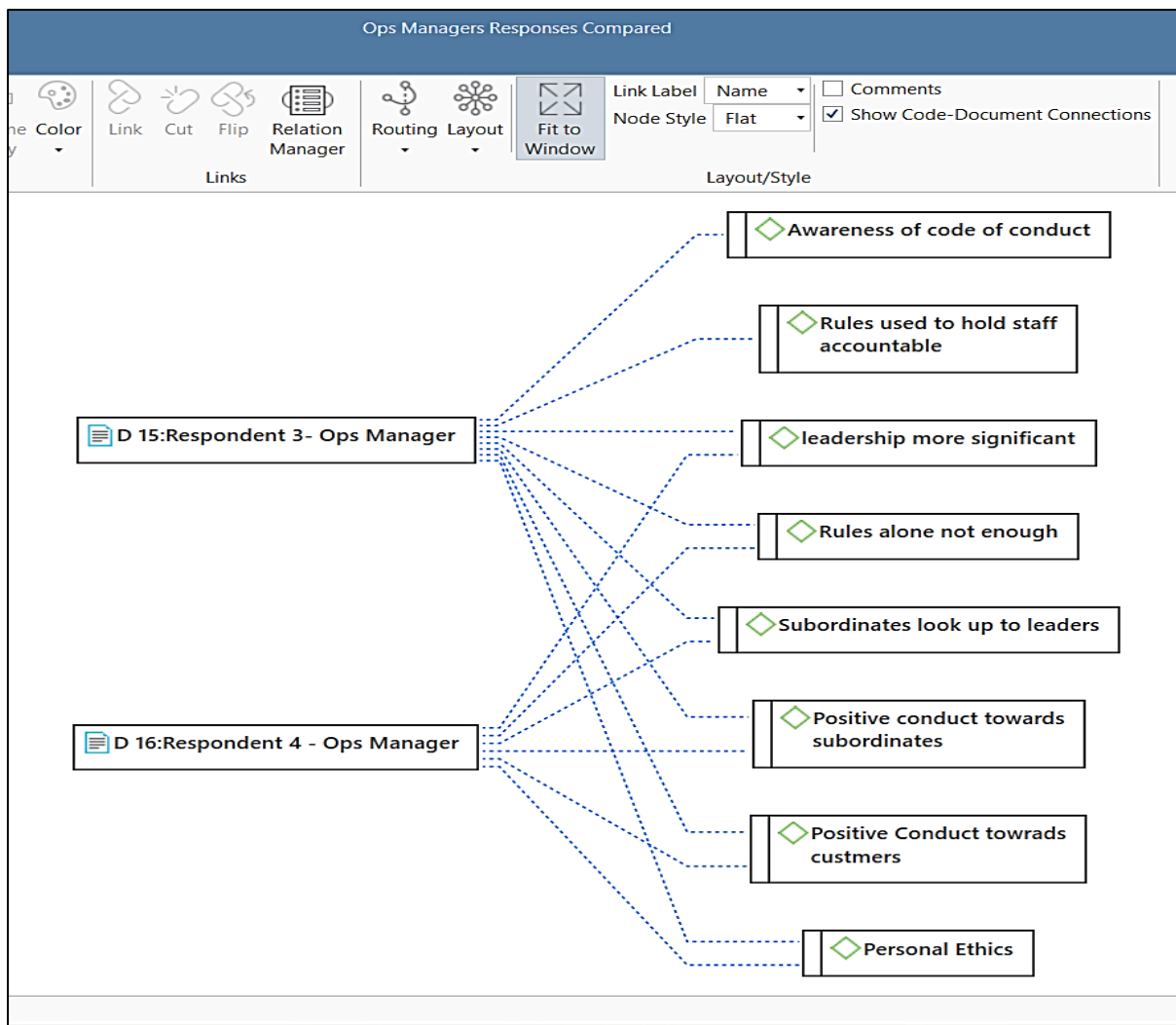
Remarkably, the responses from both the operations managers indicated a strong belief in their personal ethics. As in the case of the supervisors, the operations managers also have a positive attitude towards their customers and their subordinates and strongly believe in leading by example. They are of the opinion that rules alone are not enough to guide ethical behaviour. One of the participants stated: "*You have to set an*

*example...Even in small things such as being on time*". Clear indication was received that: the actions of a leader play a critical role in encouraging staff; leadership within the municipality plays a more significant role than rules in ensuring acceptable ethical behaviour; the managers are the ones that ensure that individuals attend ethics training; and there is a channel for employees to complain, when needed.

As indicated above, two supporting questions were also asked during the interviews with the operations managers. The questions are: 'Do you attend to the needs of your subordinates in an ethical manner?' and 'What role does the code of conduct of the municipality play in encouraging ethical conduct?'. These endeavoured to establish whether the participants from the CTMM uphold ethical right behaviour when engaging with their subordinates. Should the majority responses lean towards high ethical behaviour, the data will confirm that the code of conduct, indeed, has a positive influence on the interrelated relationships and behaviour among managers and subordinates. All the participants agreed with the assertion that the code of conduct has a positive effect on how they attend to the needs of their subordinates. The code of conduct of the CTMM undoubtedly guides and prescribes ethical behaviour.

One of the participants noted: "*I want to be the leader others choose to follow*". He confirmed that the leadership of the CTMM must encourage ethical behaviour by developing and applying the right approaches to get the desired behaviour from their subordinates, colleagues and managers. Based on these remarks, it is concluded that the leaders/managers have to use their officially assigned positions to apply the right approaches to promote ethical behaviour in their sections or departments. They have to inspire trust.

A summary of the responses from the operations managers, as captured on ATLAS.ti, is depicted in **Figure 4.2** below.



**Figure 4.2:** Processed data – Responses from operations managers

**Source:** ATLAS.ti

#### 4.4.1.3 Human resource managers

The interpretation of the responses from the human resource managers to the following questions contributed directly towards reaching the main research objective of the study, namely: to evaluate the roles of leadership and rules of conduct as driving factors of ethical behaviour among staff members of the CTMM:

- What role does the rules of conduct of the municipality play in encouraging ethical conduct?
- As an HR manager, do you think the staff members are aware of the rules of conduct of the municipality?



The following supporting questions were also asked during the semi-structured interviews with the two HR managers:

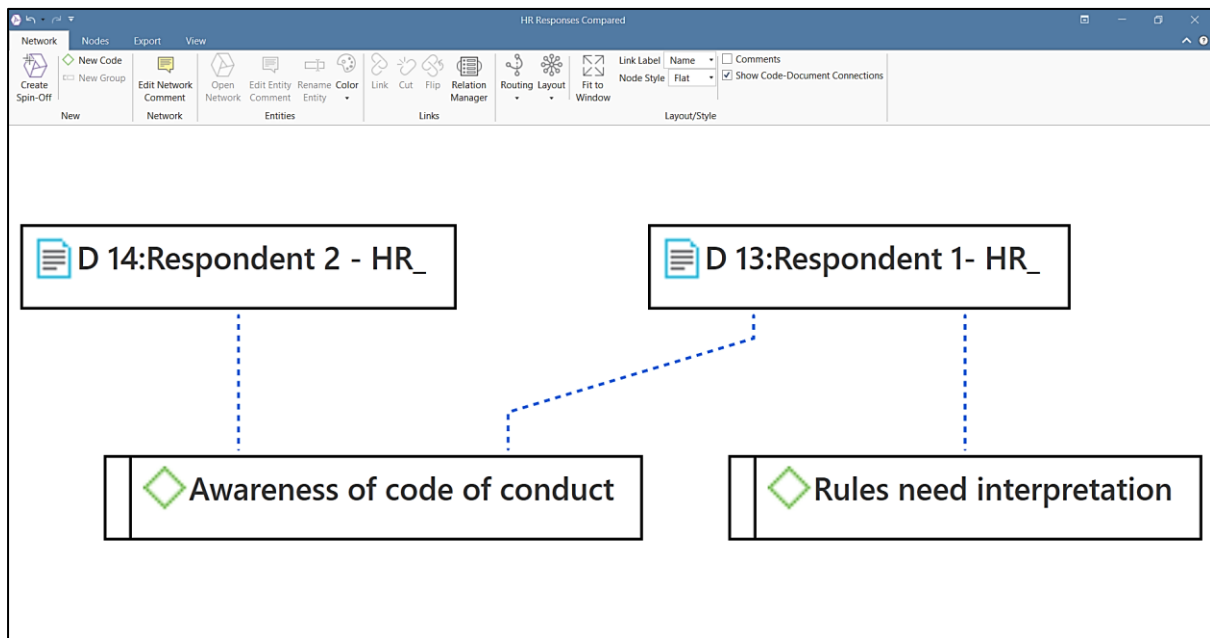
- As a manager or leader within the municipality, do you think your behaviour influences the conduct of other staff members?
- Which of the two concepts, leadership and rules of conduct, do you think plays a more significant role in the ethical behaviour of staff members?

It was highlighted in Chapter 2, section 2.7.3 (*Rule enforcement and compliance*) that compliance is particularly important for public institutions because rules symbolise the delivery of values such as equity, fairness, transparency and accountability. Effective public institutions require compliance with rules and procedures (Borry, DeHart-Davis, Kaufmann, Merritt, Mohr & Tummers, 2016:3). Furthermore, Downe *et al* (2016:907) mentions that leadership is needed to carefully interpret rules in organizations that are complex, heterogeneous and with many uncertainties. The interview question, 'What role does the rules of conduct of the municipality play in encouraging ethical conduct', sought to establish the role that rules play in encouraging ethical conduct among the particular staff of the CTMM. About the data, the third group of participants from the CTMM, the HR managers, unfortunately, provided limited information. The HR managers proved most difficult in responding to the questions appropriately with the result that not much data could be derived.

The rules of conduct explain specific action plans for carrying out the policies of the CTMM. The rules inform employees on how and when to deal with a situation. Using the official policies and the rules of conduct together gives employees a well-rounded view of what are expected from them at the workplace. However, confirmation was received from both HR managers that the rules of the municipality play a limited role in encouraging ethical conduct. The reason for this confirmation was found in the statement from one of the managers that "*the rules are open for interpretation on how to implement it*". The HR managers confirmed that the rules are available and accessible to all staff members. It was also confirmed that all employees must sign the document upon joining the municipality. Unfortunately, one of the participants stated that "*there is opportunity for unethical behaviour within the rules*". The lack of enforcement of standardised rules of conduct puts the CTMM at risk. Based on the opinions held by the participants, it is concluded that the rules are too broad and lenient, and therefore allow interpretation by individual staff

members. Compliance with rules at the CTMM is not equally enforced among the different offices/departments of the CTMM: rendering rules less valuable as a guiding tool for ethical behaviour.

The responses to the follow-up and supporting questions are briefly described. The participants confirmed that their behaviour influences the conduct of other staff members. Both managers also elevated leadership above rules in terms of its role in influencing the ethical behaviour of staff members. As one of the participants said: *“Leadership paves the way to good conduct. The actions of a leader play a critical role in encouraging good behaviour.”* One of the participants emphasised that the managers must create vision for their subordinates by defining where their team is going and how they are going to get there. She elaborated on the role of leaders to develop the potentials of followers by giving each subordinate the freedom to improve his/her performance and to solve problems in creative ways. The confirmations were in line with the opinions raised by the operations managers. Considering the responses from the operations and the HR managers, it can be concluded that leadership has a direct and important role in directing the behaviour of subordinates at the CTMM, while rules played a less important role.



**Figure 4.3:** Processed data – Responses from HR managers

**Source:** ATLAS.ti

A summary of the responses from the HR managers as captured on ATLAS.ti, is depicted in **Figure 4.3** above.

Having outlined the questions and responses from participants, the next section will elaborate on the codes generated from the responses.

#### **4.4.2 Codes identified on ATLAS.ti**

The following main codes emerged during data analysis to eventually find answers to the research question ‘What are the roles of leadership and rules of conduct in instilling ethical behaviour in the staff members of the Human Resource Division and the Operational Division of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM?’.

| <b>MAIN CODES</b>                                   |
|---|
| Leadership drives ethical conduct                   |
| Rules drive ethical conduct                         |
| Effect of codes of conduct or rules on leadership   |
| Effect of leadership on the implementation of rules |

The following sub-codes also emerged based on the responses from the participants and the supporting literature review: (1) Rules are not enough; (2) Rules need interpretation; (3) Positive conduct towards customers; (4) Subordinates look up to leaders; (5) Personal ethics; (6) Rules are guiding tools, (7) Positive conduct towards subordinates; (8) Leadership more significant than rules; (9) Awareness of code of conduct; and (10) Effect of leadership on scheduling and attending ethics training.

To enhance the results of the analysis, an MS Excel report was generated on Atlas.ti to record the influence that leadership has on influencing ethical conduct by using both the interviews and research papers. The results generated by Atlas.ti show clear evidence that leadership plays a significant role in influencing conduct. Appendix G contains an extract of the results.

The identified codes (see **Figure 4.4 Codes extract by ATLAS.ti**) enabled the formulation of themes used to make and present the data analysis

Figure 4.4: Codes extracted by ATLAS.ti

The screenshot displays the ATLAS.ti software interface for managing codes. The main window is titled 'Ireti- Master's Project - ATLAS.ti' and is in the 'Manage Codes' view. The interface is organized into several panes:

- Menu Bar:** File, Home, Search & Code, Analyze, Import & Export, Tools, Help, Codes, Search & Filter, Tools, View.
- Toolbar:** Contains icons for 'New Group', 'Create Snapshot', 'Create Smart Group', 'Smart Code', 'Duplicate Code(s)', 'Rename Code', 'Delete', 'Edit Comment', 'Edit Smart Code', 'Open Group Manager', 'Change Color', 'Merge Codes', 'Split Code', 'Open Network', 'Code Tree', 'Word Cloud', 'Word List', 'Report', and 'Excel Export'.
- Explore Pane (Left):** Shows a search bar and a list of 29 codes. The codes are organized into a tree structure under 'Codes (29)'. Examples include 'Awareness of code of conduct (4-0)', 'Effect of codes or rules on leadership: Interviews (0-0)', and 'Rules drive ethical conduct: Interviews (1-0)'. A note at the bottom says '29 codes'.
- Code Manager Pane (Center):** Displays a table of codes with columns: Name, Grounded, Density, Gro..., Created by, Modified by, and Created. A vertical bar on the left indicates the 'Grounded' status for each code. A message on the left says 'No code groups' and 'Drag codes here to create a group'. A 'Learn more about groups' link is also present.
- Comment Pane (Bottom):** A text area for adding comments to a selected code. A message says 'Select a single item to show its comment'.

| Name   | Grounded | Density | Gro...                  | Created by              | Modified by   | Created |
|--|----------|---------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|---------|
| Awareness of code of conduct                           | 4        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-04-13 08 |         |
| Effect of codes or rules on leadership: Interviews     | 0        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-05-10 10 |         |
| Effect of codes or rules on leadership: Research Pa... | 1        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-05-10 10 |         |
| Effect of leadership on Ethics training                | 2        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-04-19 10 |         |
| Effect of leadership on rules: Interviews              | 7        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-05-10 10 |         |
| Effect of leadership on rules: Research Papers         | 12       | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-05-10 10 |         |
| Effect of leadership on subordinates                   | 5        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-04-19 08 |         |
| Influence of leadership on conduct takes time          | 1        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-05-03 10 |         |
| Interaction of rules and leadership: Interviews        | 6        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-05-10 10 |         |
| Interaction of rules and leadership: Research Papers   | 7        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-05-10 10 |         |
| Leadership drives ethical conduct: Interviews          | 8        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-05-10 10 |         |
| Leadership drives ethical conduct: Research papers     | 21       | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-05-10 10 |         |
| Leadership has no effect on conduct                    | 2        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-05-03 10 |         |
| leadership more significant                            | 5        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-04-13 08 |         |
| Personal Ethics  | 6        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-04-13 08 |         |
| Positive conduct towards subordinates                  | 5        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-04-30 09 |         |
| Positive Conduct towards custmers                      | 7        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-04-30 09 |         |
| Religion and Ethics                                    | 2        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-04-13 07 |         |
| Rules alone not enough                                 | 5        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-05-03 10 |         |
| Rules are guiding tools                                | 5        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-05-03 11 |         |
| Rules drive ethical conduct: Interviews                | 1        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-05-10 10 |         |
| Rules drive ethical conduct: Research Papers           | 2        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-05-10 10 |         |
| Rules has no effect on conduct                         | 2        | 0       | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | Ireti Adedotun Adetunji | 2021-05-03 10 |         |

Source: ATLAS.ti (June, 2021).

### **4.4.3 Main themes derived from data analysis**

After the process of coding, themes were generated for the interpretation and presentation of the data. This was done through the aggregation of the codes based on similarity of titles or responses. The following themes were derived from the codes:

- Influence of leadership on organisational ethics
- Relevance of rules of conduct on organisational ethics
- Other factors that encourage ethical behaviour

#### **4.4.3.1 Influence of leadership on organisational ethics**

One of the main themes identified from the collected data is the significant influence of leadership on organisational ethics. Leaders are accountable for creating the organisational structure, job roles, decision-making authority and the processes that enable team members to do high-quality work. Many of the codes generated from the data gave evidence to support the vast influence of leadership on how to respond to ethical challenges. It was found that the leadership at the CTMM encourages staff to attend ethics training and that subordinates look up to their leadership and follow their disposition to ethical choices and conundrums at the workplace. The leadership is accountable for removing the obstacles that prevent the staff from doing their work in the best way and in an ethical manner. Leadership also plays an important part in how rules are interpreted and applied. On occasions of unethical conduct, rules are just one part of the components, interpreted and brought together by leaders to handle the situation. Rules remain on paper if they are not implemented, and leaders sometimes act or make decisions without even referring to the codes. Downe et al (2016:907) mentions that leadership is needed to carefully interpret rules in organizations that are complex, heterogeneous, and with many uncertainties. Cases of misconduct that are not expressly stated in the rules of conduct are also dealt with by leaders. This shows that rules and leadership interact by the rules acting as guide for leaders; rules are, however, used at the discretion of the leaders.

The managers of the CTMM have an obligation to ensure that the employees have the skills necessary to perform their work, understand how their work serves the City's objectives, and know how the outcomes of their work are measured. Once these things are in place, the managers can trust their team members to be accountable for their own performance and behaviour. The leader's role is to establish the environment in which

people can thrive, be respected, and be trusted to do great and ethical work. It is worth noting that all the participants agreed on the supreme influence of leadership, mentioning that *within rules, there are ample opportunity for misconduct if leadership is lacking, and that rules do not mean much if leadership is corrupt. Some participants also mentioned that rules are open to interpretations, which usually lies at the doorstep of the leader.*

#### **4.4.3.2 Relevance of rules of conduct on organisational ethics**

Rules play a vital role in any organisation's daily operations and relieve the managers of much of the detail in directing their subordinates, but the influence of rules on the organisational ethics of the CTMM seems to be less significant when compared to leadership. A lack of consistency about the significant role that rules play in the ethical conduct of staff members was noted among the participants. Rules are recognised as important ethical behaviour guiding tools, nonetheless, the majority of the participants were of the opinion that rules need to be interpreted and are not enough by themselves. In addition, responses from the participants suggest that the effect rules have in encouraging ethical behaviour of the employees of the CTMM, is less significant compared to the influence that leadership has. Generally, rules are seen to be less significant compared to leadership. It was confirmed that rules do not mean much if leadership is lacking or if the leadership behaves unethically. It was found that there will be opportunities for unethical behaviour by the staff if the leadership do not provide the necessary guidance. There are, however, other factors such as religion and personal conviction that have possible influence on the ethical conducts of the staff members.

#### **4.4.3.3 Other factors that encourage ethical behaviour**

More influential factors that came to light during the interviews are personal convictions and religious beliefs. These two factors are also believed to play an important role in the ethical conduct of the staff of the CTMM. Some staff members mentioned the role that religion play in their conduct. Religion teaches integrity, fairness, justice and honesty, which they believe guide their conduct. Others stress values and personal convictions they have acquired over years in guiding their behaviour in the work environment. These two where both portrayed in a manner that contributes positively to ethical behaviour. This positive contribution may be because they may constitute natural restraints to personal excesses of individuals, and might inherently achieve the goal the municipality seeks to achieve through the use of rules and guidelines, and exemplary and astute leadership. On

the other hand, however, these two (i.e. religion and personal conviction) may actually have negative implications on the behaviour of people, and it is important to consider this as well. The negative impact may be because religion and personal conviction may be based on biased views that are not predicated on research or facts. Some of these may be based on simple faith in the words of the mentor in religious, social or community-based institutions that may not be open to the test of scientific evidence or fact, but, people hold on to such values because of the respect they have for people having such influence over their lives.

It is important to emphasise again that this is an important area that may be deserving of further research attention. Studies could be conducted to understand how to use such influences for positive restraints in building ethical values in the staff members within the work environment, while also seeking an understanding of means of ameliorating the possible implications of the underlying biases of such influences without necessarily disrupting the organisational ambience of mutual respect at work.

#### **4.5 RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The responses to the interview questions complemented the theory included in Chapter 2, *Literature review* and answered the research question: 'What are the roles of leadership and rules of conduct in instilling ethical behaviour of the staff members of the Human Resource Division and the Operational Division of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM?'. The following main findings were revealed:

- The main role of leadership in encouraging ethical behaviour is to develop and apply the right approaches to get the desired behaviours from their subordinates, colleagues and managers.
- Leadership plays a more significant role than rules of conduct in ensuring ethical behaviour.
- Subordinates look up to their managers for guidance and examples on how to interpret the rules of conduct. Leadership, thus, plays a significant role in interpreting the rules of conduct and helping to understand the code of ethics better.
- The participants mentioned that even with the code of conduct signed by employees, there are opportunities for unethical behaviour if leadership is lacking.

- Leadership has a direct influence on the behaviour of staff and creates the environment for individuals to thrive and be comfortable in.
- Many of the participants believed that they conduct themselves positively towards their customers and colleagues when rendering their duties. This shows that they consider ethics as an important part of their daily duties

## **4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter presented the findings from the data gathered through the online interviews. The interviewees included supervisors, operations managers and human resource managers drawn from the Human Resource Division and the Operational Division of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM. All groups of participants play significant roles in the CTMM. All aspect needed to address the research problem that “The roles of leadership and rules of conduct in promoting ethical behaviour at the CTMM, are yet unclear” were attended to during the interviews.

In summary, the data analysis confirmed that leadership plays a critical role in encouraging ethical behaviour of the employees of the CTMM. Leadership undeniably directly influences the ethical behaviour of the employees. This implies that leadership plays a significant role in ethical conduct within the CTMM. It was further found that rules of conduct play an underlying role in encouraging ethical behaviour in the workplace, as these rules still need to be interpreted before the implementation thereof. The following chapter presents the research conclusions and recommendations.

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## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*“The biggest leadership problem in most organisations today is probably not the lack of technical competence, but the lack of virtuous character” (Anon).*

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The dissertation has been presented in five chapters, of which this chapter is the ultimate. This final chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of the study. The summary of the chapters is presented first, after which the conclusions are provided. Recommendations are then made on the roles of leadership and rules of conduct as driving factors of ethical behaviour among staff members.

This study set out to evaluate the roles of leadership and rules of conduct in promoting ethical behaviour at the CTMM. The formulated research problem is: ‘The roles of leadership and rules of conduct in promoting ethical behaviour at the CTMM, are yet unclear’. To resolve the research problem, various objectives were posed:

- Evaluating the roles of leadership and rules of conduct as driving factors of ethical behaviour among staff members of the Human Resource Division and the Operational Division of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM.
- Determining what the literature say about ethical and unethical behaviour in the municipalities of South Africa.
- Establishing the most suitable research design and methodology to investigate the roles of leadership and rules of conduct on the ethical behaviour of employees of the CTMM.
- Presenting the research findings and recommendations in respect of leadership and rules of conduct as measures to enhance ethical behaviour of the employees of the CTMM, to the City.

The following section is a brief synopsis of each chapter on how the research objectives were reached.

## 5.2 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

The introductory chapter, **chapter 1**, provided a background and rationale for the study to evaluate the role of the leadership and rules of conduct on ethical practices in the CTMM. The main research question was formulated as: *What are the roles of leadership and rules of conduct in instilling ethical behaviour of the staff members of the Human Resource Division and the Operational Division of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM?* Relevant research questions pertinent to the study were posed. The objectives were also set, and the aim of the study was formulated so as to evaluate the role that leadership and rules of conduct play as driving factors of ethical behaviour among staff members of the CTMM. Thereafter, the focus of the chapter shifts to a preliminary literature review. The preferred research design and methodology was discussed followed, by the demarcation of the study. A description of the significance of the study was then provided. The chapter was concluded with the structure of the dissertation.

**Chapter 2** was a review of the literature relevant to ethics, leadership and rules of conduct to achieve the research objective of getting to know what the literature say about ethical and unethical behaviour in the municipalities of South Africa. It started with a presentation of the definition, meaning and effectiveness of ethics. Ethics, morality and law were also elaborated on and contrasted. Ethical theories of consequentialism, utilitarianism and deontology were then discussed. A section on leadership styles and theories followed this. It was established that leadership styles may be autocratic, democratic, laissez faire or bureaucratic. The characteristics of these styles were contrasted, with their possible effects on the ethical behaviour of the organisation presented. Leadership theories were also discussed including behavioural, contingency, situational, LMX theory (Leader-member Exchange), transactional and transformational theories. The review of the literature progressed to consider rules of conduct and reviews the types of rules (written and unwritten) and the effectiveness of each type. It discussed the importance of leadership in the enforcement of rules, and then progressed to the theories of rules. It also discussed the systems approach to ethical management, and the goal was to use system paradigm in the deployment of ethical values in organisations. The final part considered the joint effects of leadership and rules on the level of ethical behaviour of organisations.

**Chapter 3** focused on achieving research objective to identify the most appropriate research design and methodology to study the roles of leadership and rules of conduct in

encouraging ethical behaviour. The first part of Chapter 3 discussed the workings of the CTMM, its leadership structure and its code of conduct. This was done to help understand the environment within which this research is conducted. The chapter then proceeded to present the research design adopted for the study. The different types of design that are possible were first presented, after which the selected approach was justified. The study selected a qualitative, case study driven approach with purposive sampling method, which was done by interviewing employees who were considered to be knowledgeable and experienced at the CTMM.

**Chapter 4** presented the findings of the research and laid out the challenges experienced by the researcher during the data collection phase in the midst the COVID-19 lockdown. Municipal offices were closed and the researcher could not interview participants physically. Securing online interviews became difficult as not all targeted participants had access to personal computers at home. Despite these challenges, good quality data was received from all the participants. The responses received were augmented with selected research reports to analyse the qualitative sound and trustworthy data. The data collected was analysed by using the analytical tool of Atlas.ti. The result showed that while rules of conduct have their own place, leadership tends to drive ethical behaviour among staff members of the CTMM more than rules. The main purpose of the study to evaluate the roles of leadership and rules of conduct as driving factors of ethical behaviour among staff members of the Human Resource Division and the Operational Division of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM, were achieved in chapter 4.

**Chapter 5** provides a synopsis of the five chapters of the dissertation, as well as a summary of how the objectives were achieved. The primary conclusions were also presented. In addition, this chapter comprised the recommendations to the CTMM in respect of leadership and rules of conduct as measures to enhance ethical behaviour of the employees of the City. Furthermore, suggestions for further research concluded the chapter. The research objective to present the research findings and recommendations in respect of leadership and rules of conduct as measures to enhance ethical behaviour of the employees of the CTMM to the City is, therefore, achieved in chapter 5 (this chapter).

The conclusions are provided next.

### 5.3 CONCLUSIONS

This research leads to the conclusion that the main role of leadership in encouraging ethical behaviour is to develop and apply the right approaches to get the desired behaviours from their subordinates, colleagues and managers. Also, it was confirmed that leadership tends to contribute more to ethical behaviour in the Human Resource Division and the Operational Division of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM than rules of conduct do.

The concluding highlights from the findings are listed in the following points:

- The different roles of leadership in promoting ethical behaviour can be summarised as follows:
  - Inspiring trust
  - Creating vision
  - Executing strategy
  - Coaching potentials
- Supervisors act in a good manner and with a positive attitude towards their customers. Managers also show a concern for ethical and moral values.
- The actions and examples of the leadership of the CTMM play a critical role in encouraging ethical behaviour.
- The managers strongly believe in leading by example and to attend to the needs of their subordinates in an ethical manner. The CTMM should capitalise on the managers' positive attitude to customers and their subordinates.
- The code of conduct guides and prescribes ethical behaviour and has a positive effect on how supervisors and managers attend to the needs of the customers and their subordinates.
- The rules of conduct are available and accessible to all staff members. Unfortunately, the rules play a limited role in encouraging ethical conduct. Rules of conduct alone are not enough to guide ethical behaviour, and require further guidance on how to implement it.
- Interestingly, all the participants elevated leadership above rules of conduct in terms of its role in influencing the ethical behaviour of staff members.

## **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Having realised the main purpose of the research, which was to evaluate the roles of leadership and rules of conduct as driving factors of ethical behaviour among the staff members of the Human Resource Division and the Operational Division of the Department of Public Works of the CTMM, the following recommendations were made to the city in respect of leadership and rules of conduct as measures to enhance ethical behaviour of the employees of the CTMM:

- The level of ethical standard attained by the CTMM depends largely on the values held by leadership, including the supervisors and manager;
- Leadership is crucial in the creation and sustenance of strong ethical standards. It is, therefore important to place premium value on the personal moral and ethical standards of people appointed into positions of leadership in the municipality;
- There is a definite place for rules of conduct in creating and sustaining ethical conducts, so, rules should be made and the rules need to be properly formulated and implemented;
- The implementation of rules of conduct should be made one of the responsibilities of the leaders of the various business units of the municipality; not only to be ethical themselves, but to also demand compliance to high ethical standards from the staff. They need to make it apparent to the staff that leadership places premium value on ethics, that compliance would be praised and that failures would be reprimanded as necessary;
- It is important to create programmes and activities that will engender ethics and capacitate leaders, as well as institutionalise ethical values in the leadership as this will have a way of reflecting in the entire workforce.

## **5.5 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

There are many aspects that must be scientifically researched to provide further clarity on the roles of leadership and rules of conduct as driving factors of ethical behaviour. Hence, the following proposals are recommended.

It is mentioned during the interviews that religious beliefs, culture and personal conviction may have some role to play in a person's ethical conduct. It may, thus, be useful to have

a study that investigates what roles these factors may play in instilling ethics and maintaining positive ethical behaviour at the workplace in the public sector.

It may also be worthwhile to investigate how much the implementation a reward and penalty system for compliance or violation may influence how ethical standards may be attained by the municipality.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: Ethics clearance approval



**DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT  
RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Date: 14 February 2020

Ref #: PAM/2020/001 (Adetunji)  
Name of applicant: Ms IA Adetunji  
Student#: 46336427

Dear Ms Adetunji

**Decision: Ethics Clearance Approval**

**Details of researcher:**

Ms IA Adetunji, student#: 46336427, email: [46336427@mylife.unisa.ac.za](mailto:46336427@mylife.unisa.ac.za),  
tel: 072 721-3458

[Supervisor: Dr C Alers, staff#: 90222237, email: [alersc@unisa.ac.za](mailto:alersc@unisa.ac.za),  
tel: 012 429-6286]

**Research project** 'Evaluation of ethical practices in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality: Rules and leadership'

**Qualification** Master of Public Administration (MPA)

Thank you for the application for **research ethics clearance** by the Department: Public Administration and Management: Research Ethics Review Committee, for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted. The decision will be tabled at the next College RERC meeting for notification/ratification.

**For full approval:** The application was **expedited and reviewed** in compliance with the *Unisa Policy on Research Ethics* and the *Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment* by the RERC on 13 February 2020.

The proposed research may now commence with the proviso that:

- 1) The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics.



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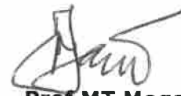
- 2) Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study, as well as changes in the methodology, should be communicated in writing to this Ethics Review Committee.
- 3) The researcher will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
- 4) Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing, accompanied by a progress report.
- 5) The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study, among others, the **Protection of Personal Information Act** 4/2013; **Children's Act** 38/2005 and **National Health Act** 61/2003.
- 6) Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
- 7) Field work activities **may not** continue after the expiry date given. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Kind regards



**Dr V Sambo**

Acting Chairperson: Research Ethics  
Review Committee  
Department of Public Administration and  
Management  
Research Ethics Review Committee  
Office tel. : 012 429-4355;  
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**Prof MT Mogale**

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## APPENDIX B: Permission letter from the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality



### City Strategy and Organizational Performance

Room CSP22 | Ground Floor, West Wing, Block D | Tshwane House | 320 Madiba Street | Pretoria | 0002  
PO Box 440 | Pretoria | 0001  
Tel 012 358 7423  
Email Nosiphoh@tshwane.gov.za | www.tshwane.gov.za | www.facebook.com/CityOfTshwane

My ref **Research Permission/ Adetunji**  
Contact person **Pearl Maponya**  
Section/Unit **Knowledge Management**

Tel 012 358 4559  
Email [PearlMap3@tshwane.gov.za](mailto:PearlMap3@tshwane.gov.za)  
Date 06 November 2019

**Ms Ireti Adetunji**  
74, Enkeldoorn,  
374 Sprokie Avenue,  
Faerie Glen,  
Pretoria.  
0081

Dear Ms Adetunji

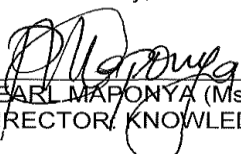
#### **RE: EVALUATION OF ETHICAL PRACTICES IN THE CITY OF TSHWANE METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY: RULES AND LEADERSHIP.**

Permission is hereby granted to Ms Ireti Adetunji, Master of Public Administration Degree candidate at the University of South Africa (UNISA), to conduct research in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality.

It is noted that the main of the study is to evaluate the effect of rules and leadership on the standard of ethics maintained by individual employees and the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality as a collective, and to determine the degree of influence each of these factors have on the ethical behaviour of the staff members. The City of Tshwane further notes that all ethical aspects of the research will be covered within the provisions of UNISA Research Ethics Policy. You will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement with the City of Tshwane prior to conducting research.

Relevant information required for the purpose of the research project will be made available as per applicable laws and regulations. The City of Tshwane is not liable to cover the costs of the research. Upon completion of the research study, it would be appreciated that the findings in the form of a report and or presentation be shared with the City of Tshwane.

Yours faithfully,

  
PEARL MAPONYA (Ms)  
DIRECTOR, KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

## APPENDIX C: Participant information leaflet

### PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LETTER

30 November 2019

#### Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Mrs IA Adetunji and I am doing research with Dr Corlia Alers a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Public Administration for my MPA studies at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled

*'Evaluation of ethical practices in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality:*

*Rules and Leadership'*.

#### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

The main purpose of the study is to explore and understand the role and effect of rules and leadership as driving factors of ethical and moral behaviour and practices among staff members of the CTMM. That is to examine how managerial and regulatory aspects combine to influence ethical conduct among the municipal managers and officials of the CTMM.

The study thus wants to evaluate the effect of rules and leadership on the standard of ethics maintained by individual employees and the CTMM as a collective, and to determine the degree of influence each of these factors have on the ethical behaviour of the staff members.

#### WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

The study will be conducted with administrative officials, supervisors and managers of the Department of public works and with the managers of Human Resources of the CTMM. The participants had been identified based on their experience within the two departments. Contacts details of participants have been obtained through the Human Resource office.

#### WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

The study involves *semi-structured interviews*. Participants are required to provide answers to the following questions:

Front Desk Officers

- a. Do you think your behaviour or conduct when relating with customers or the public is ethical?
- b. What role does rules or the code of conduct of the municipality play in encouraging your ethical conduct?
- c. What role does leadership play in encouraging your ethical conduct?
- d. Which of these two concepts, rules and leadership, do you think play a more significant role in your ethical conduct?

- e. Do you think your team leadership or supervisor show a concern for ethical and moral values? (Belle and Cantarelli,2017:19)

#### Supervisors

- a. Do you think your behaviour or conduct when relating with customers or the public is ethical?
- b. Do you attend to the needs of your subordinates and the public in an ethical manner?
- c. What role does rules or the code of conduct of the municipality play in encouraging your ethical conduct?
- d. What role does leadership play in encouraging your ethical conduct?
- e. Do you think your manager show a concern for ethical and moral values? (Belle and Cantarelli,2017:19)

#### HR Managers

- a. Do you attend to the needs of your subordinates and the public in an ethical manner?
- b. What role does rules or the code of conduct of the municipality play in encouraging your ethical conduct?
- c. As an HR manager, do you think the staff members are aware of the rules of conduct of the municipality?
- d. As a manager or leader within the municipality, do you think your behaviour influence the conduct of other staff members?
- e. Which of the two concepts, rules and leadership, do you think play a more significant role in the ethical behaviour of staff members?

#### Operational Managers

- a. Do you attend to the needs of your subordinates and the public in an ethical manner?
- b. What role does rules or the code of conduct of the municipality play in encouraging your ethical conduct?
- c. As a manager or leader within the municipality, do you think your behaviour influence the conduct of other staff members?
- d. Which of the two concepts, rules and leadership, do you think play a more significant role in the ethical behaviour of staff members?

The expected duration for interviews would be approximately 60 minutes per participant.

**CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?**

Participating in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

**WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?**

The participants will not receive any payment or reward, financial or otherwise and the study will not incur cost to the participants. However, the researcher would be willing to share the findings of the study with the participants in aggregate format and the participant would be able to make use of the findings for personal and organisational improvements as necessary. In addition, participants would be making a contribution towards helping the municipality in becoming more efficient in service delivery to all.

**ARE THERE ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?**

There is no anticipation of risk but if any adverse events are experienced, the researcher will conduct a debriefing to put things right. However, the researcher will take precautionary steps to follow the prescribed standards of doing research such as one may not harm, coerce and falsify the information. All these and other principles will be adhered to.

**WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?**

You have the right to insist that your name will not be recorded anywhere and that no one, apart from the fieldworker, researcher and identified members of the research team, will know about your involvement in this research OR your name will not be recorded anywhere and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give. Your answers will be given a code number or a pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceeding.

Your answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the transcriber and a statistician. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records.

The anonymous data may be used for other purposes, such as a research report, journal articles and/or conference proceedings. However your privacy will be protected in any publication of the information.

**HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?**

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if

applicable. The survey data will be destroyed when it is no longer of functional value (five years after completing the research project).

**WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?**

The participants will not receive any payment or reward, financial or otherwise and the study will not incur undue cost to the participants.

**HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL**

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the Department of Public Administration and Management of Unisa. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

**HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?**

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Mrs Irete Adetunji on 072 721-3458 or email: [46336427@unisa.mylife.co.za](mailto:46336427@unisa.mylife.co.za).

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Dr Corlia Alers Tel: 012 429 6286 or email: [alersc@unisa.ac.za](mailto:alersc@unisa.ac.za).

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Mrs Irete Adetunji

Student # 46336427



# APPENDIX D: Informed consent form



## CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH

### RESEARCH TITLE:

**Evaluation of ethical practices in the**  
**City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality:**  
**Rules and Leadership**

I, ..... (participant name & surname), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

- I have read and understood the study as explained in the participant information sheet.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty.
- I am aware that the findings of this study will be anonymously processed into a dissertation.
- I agree to complete the questionnaire and/or to be interviewed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's name and surname

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Mrs IA Adetunji,  
Student#: 46336427

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher's name and surname

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature



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**APPENDIX E:  
Confidentiality agreement with transcriber**

|   |             |                  |
|---|-------------|------------------|
| <b>CONFIDENTIALITY CLAUSE BETWEEN</b>   |             |                  |
| <b>Student: <u>Mrs IA Adetunji</u></b>  |             |                  |
| <b>AND</b>  |             |                  |
| <b>The Editor/Language practitioner/Statistician/Transcriber:</b>   |             |                  |
| <br>  |             |                  |
| <b>Research Title:</b>  |             |                  |
| <b>ROLES OF LEADERSHIP AND RULES OF CONDUCT<br/>IN INSTILLING ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR:<br/>CASE OF CITY OF TSHWANE METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY</b>  |             |                  |
| <p>The research code of ethics mandates that confidentiality should be maintained throughout data collection, data analysis and reporting.</p>  |             |                  |
| <p>As a <u>Transcriber</u> I understand that I have access to confidential information. By signing this statement, I am indicating my understanding of this responsibility and agree to the following:</p>  |             |                  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I understand that all information obtained or accessed by me in the course of my work is confidential. I agree not to divulge or otherwise make known to unauthorized persons any of this information, unless specifically authorised to do so.</li><li>• I understand that names and any other identifying information about study sites and participants are completely confidential.</li><li>• I agree to use the data solely for the purpose stipulated by the client.</li><li>• I agree to maintain the confidentiality of the data at all times and keep the data in secure, password protected location.</li><li>• I agree to shred all hard copies of data in my possession on completion of the project. All electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of my computer upon completion of this project.</li></ul> |             |                  |
| <br>  |             |                  |
| _____   | _____       | _____            |
| <b>Printed name</b><br>(Editor/Statistician/Transcriber)  | <b>Date</b> | <b>Signature</b> |
| <br>  |             |                  |
| _____   | _____       | _____            |
| (Researcher)  | <b>Date</b> | <b>Signature</b> |

## **APPENDIX F:**

### **Lists of interview questions**

#### **Front Desk Officers**

- In your opinion, is your behaviour or conduct ethical when relating with customers?
- Do you think your manager show a concern for ethical and moral values?

#### **Supervisors**

- In your opinion, is your behaviour or conduct ethical when relating with customers?
- Do you think your manager show a concern for ethical and moral values?

#### **Operational Managers**

- As a manager or leader within the municipality, do you think your behaviour influence the conduct of other staff members?
- Which of the two concepts, leadership and rules of conduct, do you think play a more significant role in the ethical behaviour of staff members?
- Do you attend to the needs of your subordinates in an ethical manner?
- What role does the code of conduct of the municipality play in encouraging ethical conduct?

#### **Human Resource Managers**

- What role does the rules of conduct of the municipality play in encouraging ethical conduct?
- As an HR manager, do you think the staff members are aware of the rules of conduct of the municipality?
- As a manager or leader within the municipality, do you think your behaviour influence the conduct of other staff members?
- Which of the two concepts, leadership and rules of conduct, do you think play a more significant role in the ethical behaviour of staff members?

# APPENDIX G: Illustration from Atlas.Ti: Working with data an integrated way

|    | A  | B  | C  |
|----|--|--|--|
| 1  | <b>Quotation Name</b>  | <b>Quotation Content</b>   | <b>Codes</b>   |
| 16 | The above findings reveal an inadequate commitment to ethical practic...   | The above findings reveal an inadequate commitment to ethical practice which impacts on the effectiveness of regulations and frameworks guiding ethical practice.  | Effect of leadership on rules<br>Interaction of rules and leadership<br>Leadership drives ethical conduct                                |
| 17 | . It is argued that this can be achieved by leadership directing all...    | . It is argued that this can be achieved by leadership directing all behaviour, actions and strategies toward purpose driven public service delivery.  | Leadership drives ethical conduct  |
| 18 | Leadership needs to direct the behaviour of others toward the accompl...   | Leadership needs to direct the behaviour of others toward the accomplishment of the organisation's purpose   | Leadership drives ethical conduct  |
| 19 | Morality cannot be learned simply by reading relevant literature. It...    | Morality cannot be learned simply by reading relevant literature. It is instilled in the individual only through the observation and conduct of the ethical behaviour of other people, e.g. parents, educators, pastors or managers. | Effect of leadership on rules<br>Leadership drives ethical conduct   |
| 20 | moral behaviour within a work situation can be learned through posi...     | moral behaviour within a work situation can be learned through positive reinforcement such as personnel assessment.  | Leadership drives ethical conduct  |
| 21 | decisions of public service managers. These officials help to set th...    | decisions of public service managers. These officials help to set the climate, develop the vision, and shape the behaviour of all those involved in their organisations.   | Effect of leadership on rules<br>Leadership drives ethical conduct   |
| 22 | The critical point to understand here is that the ethical conduct po...    | The critical point to understand here is that the ethical conduct portrayed by public service managers establishes models for the behaviour of individuals working with them as well as for the public.                              | Leadership drives ethical conduct<br>Leadership more significant<br>Subordinates look up to leaders                                      |
| 23 | within the rules there are ample opportunity for unethical behaviour (...) | within the rules there are ample opportunity for unethical behaviour (example unethical scoring interviews. In such cases, ethical leadership is required  | Effect of leadership on rules<br>Interaction of rules and leadership<br>Leadership drives ethical conduct                                |
| 24 | Yes  | Yes  | Leadership drives ethical conduct  |
| 25 | Yes, you have to set the example. Small things such as being on time...    | Yes, you have to set the example. Small things such as being on time for work, not abusing leave, following internal policies and procedures, how you treat others   | Leadership drives ethical conduct  |
| 26 | Thus, an organisation can have all the rules necessary in place, but i...  | Thus, an organisation can have all the rules necessary in place, but if the leadership does not set the example, the rest of the organisation will not place value on these rules.   | Effect of leadership on rules<br>Interaction of rules and leadership<br>Leadership drives ethical conduct<br>Leadership more significant |
| 27 | Yes, you have to set the example. Small things such as being on time...    | Yes, you have to set the example. Small things such as being on time for work, not abusing leave, following internal policies and procedures, how you treat others. Being honest at all times  | Leadership drives ethical conduct  |
| 28 | Actions of a leader play a critical role in encouraging and showing ot...  | Actions of a leader play a critical role in encouraging and showing other people that ethics are importan  | Leadership drives ethical conduct  |
| 29 | Rules can remain on paper if they are not demonstrated or shown in app...  | Rules can remain on paper if they are not demonstrated or shown in application. Leadership is critical for ethical behaviour and plays a more significant role than rules.   | Effect of leadership on rules<br>Interaction of rules and leadership<br>Leadership drives ethical conduct<br>Leadership more significant |
| 30 | leadership gives guidance it paves way to good conduct, leadership enc...  | leadership gives guidance it paves way to good conduct, leadership encourages understanding  | Effect of leadership on rules<br>Interaction of rules and leadership<br>Leadership drives ethical conduct                                |

Source: Atlas.Ti (June, 2021).

**APPENDIX H:  
English Language Certificate of Editing**

