

https://dspace.org/

The returns to education in the city of Johannesburg

Petje, Rangwato Boledi

2017

http://hdl.handle.net/10539/23130

Petje, Rangwato Boledi (2017) The returns to education in the city of Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, <http://hdl.handle.net/10539/23130>

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

THE RETURNS TO EDUCATION IN THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG

Rangwato Boledi Petje

A research report submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand in 50% fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management in the field of Public and Development Management.

June, 2017

ABSTRACT

A way to better understand the returns for investing in education is to identify the gap between education and employment. This issue has been identified not only in South Africa but worldwide. However, while it focuses on the challenges of employability there has been little research on the value of education in relation to employability and career development amongst workers' productivity in public sector organisations. For this reason, a basic interpretative qualitative study is developed which explores this relationship with a focus on the value of the City of Johannesburg's (COJ's) subsidised education scheme in terms of its returns to organisational growth and human development. Through semi-structured interviews and thematic data analysis of employees' perceptions, it is found that self-enrichment or personal development outweighs organisational benefits. A culture of life-long learning for the COJ employees has been created without the implementation of mentoring and succession planning to minimise mismatches in the workplace in order to enhance productivity.

DECLARATION

I declare that this report is my own, unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management (in the field of Public and Development Management) at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.

_____

Rangwato Boledi Petje

23 June 2017

DEDICATION

I would like to thank, first and foremost my God and Saviour Jesus Christ for strengthening and encouraging me in all I do. I wish to thank my loving husband and family for their understanding, support and their love throughout this process. I will remain forever grateful. This research report is dedicated to my loving grandmother Rangoato Wilhelmina Petje.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the City of Johannesburg, particularly the Department of Development Planning, for allowing me access to their employees. My thanks also go to the employees who participated in the research study. I also wish to thank my supervisor Professor Pundy Pillay for his academic support, time and guidance throughout the research and writing of the report. Without the employees' participation and my supervisor's assistance, this research would not have been possible.

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ..... **i**

DECLARATION ..... **ii**

DEDICATION ..... **iii**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... **iv**

LIST OF TABLES ..... **viii**

GLOSSARY OF TERMS ..... **ix**

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION **1**

1.1 Rationale of the study 1
1.2 Background of the study 4
1.3 Purpose of the study 6
1.4 Objectives of the subsidy education scheme 6
1.5 Problem statement 6
1.6 Research questions 7
1.6.1 Main-research question 7
1.6.2 Sub-research questions 7
1.7 Significance of the study 8
1.8 Limitations of the study 9
1.9 Assumptions 10

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW **12**

2.1 Introduction 12
2.1.1 Education and employment 13
2.1.2 Employability and career growth 14
2.1.3 Over-skilling and over-education 15
2.1.4 The effect of internal labour practices 16
2.1.5 Further learning and career development 17
2.1.6 Job satisfaction and productivity 19
2.2 Conclusion 21

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY **23**

3.1 Introduction 23
3.2 Research methodology 23

3.3 Research design 25
3.4 Sample 26
3.4.1 Sample and sampling method 27
3.5 The research instrument 28
3.6 Procedure for data collection 30
3.7 Data analysis and interpretation 31
3.8 Limitations of the study 32
3.9 Validity and reliability 33
3.9.1 Transferability: external validity 33
3.9.2 Credibility: internal validity 34
3.9.3 Dependability and authenticity: reliability 34
3.10 Ethical considerations 35
3.11 Demographic profile of respondents 35

CHAPTER 4. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS 39

4.1 Introduction 39
4.2 Self-enrichment outweighs organisational benefits 39
4.3 Education versus work experience for growth 45
4.4 Lack of succession planning and job mobility 55
4.5 Work environment 62
4.6 Summary of the findings and analysis 66

CHAPTER 5. INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS 70

5.1 Introduction 70
5.2 Theme 1: Self-enrichment 70
5.2.1 Lack of effective internal labour market and loss of skills 70
5.2.2 Investment returns adversely affected by mismatches 72
5.3 Theme 2: Seeking competitive advantage 74
5.3.1 Personal growth with no advancement 74
5.3.2 A culture of life-long learning with no job-mobility 76
5.4 Theme 3: Work experience matters 78
5.4.1 Value of informal learning 78
5.4.2 Mismatches and education application 81
5.4.3 Over-education and lack of job-mobility 83
5.5 Theme 4: Job-mobility and succession planning 85
5.5.1 Education competencies not exploited 85
5.5.2 Future employability 87
5.6 Theme 5: Work environment 90
5.7 Conclusion 91

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 97

6.1 Introduction 97
6.2 Conclusions of the study 97
6.3 Recommendations 100

6.4 Suggestions for further research 102

REFERENCES 104

APPENDIX A 111

Actual Research Instrument 111

APPENDIX B 116

Example of a Memo 116

APPENDIX C 117

Example of Transcripts 117

APPENDIX D 126

Example of a Signed Consent Form 126

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Profile of participants 27

Table 2: Participants 36

Table 3: Summary of demographics 36

Table 4: Self-enrichment outweighs organisational benefits 40

Table 5: Work experience matters. 46

Table 6: Participants seeking career development 49

Table 7: No job mobility 56

Table 8: Work environment is the determining factor 63

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Depersonalisation: Employees who are dissatisfied with their jobs and lack motivation to perform their work duties (Knani, 2013).

Employability: The ability of a graduate to secure employment that is matched with a qualification (Teijeiro, Rungo, & Freire, 2013).

External effectiveness: Usefulness and usability of higher education for employment in the academic field and the labour market (Giancristofaro, Bonnini, & Salmaso, 2009).

External labour market: Operating on an open commercial market with competition for jobs amongst external candidates (Groeneveld & Hartog, 2004).

Goal-orientated career: Workers who plan their career development in a linear way and with predictable outcomes (Ahola & Galli, 2012).

Horizontal match: An employee's job matches with the field of study (Beduwe & Giret, 2011).

Individual Learning Plans (ILP's): A learning plan for career and personal development of an employee agreed with an employer (City of Johannesburg, 2008).

Instrumental competency: The competencies that are gained specially from education indicating a graduate capacity to do a task or a specific job (Teijero et al., 2013).

Internal effectiveness: The value and usability of higher education in an organisation or department (Giancristofaro et al., 2009).

Interpersonal competency: The ability to communicate and work with others in challenging situations (Teijero et al., 2013).

Internal labour market: Hiring internal candidates only and promoting them based on years of working experience rather than performance (Groeneveld & Hartog, 2004).

Learning-orientated career: Workers who learn to change to a new career that is appealing and want career development, but they plan with no clear objectives (Ahola & Galli, 2012).

Mass professionalism: The expanded growth of education producing over-supply of skilled professional labour force (Baker, 2009).

Over-education: Workers having higher skills than required in terms of their job positions (Belfield, 2010).

State dependence: The degree to which the presence of over-education in a worker's life influences the chances of being over-educated in future (Mavromaras, Sloane, & Wei, 2012).

Systemic competency: The transferable competencies concerned which are with personal character or personality of a candidate for a job (Teijero et al., 2013).

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale of the study

Social research assists in understanding problems that affect society (Bryman, 2012). This social research study has explored the relationship between higher education and employment from the perspective of public sector employees, particularly in a local municipality. The education and employment relationship is an issue that has been identified worldwide as a way to better understand the value of education in relation to economic growth and human development. The expansion of higher education has created intense competition for jobs in the labour market. Owing to this competition, the employability of graduates and their career growth is affected and requires that individuals take responsibility for their own employability and career development (Beduwe & Giret, 2011; De Graaf & Van Zenderen, 2013; Giancristofaro, Bonnini, & Salmaso, 2009; Payne, 2013; Wang, Liu & Lai, 2012). This expansion of education not only affects the employability of graduates to secure a well-matched job when the supply of job opportunities is less than the demand, but also affects the employers' views on skilled labour, employability and retention of employees who constantly upgrade their skills to remain valuable and competitive within the labour market.

The literature focuses on the relationship between education and employment in terms of educational value, employability, competence, skills, over-education, job-matches and job satisfaction. In this study, the focus on employability and skills of graduates will be part of the conceptual framework used to help analyse the relationship between education and employment within local government. The link between education and employment cannot be assessed independently of contextual considerations (De Graaf & Van Zenderen, 2013). Graduates, scholars and employers are usually part of such research to better understand the dynamics of the relationship between education and employment. The literature demonstrates that for higher education qualifications to be valued, jobs need to be well matched with qualifications, skills and wages. It was previously thought that higher degrees

provide more employment opportunities and wage increases but the current literature proves this is not so. Those with higher degrees may be "over-skilled" or "over-educated" and as a result "experience state dependence" (Mavromaras & McGuinness, 2012, p. 619). This questions the value of education and the effect of mismatches on career development and organizational growth. Mismatches also have adverse effects on job satisfaction; this may lead to either an increase or a decrease in performance or productivity (Belfield, 2010). Often, when attempting to create equal opportunities for all, a broken link develops between education and employment when all factors intertwined with employability are not taken into consideration (Gracia, 2009). Bridging this gap helps to formulate better employability and skills development policies (Werquin, 2012). This research therefore explored the relationship between the higher education that employees receive and their development in relation to their current jobs, productivity and career growth. The human capital theory which demonstrates that education leads to automatic job attainment has also been considered in the analysis (Gracia, 2009). This has helped to understand the return on investment for the employees and the organisation.

The research covers the main components, which are the research problem, the purpose of the research (Chapter 1) the existing literature (Chapter 2), how the research is conducted (Chapter 3) and the research findings and analysis (Chapter 4), and is followed by the interpretation (Chapter 5) and conclusion (Chapter 6) with recommendations and suggestions for future research.

The literature tends to emphasise enhancing employability, labour markets and progression and that these signify good economic or human capital returns as they do not waste public or state resources. However, this study has also demonstrated that it is equally important to recognise other benefits such as identity (self-confidence, personal development or growth) and social gains (individual positive impact on networks, community and work relationships) (Callender & Little, 2014). It is assumed that education only contributes immensely to the City of Johannesburg (COJ) if the employees' education is matched with their jobs. If not matched, it is thought that employees experience over-education leading to a desire to find jobs

outside the organisation where they can use their new skills gained through education. The findings of this research have put further emphasis on the importance of using employees' skills effectively to increase productivity, internal labour effectiveness and to assist in enhancing the positive relationship between education and employment going forward (Payne, 2013). What is also important is that the implementation of workforce development policies to enhance production and performance should be monitored and evaluated against the COJ's skills, needs and objectives. Instead, however, it was found that the COJ employees were mismatched and education did not have an effect on their future employability within the internal labour market due to lack of job mobility within the department and organisation. This implies that education needs to be aligned with job duties to be valuable in order to enhance productivity. In addition, mentoring and succession planning need to be implemented to enhance employability within the internal labour market (Fredericksen, 2010).

The research has also demonstrated that the education of workers was for personal enrichment and that they were not concerned with productivity but rather in the development of identity capital gains (self-confidence and personal growth) for their professional development in terms of decision-making and to enhance their own employability (Callender & Little, 2014). The managers and workers shared the same perspective on how the educational skills gained by workers built professional confidence and provided opportunities to gain competitive advantage in job searches outside the organisation. The identity factor (self-confidence and personal growth) and social capital gains (individual positive impact on networks, community and work relationships) are as important as human capital gains (economic benefits) when considering that education has a positive personal and societal impact (Callender & Little, 2014). The relationship between these three factors is more likely to reveal the true benefits of education beyond the labour market (Loxley, Seery, & Walsh, 2014). Life-long learning produces long-term effects but should be monitored and effectively used to create a good interrelation between human, social and identity capital benefits for productivity, personal and professional development (Bennion, Scesa, & Williams, 2011). A broader and better understanding of the

benefits of formal and informal learning in the municipality in relation to these three capital gains is also required in order for workforce development policy makers to address challenges of productivity often experienced in the workplace.

1.2 Background of the study

There have been various studies around the world that have explored the relationship between education and employment. There is both a positive and negative correlation between education and employment depending on the contextual background of a country's economy, the labour market, educational system and organisational needs. This relationship has been largely explored amongst undergraduates and graduates from universities as well as workers in different professional sectors. The emphasis has been on the value of qualification and employability in relation to the various fields of study. The value of a qualification in relation to a job is known to be only recognised after graduates have been in the labour market for some years (Coates & Edwards, 2011). Employability is a factor that is dependent on the labour market, government interventions and the ability of higher education institutions to produce skills that employers need (Storen & Aamodt, 2010). Overall, graduates agree that a degree is required to be able to secure employment and for career development but this perception differs in terms of fields of study and other social factors (Coates & Edwards, 2011). In South Africa, there is a high unemployment rate of 25% of which 19% of the unemployed have tertiary education. There are 8.6% self-employed graduates with a tertiary education with the underemployed at 11% and the low-skilled at 29% (Statistics SA, 2008, p. 11; 2014, pp. 3, 10). These figures challenge the notion that a degree is enough to secure a job or a well-matched job where a qualification matches the job requirements, as the demand for jobs does not always meet the supply within the labour market.

The City of Johannesburg (COJ) is a government organisation that seeks to turn the city into a world class African city and for this it requires a skilled and competent labour force. The implementation of its Training and Career Development policy has been seen as a way to develop competent employees and to increase performance to

provide better public service delivery. It is a requirement of these policies that an employee annually submits an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) outlining their required training, further education or higher education (City of Johannesburg, 2008). This education requested by employees is meant to increase their skills for better performance, employability and career development within the organisation and is therefore subsidised by the organisation. However, the value of such education has not been explored within the organisation to determine the return on investment of all the subsidised educational schemes given to employees. The COJ's expenditure on subsidised education schemes for its employees is approximately R4 million per year for further education, higher education and development of employees (City of Johannesburg, 2008).

The value of employees' qualifications in relation to the work environment, and their ability to secure a job matched with the qualification within the organisation requires research. The findings here will help determine the investment return of subsidised education for the employees against the growth of the organisation. There is evidence of an adverse effect on employee employability and job satisfaction as the COJ has experienced the continued increase of over-educated and over-skilled employees due to the implementation of skills and personal development policies within the organisation without any evaluation (City of Johannesburg, 2008). As a result, the employees find themselves with more than one qualification but are still employed in jobs not matched with those qualifications or not placed in jobs in line with their skills. It is apparent, therefore, that a positive relationship between education and employment can only exist when qualifications are matched with relevant jobs, and the skills are aligned with the needs of the organisation (Kelly, O'Connell, & Smyth, 2010). This relationship and the role of the subsidised education scheme has been explored within the Department of Development Planning in the organisation due to easy access to information and the existing variety of career fields in the department. In this study this relationship has also been explored amongst the workers who are beneficiaries of education subsidies to analyse the significance and value of education in relation to their employment within the public sector.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this research is to explore the relationship between education and employment with a focus on the value of the City of Johannesburg (COJ) subsidised education scheme in enhancing productivity, employability, and career development within the workplace.

1.4 Objectives of the subsidy education scheme

This education scheme of the COJ was designed to enhance development of employees by providing financial benefits to workers in various departments. This development is in line with the yearly ILPs of employees and the COJ's organisational goals (City of Johannesburg, 2008). The primary objectives are as follows:

- To provide a framework for training, development and education of COJ's staff.
- To integrate training and education initiatives and alignment of the training strategy with the strategic plan of the COJ.
- To provide a supportive environment to encourage employee development.
- To ensure that the decisions on employee education, training and development are taken in the best interests of the COJ.
- To ensure that education, training and development initiatives of the COJ are consistent with best practices in the education, training and development fraternity.

1.5 Problem statement

The relationship between education and employment is a concern of government and institutions of higher education. Undoubtedly, the role of education as an investment for employability and career development indicates the value of education for society and economic growth (Maharasoa & Hay, 2001). The value of education and its relationship to employment has been researched in relation to the employability of

graduates, wages, labour market, over-education, over-skilling, mismatches and job satisfaction in the private sector (including universities). However, although the COJ provides a subsidised education scheme in line with individual learning plans for further employability, skills and personal development of employees to increase productivity and service delivery, relatively little is known about the value of education in relation to employability and career development amongst these beneficiaries to enhance productivity in the COJ. The challenge is that this has also resulted in mismatches and over-education affecting the return on investment for the organisation (City of Johannesburg, 2008). Furthermore, there are negative perceptions amongst employees about the value of qualifications received from the COJ's subsidised education in terms of career progression within the organisation. More extensive research, therefore, is required on the value of the qualifications that local government employees receive from subsidised education and its effect on their current jobs, productivity, skills and employability.

1.6 Research questions

This research study sought to answer particular research questions to better understand the relationship between education and employment from a public sector perspective.

1.6.1 Main-research question

The main research question is the following:

How do the COJ employees from the Department of Development Planning perceive the value of qualifications received through subsidised education in relation to their current jobs, future employability, career development, and work productivity?

1.6.2 Sub-research questions

The sub-research questions are:

a) What are the employees' perceptions of the investment returns on the COJ subsidised education scheme?

b) How has the education received influenced work productivity and career development within the department and organisation?

c) What relation does education have with an individual's current job and future employability status within the organisation?

d) Are the education choices aligned with the departmental skills needs?

1.7 Significance of the study

Globally, the relationship between education and employment has been researched with an emphasis on employability and job-mismatches. The link between education and employment has also been analysed in this study in terms of the human capital theory which posits that the number of graduates increases at the same time as the level of jobs in the economy (Coates & Edwards, 2011). This implies that graduates should be able to get a job matched with their education or qualification and that learning further enhances career or job mobility. This human capital theory has not been previously explored within an organisation that encourages employees to develop their skills and enhance work productivity.

The management of the COJ is interested in improving employability, productivity and retention of employees through their skills and career development policy. The subsidy education scheme for part-time studies is one of the mechanisms used by the organisation to promote skills and career development in the workplace. Nonetheless, such skills development in the workplace is influenced by the experiences and perceptions of employees. Moreover, employees must decide to develop themselves by choosing to go from work to school or study further at a tertiary institution to enhance employability, improve their skills or develop their

careers. It has been assumed that education investment through the subsidy ought to have brought substantial work-related returns, but there is a concern that this may not be the case and that it has led to over-education which negatively affects work productivity (Belfield, 2010; Mavromaras, Sloane & Wei, 2012; McGuinness & Sloane, 2011; Nordlund, Stehlik & Strandh, 2013). The issue of job matches or job mobility within the organisation is also unknown.

Consequently, any knowledge about the perceived value of the subsidy education scheme within the organisation in relation to employability, career progression and productivity assists in understanding the investment returns to the organisation. In other words, the subsidy education to employees may be an unnecessary cost for the organisation when there are no or little returns. Since there has been limited investigation of whether this learning investment provides genuine opportunities of employability and development of employees to enhance skills development and work productivity it was considered important to conduct this research to remove any uncertainties regarding the value of workforce development in the public sector. It is hoped that the study has also provided guidance to government on developing better employee retention, and career and skills development policies.

1.8 Limitations of the study

Owing to the broad scope of a study of this nature, which attempts to explore the relationship between education and employment, it is important to clearly delineate the objectives. This has been clearly demonstrated by the limitation of the sample in the methodology and the explicit choice of topic. The research has concentrated on the returns of an investment on education in terms of its benefits. As such, the main focus becomes understanding the relationship between education and employment. The research has also focused on concepts of career development, future employability, skills, work productivity or performance. This was analysed with the return on investment in education being at the forefront of the research. However, while different fields of education are relevant for a better understanding of what choices affect an employee's job performance, it will not be much discussed in this

research. Furthermore, accessing documents on performance for analysis was not permitted at the COJ due to the concern that, as the researcher is an employee of the organisation, the employees' information may be leaked and affect employee confidentiality. Therefore, the issue of performance will be discussed based on the opinions of employee managers. The research will not attempt to find the causal links of the attributes of work performance and employability and its effect on the COJ as this will require a much more longitudinal or mixed method study (Neuman, 2011).

This research, therefore, is primarily limited by the focus of the research, the sample group and the assumption that the information provided by the employees is reliable and based on honest responses. The findings will also not be generalised to the employees in the Department of Development Planning or the City of Johannesburg as the perceptions are only based on individual experiences and opinions. In addition, the perceptions about subsidised education differ amongst employees due to the fact that the reasons for pursuing higher education differ. Therefore, the research has focused not only on the common shared perceptions and experiences of employees but also on the unique perceptions that shed more light on the gap between education and employment.

1.9 Assumptions

In this research, assumptions have been minimised as much as possible; however, the methods selected for data collection, notably the use of convenience sampling and interviews, necessitated that certain assumptions were made. It has been assumed that the employees have accurately disclosed their years of working experience and levels of education to the researcher. The participants, being employees, have shared their opinions and experiences vital to the research but were not coerced to participate in the research study. The honesty of the participants was vital, as the research findings were based on their opinions to create a better understanding on how education influences jobs in the public sector, and whether education can be a

solution to public sector performance. It is hoped that the results will then be an accurate reflection of the value of subsidised education in the City of Johannesburg.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This literature review discusses the research on the relationship between education and employment. It focuses on employability and competencies, over-skilling and over-education, the value of education, social factors and labour market conditions. Subject areas that need further research will also be discussed. For example, education and employment are further explored within a workplace context to better understand issues of employability and education. Employability is defined as the ability of a graduate to secure employment that is matched with a qualification (Teijeiro, Rungo, & Freire, 2013). Employability enhancement requires that competencies acquired by graduates and required by employers are aligned (Teijero et al., 2013; Romenti, Invernizzi & Biraghi, 2012). Competencies developed to meet employer's needs and destinations of graduates need to be monitored in order to resolve issues of employability (Teijero et al., 2013), therefore, improvement in employability also requires that over-skilling and over-education are addressed. It is often assumed that higher degrees provide more employment opportunities and wage increases but the current literature proves that this is not so. Those with higher degrees may be over-skilled and experience state dependence (Mavromaras et al., 2012). This then questions the value of education and the effects of over-skilling and over-education on career development. Over-education and over-skilling may have adverse effects on wages and job satisfaction, leading to either an increase or a decrease in profit, productivity and service delivery (Belfield, 2010).

Certainly, the expansion of higher education has created high competition for jobs in the labour market. Owing to this competition, social factors affect the employability of graduates and require that individuals take responsibility for their own employability (Beduwe & Giret, 2011; De Graaf & Van Zenderen, 2013; Giancristofaro et al., 2009; Payne, 2013; Wang, Liu, & Lai, 2012). Nonetheless, a broken link exists between education and employment when all factors intertwined with employability are not taken into consideration to create equal employment

opportunities for all (Gracia, 2009). Bridging this gap will help formulate better employability and skills development policies (Werquin, 2012).

2.1.1 Education and employment

In an ideal economy and a good quality education system, education brings positive long-term investment returns. Education transforms societies and its effect is experienced by workers and employers (Baker, 2009). A graduate destination survey in Australia showed that 70% of employees are satisfied with the value of their qualifications (Coates & Edwards, 2011). Significantly, they agreed that they would probably choose the same degree if they had to study again. From a human capital theory's perspective, an increase in educated graduates occurs at the same rate as the level of jobs in the economy (Coates & Edwards, 2011). This means that in a "perfect" economy the labour market will always be in equilibrium, and the demand of labour will always meet the supply (Baker, 2009). However, the evidence of youth unemployment, under-employment, over-education, and job-mismatches, challenges this theory as does the notion that an academic degree is enough for employability and career advancement (Morrison, 2014; Tomlison, 2008; Verhaest & Van der Velden, 2013). Baker (2009), however, argues that any change in education will bring change to the worker's job relationship in the labour market.

Employability emphasises the importance of having an employee or graduate possessing the required competencies to be positioned in a well-matched job. This ensures that education remains valuable in the workspace (Maharasoa & Hay, 2001; Verhaest & Van der Velden, 2013). However, in South Africa, employability studies, which have mostly focused on recent university graduates, students and educators rather than employees by Kruss (2004), Maharasoa and Hay (2001) have found that a field of study had a significant effect on graduate employability and that this was dependent on the demand for certain skills in the labour market (Anyanwu, 2000; Maharasoa & Hay, 2001). Overall, the characteristics of field of study programmes determine the value of qualifications for firms, but this has rarely been analysed in

relation to productivity and career development (Giancristofaro et al., 2009; Maharasoa & Hay, 2001; Storen & Aamodt, 2010).

Recent studies in Nigeria and other sub-Saharan African countries such as Malawi, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Uganda, reveal that a first degree is not enough for employability and employers prefer staff with higher degrees for the required skills (Al-Samarrai & Bennell, 2007; Chinwuba, 2013; Maharasoa & Hay, 2001). This has led to high unemployment and self-employment in these countries. It seems obvious, therefore, that since this requires higher degrees, employers should promote employability by assisting young people build their careers through higher learning opportunities (Maharasoa & Hay, 2001). In the United Kingdom, individuals are urged to take the responsibility regarding their own employability through additional degrees to ensure that they possess the required competencies to be competitive in the labour market (De Graaf & Van Zenderen, 2013; Geyde, Fender & Chalkley, 2004; Tomlinson (2008, 2012); Wang et al., 2012).

2.1.2 Employability and career growth

Employers expect graduates to have the required competencies to secure a well-matched job and then be productive. The issue of whether a graduate claims to have acquired those competencies or not is, however, questionable. A study conducted in Spain indicated that, on average, a fair gap exists between competencies taught at universities and those required, or rather demanded, by the labour market or firms (Kelly et al., 2010; Teijero et al., 2013). In this case, graduates usually go back to school to try and add more skills to increase their opportunities of employment and build their careers (Mavromaras et al., 2012; Verhaest & Van der Velden, 2013). When they do find work, it may be a mismatch leading to a decrease in wages, job satisfaction and an increase in over-qualification; this results in the reduction of job-matched security (Mavromaras et al., 2012; Verhaest & Van der Velden, 2013). The issue of over-qualification continues to increase when graduates add qualifications not necessarily required by employers (Giancristofaro et al., 2009). Furthermore, female employability is adversely affected if women hold a higher degree (for

example, one of five years duration) instead of a three year degree (Teijero et al., 2013). This may be due to over-qualification, where someone has a higher degree (five years) without working experience and who might need to be paid a higher salary than someone with an entry level three-year degree. In such a case, there is a high probability that organisations would rather hire a female with an entry degree to keep labour costs minimal. Female employability may also be affected by industry limitations in relation to gender inequality, where engineering or mining companies prefer male graduates (De Graaf & Van Zenderen, 2013; Teijero et al., 2013; Stevanovic, 2014). Therefore, adding more qualifications can influence graduate employability and career development negatively or positively, depending on the demand for skills (Jackson, 2014).

2.1.3 Over-skilling and over-education

When certain skills are not in demand, graduates who are working may find themselves mismatched, which affects their job satisfaction and productivity (Beduwe & Giret, 2011). Beduwe & Giret's (2011) findings in France reveal that mismatches are high among young people, and this increases the desire of permanent well-paid workers to find another job due to dissatisfaction. This mainly arises when workers have only found jobs not related to their education (Beduwe & Giret, 2011). Other graduates are affected by over-skilling and over-education, which also hinder career development. McGuinness & Sloane's (2011) simple definition of over-skilling is when skills do not match job requirements, meaning that workers' skills are under-utilised. Over-education occurs when the individual's education outweighs job requirements (McGuinness & Sloane, 2011). In trying to better understand the value of education within the workplace, over-education and over-skilling have been cited as one of the negative factors. In a British self-reported credential survey in 2006, it was found that about 40% of the labour force was actually over-educated when they obtained their first jobs and it was estimated that this percentage would continue to increase if skills were not effectively and appropriately utilised (Livingstone, 2010). Workers have reported that their skills are not fully used in their

jobs as they have higher skills than what is required in their positions (Belfield, 2010; Groeneveld & Hartog, 2004; Mavromaras et al., 2012; McGuinness & Sloane, 2011).

There are also more over-educated than over-skilled workers in the UK. This has been noticed in jobs that offer security such as the public sector or large firms which do not use career development or skills policies effectively (Groeneveld & Hartog, 2004; McGuinness & Sloane, 2011). In terms of the career mobility theory, graduates deliberately prefer a low-level job so that they can acquire the skills needed to get a matched job. The theory posits that over-skilling and over-education can only be temporary and will fade as people search and find matched jobs or get promoted in the workplace (McGuinness & Wooden, 2009). However, Sweden's cross-sectional surveys of 1974-2000 show that educational mismatches do not dissolve over time; instead, mismatches can occur early in the employment process as well as later in graduates' careers (Korpi & Tahlin, 2009). Employees with higher degrees suffer more with over-skilling and wage penalties than qualified matched workers. They are also more likely to suffer from state dependence because of the early effects of over-education continuing in the future (Belfield, 2010; Mavromaras et al., 2012).

2.1.4 The effect of internal labour practices

It is a concern in the workplace when there are genuine mismatches; when a worker possesses more qualifications than required in a job and then becomes dissatisfied (Brynin & Longhi, 2009; Mavromaras et al., 2012). It has been found that about 19% of long-term employees who stay in a company for 13-16 years become over-educated and mismatched (Groeneveld & Hartog, 2004). Belfield's (2010) research also shows that fewer public-sector employees report being over-educated compared to the private sector. In the public sector, over-education rises with education levels (Belfield, 2010). Furthermore, unionisation increases over-education whilst appraisal programmes and internal hiring reduce it (Belfield, 2010; Korpi & Tahlin, 2009; McGuinness & Sloane, 2011). A workplace with a recognised union cannot easily decide on wage terms, deployment of workers or promotion terms without the union's agreement. For example, if an employee wants to raise salaries of particular

skilled workers and place them at higher job positions to retain valued employees, the union may see it as unfair labour practice and this may hamper reducing over-education in the workplace. One should consider the fact that the arrangement of the internal labour market (namely, hiring internal candidates only and promoting them based on years of working experience rather than performance) and external labour market (namely, operating on an open commercial market with competition for jobs amongst external candidates) in the organisation and skills policies may have an impact on the overqualified in enhancing their employability and careers (Baker, 2009; Gracia, 2009; Groeneveld, & Hartog, 2004; Jackson, 2014; Knani, 2013; Morrison, 2014; Schomburg, 2007). For example, when workers see an organisation internally hiring them over external candidates, it increases their sense of value and the skills and education they possess, and their careers grow within the organisation. The organisation also benefits by being able to retain their most valued employees as this reduces the loss of skilled labour. The literature does not discuss the possibilities of how the implementation of workplace skills and career policies can reduce or increase over-education or mismatches. If evidence of the effects of over-education on career development and productivity is found in firms, an investigation should be researched on the firms' role in mitigating over-education in the workplace and the methods used to reduce it to enhance job-satisfaction (Belfield, 2010; Mavromaras et al., 2012). There is also a need to determine whether poor workplace career and skills management policies are also responsible for high rates of over-education in firms or if internal hiring reduces over-education. It is important to analyse this, as over-education affects productivity, job satisfaction and service delivery, which can only be improved when skills are used effectively (Beduwe & Giret, 2011; Belfield, 2010; Mavromaras et al., 2012; McGuinness & Sloane, 2011; Nordlund, Stehlik, & Strandh, 2013; Verhaest & Van der Velden, 2013; Wang et al., 2012).

2.1.5 Further learning and career development

In Sweden, further education enhances career development for adults. This further education is less likely to cause adults to be over-qualified or over-educated compared to Australia and other UK countries (Nordlund et al., 2013). The

longitudinal results of Nordlund et al. (2013) are consistent with that of Long (2010). Long's (2010) findings of the three cohort studies (in the years 1970, 1980 and 1990) from the United States of America reveal that added education brings positive effects in the labour market. This is because adults choose to work whilst furthering their studies and this gives them a competitive advantage in job searches and promotions as they are able to gain experience in their various work fields while studying further. Furthermore, employers are involved in assisting higher education institutions to provide the education programmes relevant for the jobs offered. The cost, time and effort spent towards obtaining a degree is worth it for the worker's career development when they are promoted within their firms (Coates & Edwards, 2011; Long, 2010).

Nevertheless, Brynin and Longhi (2009) argue that an additional qualification, if not well-matched with job requirements, is not an investment in career development or job mobility but an investment for a wage increase. Although internal hiring reduces over-education as internal workers get promoted, Verhaest and Van der Velden, (2013) have demonstrated that over-education may be considered positively for life-long learning but it should never be forgotten that it is an issue that cannot be resolved within a vacuum. It is influenced by business changes, implementation of skills policies and over-supply of skilled labour (Verhaest & Van der Velden, 2013). Furthermore, the over-skilled find it difficult to secure better matched or equivalent jobs in the future (McGuinness & Wooden, 2009; Mavromaras et al., 2012). They tend to find themselves re-employed in jobs where their skills are not fully utilised. They then either remain stuck in over-skilled jobs or exit the labour market and find themselves unemployed (McGuinness & Wooden, 2009). Research in Finland has demonstrated that half of the employees that had Master's degrees were "goal oriented careerists"; others were either "goal oriented career fighters, learning oriented progressors and adaptors or discontented and satisfied" (Ahola & Galli, 2012, p. 537). The goal-oriented graduates had career goals, chose a specific education pathway and used their education to accomplish their goals (Ahola & Galli, 2012). For those who were known to be goal oriented, their career path was predictable but other careers occurred by chance or coincidence. The goal-oriented

workers improved their employability rate and career development through planning and investment in further education by acquiring higher qualifications (Ahola & Galli, 2012). Ahola and Galli, (2012) argue that this goal-oriented approach would prevent over-skilling or over-education issues as individuals will take charge of their employability and career pathways through the use of self-development plans. However, they recognise that the use of skills in organisations for productivity and self–development of employees requires more research, as skills development policies may not be aligned with organisational needs (Ahola & Galli, 2012; Nordlund et al., 2013; Payne, 2013). Furthermore, factors prohibiting career progression need to be further investigated within the workplace. The data would provide further understanding of employability, career development and the importance of further education in workplaces (Ahola & Galli, 2012; Nordlund et al., 2013; Stevanovic, 2014; Werquin, 2012).

2.1.6 Job satisfaction and productivity

Overall, graduates are dissatisfied with further learning possibilities, as it is associated with over-education. The strongest dissatisfaction was found where there were mismatches. Therefore, further learning needs to be analysed in-depth to check its effect on productivity for those who have formal education and whether it increases mismatches (Mavromaras & McGuinness, 2012). In Sweden, further education has brought long-term effects for adults and is less likely to cause adults to be over-qualified or over-educated compared to Australia (Nordlund et al., 2013). In the Netherlands, individualism plays a more significant role in enhancing employability and reducing over-education (De Graaf & Van Zenderen, 2013). Individualism entails a person's ability to be committed and take control of their own educational life. In De Graaf and Van Zenderen's (2013) study individualisation played a vital role in work and school transitions as students took charge of their own learning and employability.

There has been no determination of whether poor management is also responsible for high rates of over-education in firms (Belfield, 2010). The participants reporting

over-education need to be analysed through qualitative research to understand what factors exist that lead to over-education. There has also been no previous evaluation of whether highly experienced workers are over-educated or not; and how over-education relates to job search theory and career mobility theory.

The inability of human capital theory to explain the presence of over-qualification or over-education is another problem (Brynin & Longhi, 2009; McGuinness & Wooden, 2009). It raises important questions which need answers. Is over-qualification a rational labour market decision or not? How do employees view over-qualification as a career investment or for employability and competitive advantage within the labour market? Since over-education reduces job satisfaction, it affects productivity and to a certain extent if evidence of over-education is found in the public sector it may affect service delivery. Over-educated workers may feel that they are not valued and be dissatisfied with their jobs, and this may reduce work productivity and affect service delivery. Although graduates employed in the public sector and larger firms are more satisfied due to stability and job security, possibilities of further learning may influence job satisfaction and the reasons for this should be researched (Mora, Vila & Garcia-Aracil, 2005).

The importance of education and employment is based on the notion that productivity is influenced by education and the way changes occur at work. Baker (2009) has pointed to the fact that education does not only change productivity in workplaces, but that an increase in the number of educated people changes the nature of the working environment. When there are more educated workers in the workplace, there is a probability that the workers are more likely to make positive changes in the workplace, as they are able to make informed, confident decisions that promote accountability. Therefore, it is not only change in systems in the workplace, such as use of new technology or change of leadership that affect productivity, but also the number of educated workers (Baker, 2009).

Over-education can also be beneficial to an organisation for transformation of a workplace. On the one hand, when an organisation has highly educated employees, the lower-skilled may also suffer (Baker, 2009). This is because highly educated

individuals may result in a fiercely competitive labour market while the lower skilled become disadvantaged as their jobs are replaced by the over-qualified at low pay (Baker, 2009). The effect of over-qualification or over-education on wages and job satisfaction has been extensively researched, but few studies have analysed it in terms of productivity and service delivery in the public sector and whether further learning is useful or not.

Furthermore, evaluations of skills utilisation and where skills are needed in firms have also not been adequately discussed in relation to performance. Productivity is mostly enhanced through the use of skills policies in the workplace but its value and effect on employees' performance and job satisfaction has not been adequately monitored (Geyde, et al., 2004; Giancristofaro et al., 2009; Nordlund et al., 2013; Payne, 2013; Romenti et al., 2012; Stevanovic, 2014). Payne (2013) emphasises the need to address this issue in the workplace as it hinders development and growth of companies if not addressed. Payne (2013) maintains that the use of peoples' skills effectively increases productivity. For Payne (2013) performance working indicators should be used to resolve skills utilisation or over-education issues in relation to context, implementation and experience in the organisation.

2.2 Conclusion

The relationship between education and employment is complex and does not follow a linear path; instead it is linked to social aspects and labour market conditions. Undoubtedly, employability is not just a responsibility of higher education institutions, but it is also an individual and a firm's responsibility. What is certain is that the conditions and experiences of education and employment affect job satisfaction, wages, and productivity within the workplace. However, the role of education within the workplace in relation to employability, career development, and productivity in the public sector has been under-researched. The value of education and skills plays a vital role and to be at their best in terms of performance, employees need to be monitored and used effectively. Such improvement of employability and career development requires that the relationship between education and employment

is analysed from the employees' perspective to allow a better understanding of the employment and education dynamics. Education is valuable when the opportunities it provides are used effectively to transform societies and achieve the objectives of organisations and policy makers. This is because education and employment cut across many aspects; namely, competencies, career development and the involvement of social factors (Payne, 2013; Serban, 2013; Tomlison, 2012). Nevertheless, to resolve the issues of employability, over-education and mismatches, the value of further education in the workplace needs to be researched in relation to career-skills development and job productivity. This will be explored from a public sector perspective as the public sector is an example of an institution that seeks to promote and ensure good management practices and skills development in society.

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an account of the approach followed to answer the research questions and conclude on the research problems. The chapter begins by discussing the choice of the methodology and the research design. Following the research methodology will be a description of the selection of the sample and the sample size. This chapter also includes details on how the interview questions for this study were developed; the data sources; how the sample was selected; and how the data was collected, coded and analysed.

3.2 Research methodology

Social research requires specific approaches in order to answer the research questions that might lead to "addressing the gap in the literature and add to existing knowledge" (Bryman, 2012, p. 5). Bryman (2012) further explains three approaches that can be used to conduct social research: the qualitative, the quantitative, and the mixed-method approaches. The use of each approach depends on the type of research, and requires different research techniques. The quantitative approach views the "social world around us as something external from social actors", whereas the qualitative approach views the "social world as something that influences people's beliefs and experiences" (Bryman, 2012, p. 36). The mixed-method approach uses both approaches together in order to offset the limitations of one approach and it enhances the reliability and validity of the research (Bryman, 2012; Neuman, 2011). The quantitative approach is concerned with measurements and numbers as data and a "deductive analysis which tests theory" on human capital and career mobility or job mobility (Bryman, 2012, p. 6). It mainly uses surveys to collect data in a form of numbers for statistical analysis (Neuman, 2011).

Qualitative research uses mainly interviews or observations to collect data and thematic analysis (Bryman, 2012; Merriam, 1998). The qualitative approach is

concerned with words as data and an "inductive analysis which informs theory" and focuses on the interpretation of data from the view of point of the people being researched (Bryman, 2012, p. 6). Consistency, validity, and generalisation to the population matters in quantitative research; whereas reliability and analysis of rich textual, oral or visual information matters in qualitative research (Neuman, 2011).

Although most past studies in the literature have conducted quantitative and mixed-method approaches involving mainly longitudinal design, this research took the qualitative approach. Following the examples of past researchers who have studied the relationship between education and employment, the most appropriate research approach for this research was the qualitative one. The qualitative approach viewed the social world with social actors, meaning the relationship between education and employment cannot be viewed externally from its social actors, particularly the workers or individuals who experience how this relationship affects their daily lives (Neuman, 2011). The value of education, under-employment or being able to secure a job or maintain a career affects people, behaviour and values. If an employee experiences a job mismatch or no return on investment on further learning, job dissatisfaction may arise and as result affect work productivity. The qualitative approach is concerned with exploration to generate explanations and ideas about skills mismatches, and the value and impact of education on employees and the COJ as an organisation (Merriam, 1998). This chosen approach was appropriate as perceptions and experiences of employees on the value of their subsidised education for themselves and the organisation can only be analysed from the viewpoint of the recipients (Bryman, 2012). The interview techniques have helped provide an in-depth understanding of the investment return of subsidised education for the COJ to enhance productivity and internal employability. The information should help the organisation to better manage and formulate effective career and skills development policies for the development of the organisation.

3.3 Research design

Bryman (2012) suggests that the approaches to research can either follow an experimental, cross-sectional, longitudinal case study, or a comparative study. The literature shows that the past studies on the subject of education and employment have been longitudinal, cross-sectional, comparative studies, and case studies. The research design provides a framework on how data will be collected and analysed (Bryman, 2012; Neuman, 2011). Merriam (1998) discusses research designs that are embodied in qualitative research, for example, basic interpretative, phenomenology, ethnography, action research, evaluation and case study designs. These designs are all meant to understand and create meaning of how people see and make sense of the social world around them (Merriam, 1998). Past studies reflected in the literature such as the cases in Australia, Sweden and South Africa used case studies, where time (years) and place (chosen university or city) mattered when analysing data because it had an influence on data interpretation (Merriam, 1998).

This research has adopted the "basic interpretative qualitative" design as the purpose of the study is to explore how public sector employees value subsidised education in relation to their employability, work productivity, and career development (Merriam, 1998, p. 38). It dealt with perceptions and experiences of employees and how they gave meaning to the organisation's subsidised education and the role it played in ensuring skills management, productivity and employability within the workplace. The individual's perceptions of subsidised education was the unit of analysis, as their perspectives and experiences were needed to better understand the value of education and what it meant to them (Merriam, 1998). The research is therefore descriptive in nature as the meanings needed interpretation from the views of the employees who participated in the research (Merriam, 1998; Neuman, 2011). Since this study also sought to discover and understand the value of subsidised education in relation to employment, the basic interpretative design was considered the best approach as it allowed for in-depth analysis. These perceptions and experiences were used to better understand the complexity of the relationship between education and employment and its effects on work productivity. The perceptions were also important to

understand the importance of job mobility and whether over-education can affect or improve work productivity. The design also provided an in-depth understanding and articulated the reality of the participants that allowed concepts to emerge as well as recommendations on policy. However, the design limitations are that the interpretation is influenced by assumptions and is solely based on experiences of the participants within the context of the Department of Development Planning in the COJ.

While this research design method has taken into consideration perspectives on the human capital theory, career or job mobility theory, and over-education and employability as the conceptual framework, the primary concern will be presenting the experiences and voices of the participants in a comprehensive way.

The shortcoming of this research design is that no a priori theory can encompass the multiple realities derived from the interviews and test any theory, but rather theory will need to emerge from the data (Bryman, 2012; Neuman, 2011). The research will bring about recommendations to the subsidy education programme of the COJ and the policy on career and skills development within the workplace in order to develop solutions and improve skills development in the workplace.

3.4 Sample

In basic interpretative qualitative research, the sampling size is usually predetermined to ensure credibility of the research. The sample was determined on the basis of the research questions, availability or easy accessibility to the participants. This section of the research report discusses the choice of the sampling method and its applicability to the study. It provides a list of individuals, without actual names, who participated in the research and their job positions. The actual names have not been disclosed to protect the individuals' privacy and identity. There are many ways to sample participants, but this sampling method has considered location and availability.

3.4.1 Sample and sampling method

This qualitative strategy has used a non-probability sampling method. "Purposeful convenience sampling" is appropriate for this research based on time, location and availability (Bryman, 2012, p. 418). As an employee of the Development Planning Department and the City of Johannesburg, access to data and obtaining consent from directors were made easier. Furthermore, the workers were more inclined to be part of the research. This sampling method ensured a good response rate in exploring and understanding the value of the subsidised education scheme from the employees' perspective. It also allowed some insights and in-depth data that were used to make recommendations to improve and effectively use the subsidy education scheme programme.

The Department of Development Planning comprises eight sections: namely, Geographic Information System, Records, Registration, Land Use Management, City Transformation, Planning Control, Building Control and Legal Administration. Individuals from each section were approached to participate in the research study and more individuals from some sections agreed to participate in the study than others. There were four sections that chose not to participate in the study: Building Control, Geographic Information System, Records and Planning Control. Permission was obtained from the line managers of each section for individuals to participate in the study who are recipients of the subsidised education scheme. Table 1 provides a profile of participants in the research study from the five participating sections of the Department of Development Planning.

Table 1: Profile of participants

Description of Participant	**Section of Department**
Manager	Land Use Development Management
Manager	Land Use Development Management
Manager	Land Use Development Management

Specialist: Town Planner	Land Use Development Management
Specialist: Town Planner	Land Use Development Management
Specialist: Engineering	Technical Co-ordination
Senior Administrator	Registration
Administrator	Registration
Administrator	Registration
Director	Land Use Development Management
Senior Administrator	Legal Administration
Senior Administrator	Legal Administration
Specialist: Strategic Planner	City Transformation

A sample size of 13 employees (10 workers and 3 managers) was targeted to minimise bias and to increase the credibility of the study. Invitations were sent telephonically and to the email addresses of the employees retrieved from the line managers. The workers' managers were also interviewed to better understand the effects of education on work productivity and to compare the managers' perceptions with their workers' responses on the education scheme. It should be noted that interviewing managers separately from the workers with the interview questions provided a better understanding of the relationship between education and employment, particularly the effect of education in enhancing work productivity in the department's sections. In addition, the value of education in enhancing work productivity may also not be the same for employees, as work requirements are different in all departments. Although this may be case, this has ensured that an adequate sample is reached in order to answer the research questions and increase the credibility of the research.

3.5 The research instrument

The primary instrument used to collect data was semi-structured interviews. The data in qualitative research comprised text from the recorded interviews of the employees. The semi-structured interviews gathered the employee's opinions on the value of

their subsidised education. In other words, what was reported and how it was reported was filtered through the researcher's interpretation of the data collected (Yin, 2011). The data has been reported to reflect answers to the research questions to better understand the employees' perspective of the value of the subsidised education scheme as a return on investment for the municipality and the employees. In order to ensure that the research questions were answered, an interview guide (Appendix A), consisting of 10 questions was used to interview the workers for approximately one hour thirty minutes. There were six questions for the managers. The interview guide consisted of a face sheet to contextualise employees' answers, an introductory letter of the research and the consent to protect the interviewee from an invasion of his/ her privacy.

There were also demographic questions in the interview guide to contextualise the respondents' answers. Questions such as: (a) years of working experience, and (b) job level helped to contextualise answers on career development and job mobility. The discussion on the demographic profile has been done in section 3.10 of this research methodology chapter. The interview guide consisting of questions for workers show that Questions 1 2, 3, 5 to 6 and 8 answer sub-research questions (a), (c) and (d) regarding job mobility and the importance of education. The remaining questions 4, 7 and 9 answer sub-research questions (b), (c) and (d), with a focus on career development, work productivity and the relevance and influence of education in the department. The interview questions directed at the managers sought to make a comparison of the views of managers to answer essentially sub-research questions (b) and (d) on the influence of education on work performance/productivity and the value of the education for the department. The interview questions were structured in such a way that it was flexible enough not to close off the employee's point of view or voice (Bryman, 2012).

Specific questions in the interview guide were used to get the employees' perceptions as follows: (a) direct questions which were set to find out how the education received related to the current jobs and work productivity; (b) probing questions which allowed the interviewee to explain; and (c) open-ended and

interpretation questions that ensured that the researcher understood the interviewee's view point. The interview held with each individual was transcribed for analysis along with written memos or field notes reflecting on issues raised from the field work.

3.6 Procedure for data collection

Prior to the collection of data, consent from the Executive Director of the Department of Development Planning of the City of Johannesburg was obtained to allow the researcher to invite employees to participate in the study. Since the department consisted of eight sections and thirty eight subsidised employees, each section line manager or director was approached for permission to involve their employees in the research. Out of the eight sections, only employees from four sections agreed to participate in the study. The other four sections Geographic Information System, Records, Building Control and Planning Control, explained that they were unable to participate in the study due to the nature of their jobs. These sections comprise of building inspectors, information officers and law enforcement officers who serve the city and their jobs are time consuming and not office based. Therefore, it was not easy to access the workers for interviews at the time of data collection.

The employees from other sections who indicated that they received subsidised education were invited telephonically and by emails for interviews. The significance of the research was explained to the employees who participated (see Table 1 above). The appointments were set with employees who accepted to be interviewed. An informed consent form was signed by the participants. With the use of an interview guide, interviews were conducted at their offices and tape recorded. Notes were also written during the interview to minimise the loss of any crucial information that would increase the reliability of the research. It was evident from the data collection that some employees were much more knowledgeable about the subsidy education scheme than others. This required clarification about the subsidy education scheme during the interview to enable the participants to answer relevant questions. Each

interview was transcribed and the transcripts were read by the participants to check if they agreed with what had been said during the interviews. All participants agreed that the transcripts were correct.

3.7 Data analysis and interpretation

The transcribed data was coded and analysed by detecting recurring themes. In order to discover and understand the value of further education for employability, work productivity and career development, the study was analysed drawing from the concepts of employability and skills development. The conceptual framework of the study assisted in the identification of recurring patterns or themes (Merriam, 1998). The analysis added to the understanding of concepts and added to the existing knowledge on the value of further education for work productivity and self-development. The results were richly descriptive in nature. Since qualitative research is not a linear approach, the analysis and data collection occurred simultaneously from the first interview (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2011).

There are various analysis techniques in qualitative research such as narrative analysis and thematic analysis. This research study adopted a "thematic analysis, focusing on ordering and synthesising data" (Bryman, 2012, p. 218). The manually transcribed interviews were compiled along with field notes. Each compiled transcript was disassembled into smaller pieces of text by assigning codes to data that were interesting, important and significant to answer the research questions (Bryman, 2012; Yin, 2011). The "codes" helped in the interpretation of the data in relation to the research questions and the conceptual framework (Bryman, 2012, p. 218).

These are some of the questions that were asked during the coding process: What did the data represent? What was being repeated? What patterns exist? What topic did the data suggest? How did the data relate to the research questions? (Bryman, 2012). The disassembled data (codes) were then reassembled into groups of themes by arranging them into a tabular form. The tabular form listed the interviewee, themes and findings. The thematic table is presented and discussed in Chapter 4.

Memos (Appendix B) reflecting thoughts and understanding on anything related to the codes or what is viewed to be significant for the analysis were written to explain the thematic analysis and ensure credibility (Yin, 2011). A theme, such as lack of succession planning was a category of analysis from the data. It is related to the research questions pertaining to future employment (job mobility) and has been built from codes identified from the transcripts. Repetitions, analogies, metaphors, expressions, concepts, similarities and differences of opinions were searched for during the analysis process (Bryman, 2012). The reassembled data were interpreted by giving meaning to the themes and by considering fairness, credibility, value, completeness and accuracy (Yin, 2011). The interpretation also had to have a beginning and an end. This shows that other researchers with the same data would have arrived at the same interpretation discussed in Chapter 5. The interpretation represented the data and conveyed new interpretations or repetition of the literature. Consequently, the analysis was discussed and concluded in relation to the value of the subsidised education scheme for employees and the return on investment to the organisation with recommendations on improving skills development in the workplace.

3.8 Limitations of the study

Since the limitations of the study were based on the sampling method of the research, the purposeful convenience sample did not enable the researcher to generalise the findings to all the employees of the municipality (Bryman, 2012). This type of sampling was dependent on the availability of participants and for this reason employees from other sections of the department did not participate in the study. Skills development and the value of education to promote employability and productivity may be perceived differently from employees not using the subsidy education scheme. There may have been reasons why these employees are not utilising the subsidy so by excluding these employees, the findings were only drawn from one group, which may affect the credibility of the research.

There is also a possibility that perceptions on the investment returns of the subsidy scheme may be under- or overestimated by participants. However, the study can only rely on the honest opinions of the participants. In terms of the thematic analysis method, the limitation is based on the issue that flexibility provided by this type analysis challenges one to choose what aspect of the data to focus on. The codes and themes also merge together during analysis and it is possible to miss nuanced data which could have been important for rigorous analysis (Bryman, 2012).

3.9 Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability can be problematic in qualitative research because human behaviour changes and is not isolated (Merriam, 1998). This research sought to understand the value of higher education in the workplace from the employees' experience of using subsidised education scheme programme offered by the municipality. Qualitative research is not concerned if findings can be found in another context or generalised but whether the results can be trusted and are authentic (Merriam, 1998). This research study has increased the reliability of the research by assessing this qualitative study based on the criteria of worthiness (transferability, credibility, dependability and authenticity (Bryman, 2012).

3.9.1 Transferability: external validity

Qualitative findings are orientated to contextual settings in which participants are being studied. Transferability has only been enhanced by describing the details of the objective of the organisation's subsidised education scheme in relation to skills and career development policy (see Chapter 5 of the research report). This enables the reader to gain better insight on the discussion of the findings in relation to the objectives of the organisation's Training and Development policy. The assumption of the researcher is that the employees are overeducated and thereby, job mobility which indicates career development and employment opportunities, are not enhanced within the organisation. The theoretical orientation is that over-education hinders work productivity and employability is not linear as the human capital theory

proposes, nor is job mobility easily experienced in the organisation due to lack of demand of those specified skills in the department. These assumptions and the theoretical orientation were also considered as a basis for analysis and the significance of the study (Bryman, 2012).

3.9.2 Credibility: internal validity

To ensure that the findings are credible, the transcripts and tentative interpretations were checked with the employees for plausibility. This procedure confirmed that the researcher has understood employees' perceptions regarding the value of subsidised education in terms of employability and return of investment on work productivity (Bryman, 2012; Merriam, 1998). The transcripts and interpretations were hand delivered to participants to check the truthfulness of the data and ensured that their voices were not misunderstood for the research. There was positive verbal feedback from the participants on the quality of the transcripts and interpretation.

3.9.3 Dependability and authenticity: reliability

The findings have been made reliable through an audit trail of records entailing the selection of participants, field-work notes, transcripts (Appendix C), audio recordings and the data analysis decisions. The records have been audited by colleagues to ensure that the procedure of the research has been properly conducted and that the findings clearly represent the data collected (Bryman, 2012). The authenticity of the research has also been improved by ensuring that the research shows the different viewpoints of the employees fairly and empowers the employees to take action to enhance their own employability and career development. In addition, the members' checks on the interpretation and findings have helped employees appreciate other employees' perspectives (Bryman, 2012). It has also encouraged employees to engage in career development policies of the organisation to ensure that productivity improves through better use of skills (Bryman, 2012).

3.10 Ethical considerations

All research approaches should consider ethics. This has been recognised here by acting in good faith and not imposing the researcher's views or assumptions on the participants of this study (Bryman, 2012). Ethical matters have been considered and the employees using the subsidised education scheme of the COJ were invited to participate in the research when the intention of the study was made clear to them. Although the research paper itself does not generate any ethical issues, the researcher incurs certain ethical obligations to protect the privacy of those investigated. Appendix D shows an example of an informed consent form signed by participants to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of the information gathered (Bryman, 2012). This has not only protected the participants but also the information provided, as well as promoting transparency. Furthermore, sources of information from past researchers and participants have been accurately referenced.

3.11 Demographic profile of respondents

The purpose of this section is to describe the profile of the employees of the Department of Development Planning who were interviewed and who have been included as part of the study. There were ten workers, and three direct managers from the Land Use Development Management section who were interviewed. Two other managers from the City Transformation and Registration section of the department withdrew their participation due to personal reasons which they did not want to disclose. An effort was made to get other managers to comment, but two managers each from City Transformation and Registration resigned before interviews were conducted. A decision was then made that the current data collected from 13 interviews were sufficient to answer the research questions. Based on the findings of previous studies, the age, job levels, education and years of working in the organisation have been identified as the three most important demographic variables for a study of this nature. This was done to assist in the analysis of the views of the individual participants for the findings.

Table 2 below provides detailed information of the participants, but there are three participants with no information on their levels and type of education due to the fact that the interview guide for workers' managers did not require this type of information. Table 3 which follows shows the summary of demographics of the workers who participated in the research.

Table 2: Participants

No of Participant	Gender	Age	Job Skill Level	Years Working	Section	Level of Education	Type of Education
1	Male	18-34	Skilled	3	Techical	Degree	Civil Engineering
2	Male	35+	Skilled	10	LUM		
3	Male	35+	Skilled	15	LUM		
4	Male	35+	Skilled	25	LUM		
5	Female	18-34	Semi-skilled	6	Registration	Diploma	Public Administration
6	Female	35+	Semi-skilled	9	Registration	Degree	Para-legal
7	Female	18-34	Skilled	2	LUM	Postgraduate Degree	Building Construction
8	Female	18-34	Skilled	8	Legal Admin	Degree	Para-legal
9	Male	35+	Skilled	12	LUM	Postgraduate Degree	Public Management
10	Male	35+	Skilled	8	Legal Admin	Postgraduate Degree	Business Management
11	Female	18-34	Skilled	8	LUM	Degree	Town Planning
12	Male	35+	Semi-skilled	6	Registration	Degree	Human Resources
13	Female	18-34	Skilled	2	CT	Postgraduate Degree	Town Planning

Table 3: Summary of demographics

Gender		
Male	7	53.84%
Female	6	46.15%
Total	13	100%
Age		
Between 18 and 34	6	46.15%
35 and above	7	53.84%
Total	13	100%

Job Skill Level		
Skilled	10	76.92%
Semi-skilled	3	23.07%
Total	13	100%
Years of Working		
Between 1 and 5 yrs	3	23.07%
Between 6 and 10 yrs	7	53.84%
11 yrs above	3	23.07%
Total	13	100%

In this convenience sample of the COJ employees from the Department of Development Planning who participated in the research, slightly more than half (54%) were male. The ages of the employees do not vary much and this shows that the employees are young professionals who see the need to further their education and develop their careers. The demographics show more than three quarters (77% or 10 employees), are skilled and in management, directorships and professional jobs. This indicates the importance of education for the department and the fact that more skilled than unskilled people have used the subsidised education scheme provided by the COJ to further their education and develop their careers shows the importance of workforce development. Slightly more than half (54%) of the employees each have experience of between 6 to 10 years.

When considering Table 2, the majority of the employees who used subsidised education have 6 to 8 years experience. Furthermore, when one looks at the type of education of employees in Table 2, it shows that the field of education is varied amongst employees which suggests that employees want to develop their skills and careers and they want to be equipped with different skills to build their careers. However, this demographic profile, which shows 76.92% are skilled, needs to be supported by descriptive data to better understand the relationship between education and employment in the public sector. Descriptive data will assist in understanding the employees' reasons for (a) studying further; (b) choosing a particular field; and (c)

how the education helps them perform at work and develop their careers. The next chapter presents the findings in relation to each sub-research question to better understand the role of further education in the workplace. This is intended to understand the reasons for young employees' perceptions about studying further using the subsidised education scheme of the COJ.

CHAPTER 4. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will present the findings from interviews of employees of the Department of Development Planning using a thematic content analysis. The transcripts were coded with the research questions and the conceptual framework at the forefront of the coding process for data expansion (Bryman, 2012). The prominent themes were identified per research questions, and presented in a tabulated form to include the themes salient to the concepts that emerged. The grounded theory technique of constant contrast and comparison of themes was adopted (Bryman, 2012). This assisted in creating a better understanding of the reflections and experiences of the participants. The codes were then used to create the themes which are discussed in the next chapter (Chapter 5) and were examined with the work or job context in mind to determine similarities or differences. In certain instances, workers referred to particular experiences in the past or illustrative examples. There are also narrative summaries presented in this chapter to provide evidence and confirm the reliability of the findings.

4.2 Self-enrichment outweighs organisational benefits

All participants (workers, including their managers) were asked for their impressions of the subsidised education scheme and their experiences of the education in relation to their current jobs. The perceptions were categorised in Table 4 as personal growth; financial security, under-utilised skills and loss of skilled labour in this sub-research question.

Sub-research question (a): What are the employees' perceptions of the investment returns of the COJ subsidised education scheme?

Table 4: Self-enrichment outweighs organisational benefits

Codes	Personal growth	Financial security	Under-utilised skills	Loss of skilled labour
Interviewee 1	Admin Clerk studying further for personal growth and to get a better job.			No opportunities to climb the ladder forcing one to study to exit the organisation.
Interviewee 2	Two years in the organisation studying MSc in Building - constant need to upgrade oneself for advancement.	Cost of education is high and unaffordable.		Education provides opportunity to move to the private sector if no promotion opportunities arise within the organisation.
Interviewee 3	Good investment for growth on a personal level.			
Interviewee 4	Studied to improve knowledge and the increase of skills enhanced personal growth.	Affordability- sponsorship takes away the financial burden.	The skills gained are not fully exploited. The skills are under-utilised which urges one to leave for better jobs.	
Interviewee 5	Professional working in the Legal Admin section with four	Financially viable	All the skills gained are not	No growth in the department and therefore

	qualifications used the scheme for personal growth.		fully used.	one studied for other job opportunities elsewhere.
Interviewee 6	Provided the opportunity for growth and advance one's career or choose a different career path.	Furthering studies is expensive and the organisation provides financial security	Skilled people are available and not utilised to bring change internally to the department.	
Interviewee 7	Good for personal growth	Low income job as an Admin person, could not afford to pay the fees to study Human Resources.	The skills are not utilised in the current job & it is believed one is worthy of much more.	Studied for better employment opportunities anywhere.
Interviewee 8	Uplifts one personally.	Helps ease the financial burden to further studies.		
Interviewee 9	Self-enrichment and to get ahead career wise.	Financial assistance and security.		People leave the organisation to access the desired jobs.
Interviewee 10	Individual empowerment	Low income job with matric and could not afford fees to study public administration.		Skills gained to apply for better employment opportunities in line with the qualification

Interviewee 11 (Manager)	Empowers the employees personally more than the COJ.		A gap exists between qualifications gained and work.	
Interviewee 12 (Director)	Employees develop their knowledge for growing their career	Gives opportunity to study if one cannot afford the fees		COJ loses skilled labour due to lack of further job opportunities.
Interviewee 13 (Manager)	Promotes career growth by supporting employees' interests.	Opportunity to up-skill employees when they can't afford to do so.		Job opportunities are not provided and employees leave the COJ.

The contents of Table 4, demonstrate that for the most part, workers including their managers, perceived the subsidy education scheme more eminently beneficial for the employees than the organisation. Since the participants were able to express their views on the subsidy and the reasons for using the subsidy, they stated overall that they appreciated the financial security the subsidy education scheme provided, as many could not afford to pay their education fees. Other workers felt that their education skills were under-utilised and the subsidy education scheme was used as an opportunity to access better job opportunities elsewhere. The under-utilisation of the employees' skills has created an atmosphere of despondency. The organisation loses highly skilled employees, as many resign from the organisation for better job opportunities not provided within the organisation. One director and manager reinforced the fact that the organisation would benefit if more job opportunities were provided within the organisation. This is evidenced by the following replies:

Interviewee 12, Director*:*

"If I just had my diploma, I do my work I work here and I sort of feel that I am on top of my job. I know what I am doing now and I am aspiring to improve myself, I go and do a B-Tech. I am expecting now I must be given other opportunities to test myself (this additional knowledge that I have now got, what can I do with it?) I must test myself, but what happens? I am sitting in this same position. There is no advancement for me, I can't become a senior professional where a bigger responsibility will be given to me so then I will get despondent at a point in time because I might feel I am sure I [have] got this additional knowledge now but I am not being tested with it. The platform to utilise my knowledge is not there. There are no further opportunities".

Interviewee 13, Manager:

"It is not a benefit to the department as such, it benefits the individual because the more skills you have the more opportunities seem to be available to you. You do not pay or help pay for someone's education

and once they have graduated you lose them and that's what seems to be the gap in the organisation".

Another worker or a subordinate put it this way:

Interviewee 5:

"The City should have done more to keep the skills of the employees, keep it in-house because after they are done with their studies what happens? They leave the organisation".

The participants recognised that the COJ should address the issue of loss of skilled labour in order to benefit from the education the employees gained through the subsidy education scheme:

Interviewee 6:

"I believe we could do much, much better in using the skills".

With a consideration that most of the employees in this study are skilled (76.92%), the under-utilisation of skills leads to a depreciation of human capital and complete loss of skilled labour, which will adversely affect productivity.

The participants also noted that the motivation to further their education was based on the financial security the subsidy education scheme provides and the constant need or desire for personal growth. One worker reiterated that:

Interviewee 2:

"We need to be constantly upgrading ourselves and it is good that they have such a scheme in place because financially these institutions are very expensive and not everyone has that opportunity to further their studies".

Personal growth is important for the workers and one worker studying in the Para-Legal field explained that she used the scheme because she wanted to "*grow*

[herself]" and wanted *"to have a better job after completing the education"*(Interviewee 2).

The organisation loses its investment in skilling employees when the skilled employees leave the organisation after completing their studies. The participants (both the workers and managers) appreciated the scheme for the enrichment of workers but were concerned that the organisation does not utilise the skills for its benefit, resulting in a loss of investment for the organisation.

4.3 Education versus work experience for growth

The employees' responses to career development and work productivity were categorised as follows:

- compete for jobs
- avoid stagnation
- create alignment
- practical learning
- professional confidence
- knowledge transfer.

To fully understand whether the education gained from subsidy improves work productivity or performance for the organisation as well as career development, the employees from the department answered this research question.

> Sub-research question (b): How has the education received influenced work productivity and career development within the department and organisation?

Table 5: Work experience matters

Codes	Practical learning	Professional Confidence	Knowledge transfer and alignment
Interviewee 1	The performance only improved due to the seven years of experience and being in the same position.		Mismatched and no skills transfer
Interviewee 2	Undergraduate degree is sufficient and more experience is needed to improve performance.	Education encouraged diligence and dedication.	
Interviewee 3	Experience in Legal Admin section is as important as education to increase performance.	Education granted the employee the ability to think critically and communicate with other professionals in the private sector.	Performance improved when knowledge and skills are transferred from old to younger generation.
Interviewee 4		Education helped develop confidence in making decisions at work.	
Interviewee 5		Studying law and developed understanding when communicating with attorneys and wants to become a problem solver.	Worked in different department sections and aligning education to those jobs improved performance.
Interviewee 6	More practical courses such as report writing should be taken into consideration to improve performance.	Improved the ability to apply one's mind to difficult situations.	Managers do not further their studies and this blocks change and hampers performance as subordinates are more

			skilled than managers.
Interviewee 7	Admin Clerk working for six years, performance mostly influenced by experience.		Human Resources administrative knowledge from education helped improve performance.
Interviewee 8	Working for only three years and experience was important for performance as education was just a foundation.	Created better interaction with other professionals in the field and in making better decisions.	Furthering in education in the same field help produce better reports and work standards.
Interviewee 9	Improved as knowledge was applied to practical work but experience mostly enhanced performance.	Education helped develop confidence in decision making when performing daily duties.	
Interviewee 10	Experience helped more than education. Education helped in terms of improving customer care.	Helped in becoming more knowledgeable and created a better interaction with intellectuals.	
Interviewee 11 (Manager)	Manager for fifteen years and seen employees performance improve by practical experience.		
Interviewee 12 (Director)	With twenty five years in the organisation employees improved performance through practical application. More practical courses are actually needed.	Observed that it broadened employees' minds and helped in making effective decisions.	Knowledge enhanced performance in the long-term if education skills are aligned with daily duties.

Interviewee 13 (Manager)		Builds confidence in understanding and decision making.	Application of knowledge to job helped enhance performance after a long period.

Table 6: Participants seeking career development

Codes	Compete for jobs	Avoiding stagnation	Create alignment
Interviewee 1		Working for eight years in administration and wanted challenges and new job in another department.	
Interviewee 2	The education provided the opportunity to change professions.	Studied Masters in Building for personal future career development and to avoid being in the same position.	
Interviewee 3	Provides opportunity to apply for qualified jobs.	Valued change in level of job positions after certain period of time.	Education should be aligned with experience or job in order to grow.
Interviewee 4		Strongly felt that one should not stay in the same job position.	Experienced career growth by aligning education with career goals.
Interviewee 5	Provided opportunities to change in jobs and compete with peers.		Strategically aligned qualifications with personal career goals.
Interviewee 6	Strongly felt the qualification provided added an advantage when competing for jobs to be a registered professional planner.		

Interviewee 7	Opportunity to get jobs in other departments and compete with other qualified people.	Admin clerk that did not want to limit himself to one job position in the department.	
Interviewee 8	Created an opportunity to develop one's career within the department and chance of getting better jobs.	Studied to avoid limitation in terms of job and knowledge.	Furthered studies in Civil Engineering and working in the Technical section for career growth.
Interviewee 9	Provided opportunity to compete for jobs within the city and outside the organisation	Working for two years, and then felt the need to leave. Furthered education so as not to be stuck in the same job position for long.	Alignment of education with job experience helps in registering as a professional planner.
Interviewee 10	Enhanced better job opportunities.	With six years of experience as a clerk and studied to not be limited to same level of job but increase career options	
Interviewee 11 (Manager)	Created chance for better job opportunities		Career growth experienced due to education alignment with job position and experience.
Interviewee 12 (Director)	Employees had opportunities to change careers within the organisation and outside.		Match between education and job and job level is required for growth.

Interviewee 13 (Manager)	Enhanced the future job prospects.		

The two themes created from Table 5 (work experience) and 6 (career development) have been summarised with education and experience as two important factors that are crucial for career development and work performance or productivity. The workers' education did not have a significant influence firstly on their career development, except that it provided the workers with an opportunity to change professions or apply for desired jobs internally or externally. The workers were concerned with the issue of job immobility but acknowledged the need to align education with career goals in order to progress in the workplace. A few of their concerns were made in the following statements:

Interviewee 10:

"I am working in an administrative section in a Planning environment but I do not want to limit myself, I would rather broaden myself and not just stay in Planning".

Interviewee 8:

"Nobody wants to remain in one position for the rest of their lives … so you choose courses that are aligned to projected career goals".

Interviewee 6:

"It puts me in a level where I can compete with other professionals out there with the skills I have and the knowledge I am gaining. One cannot be in one level for a long time so one has to grow".

Interviewee 2:

"With my Masters in Science in Building, it is a very, very broad course with five different avenues and I am in a position to compete for jobs in the private sector or in the public sector so I can move around and further my career".

The workers' education assists in enhancing their employability within or outside the organisation and they mainly chose to further their studies to gain a competitive advantage in job searching and to avoid being over-skilled with no job mobility. However, they also have acknowledged the fact that career goals should be aligned with education to experience career growth. The influence on career development as a result of the education gained through the subsidy depends on the individual's desire for advancement.

In terms of productivity or performance, the employees' stated that their education only had a positive influence on their job if the education knowledge is transferred and applied to their current work duties. Workers also indicated that the education also builds their professional confidence as they are able to make valuable decisions that can be justified because they think critically and become problem-solvers. However, the workers and their managers have also indicated the need to recognise the role that work experience also played in enhancing productivity or performance. The relationship between education and learning through work experience was considered crucial for improving performance but in most cases work experience made an enomous difference to employees' productivity depending on the relevance of that education to the job. One of the managers put it this way:

Interviewee 3:

"I have colleagues who have furthered their education by doing B-Tech in Town Planning, but it doesn't make any difference to their work productivity. I have seen people improving from them working (not because they went to an institution to study). I mean we have seen Secretaries who have become town planners purely by experience of working in the office".

However, another director with twenty five years of experience had a different opinion:

Interviewee 12, Director:

"You only get to see a difference after a long period of time, not immediately. Employees that have done B-Tech in Planning, [find that it] influences their performance because it helps them broaden their minds and see things from another perspectives. I am not going to mention names but if I compare how this guy would have done a report a year ago and how it looks now after he has completed the course (and maybe it is because it is specific to our field of work that I would pick up something like that) but I definitely think it had a benefit towards improving work performance and productivity".

The workers have also acknowledged the importance of practical learning and professional confidence in their careers. Not only did they feel that one should be knowledgeable to be effective at their work, but that the education provided them with the ability to interact better with other professionals and make a significant contribution when making decisions. Workers expressed this influence of their education on their work performance in this way:

Interviewee 9:

"It does improve my work performance and productivity because although not hundred percent, you have the basis, you already know what to expect from your job (although you learn while you are still working) but you have a foundation… the rest you just learn on your job".

Interviewee 8:

"I mean, you gain confidence with what you do or what you are doing and when you are sure about what you are doing, you do it simpler and better in that the skills that I have gained… I think they have made my job very clear. I mean very clear in that I know exactly what I am doing and I am confident in what I am doing and I think [with] the education that I have, it does help me perform better at my tasks".

A worker still studying a degree at the Legal Administration section of the department said:

Interviewee 5:

> *"It does improve my performance, we deal with professional attorneys and you need to know your story because otherwise you will end up being deceived… the knowledge that I have acquired from the law education helped me know the law language of communication and to understand my work better"*.

Another worker pursuing a degree in Civil Engineering shared the same sentiment on confidence by saying:

Interviewee 8:

> *"My knowledge helped me in knowing all those small technical stuff and the education gave me the opportunity not to say 'I don't know' when amongst other professionals, otherwise you will be taken for a ride"*.

The education improved their work performance through encouragement and confidence in decision making and being able to justify a particular decision or action. This reflected on their professionalism and competency as workers representing the municipality.

4.4 Lack of succession planning and job mobility

The views of the employees regarding current and future employability status were categorised with following codes: mismatches, accessibility to jobs, applicability of the education and hindrances to job opportunities. The workers in their individual interviews were asked questions relating to how easy it is to access desired jobs within the organisation and if their education is relevant to their current jobs. Their opinions were analysed to answer the next research question:

Sub-research question (c): What relation does education have with an individual's current job and future employability within the organisation?

Table 7: No job mobility

Codes	Mismatches	Accessibility to jobs	Applicability of education	Hindrances to job opportunities
Interviewee 1	Para-legal working as a junior administrator.	Working for seven years in same position but with Para-legal education.	No relevance as administrative duties in the Planning department do not require legal background.	Lack of budget and departmental targets relating to employment equity.
Interviewee 2	Masters in Construction Building working as a junior town planner and mismatched in the department.	The education skill is in demand at the Housing department.	Relevant to current job in Planning as in the built environment but also too broad.	
Interviewee 3	Studying Public Admin but working in the Legal Admin section.	Public Admin is in demand in the organisation and public sector.	Not applicable in detail to job but generally applicable to the public sector.	No skills transfer, planning and mentorship programmes.
Interviewee 4		Obtained a management job after three years of completing Masters in Management.	Applicable in theory but not practically.	No skills analysis or planning.
Interviewee 5	Qualification in IT, Business management and Law and positioned in Legal Admin	Skills under-utilised as labour has no gap skills analysis. No opportunities in the	B.Com Law and working in the Legal Admin section.	Education not aligned with experience.

	section.	department.		
Interviewee 6		Opportunities are there for senior jobs but only with relevant qualifications.	B-Tech in Town Planning and working as a town planner for seven years.	
Interviewee 7	Senior administrator in Planning department with Human Resources.	Can apply for jobs if available but also used to broaden knowledge.	Not relevant as planning is different from human resources.	No succession planning and skills transfer.
Interviewee 8		Not to access job specifically but studied to broaden knowledge but opportunities exist within the section.	Applicable as studying engineering and working in the engineering field.	
Interviewee 9		No promotion within the organisation. Opportunities are created due to people resigning.	Working as a town planner and studying Honours in Town Planning.	No promotion policy of skills gap planning.
Interviewee 10		Challenging without experience. Opportunities are not created.	Public Admin is relevant in any administrative environment.	
Interviewee 11 (Manager)			Some relevant if aligned with jobs.	No succession planning and monitoring of skills.

Interviewee 12 (Director)		No further job opportunities.	Relevant depending on the job duties and application of the course.	No plan to utilise the skills and lack of budget
Interviewee 13 (Manager)		No provision or creation of job opportunities in the organisation.	Relevant when applicable to the department.	No employee retention strategy and succession planning.

The contents of Table 7, clearly illustrates that the organisation needs to plan for the skills that the employees have acquired through the subsidy education scheme. Although some of the employees may be mismatched, there are not enough opportunities of employment within the organisation unless one's work experience matches one's qualification. The hindrances to job opportunities are based on budget constraints and the fact that there is no mentoring and succession planning. One of the managers explained that:

> Interviewee 13, Manager:
>
> *"Someone uses the organisation's finance to uplift themselves, once they have uplifted themselves they see job opportunities which are not provided within the department or organisation and they leave the organisation. People will graduate and not find any opportunity because there is no employee retention plan, succession plan or promotion plan. You have to apply for a certain position when available but it is not guaranteed that it is going to be an individual internally who will get that position".*

A director reiterated that:

> Interviewee 12, Director:
>
> *"In the past years we were not able to fill in positions… so in our organisation itself unfortunately it is budget - it is always budget and if not budget, it is this and that. There are always excuses that we can't open path[s] for people to grow. In five years we were only able to fill four positions and that was only because people set out for those positions have left the organisation and they left because there wasn't any further opportunities for them. There wasn't an opportunity for them to grow and make progress within our own organisation*."

The employees also understand that there is no promotion plan and choosing to study something not related to your job lowers the chances of obtaining a better job

internally. A worker studying for an Honours degree in Town Planning who has been working in the Department of Development Planning for two years recognised that:

> Interviewee 9:
>
> *"In the municipality there is no advancement because when a position comes up you apply, there is no promotion, it does not exist, [and] there is a possibility that someone from outside will get it over you whether you have done these courses or not. Although I was told I should do something in line with the current job that I am doing but it is highly unlikely that I am going to be promoted within the current job but since my course is broad I have options to change careers. The education is mainly for personal benefit as the City does not create opportunities to retain skilled employees because I have never heard that there is a person that was promoted".*

Other employees expressed their concerns in this way:

> Interviewee 10:
>
> *"We had two highly skilled engineers in the Technical section and were going to retire [and] everybody - I mean everybody - knew that these people are going to leave in the next five years. Why wasn't there any succession planning?"*
>
> Interviewee 6:
>
> *"The organisation needs to improve on mentorship, there is no implementation of mentorship and skills transfer so how can we plan ahead?"*

These employees' concerns reveal that lack of skills utilisation and planning is a problem in the organisation and should be addressed through observation, monitoring and succession planning.

The employees, particularly the managers, are concerned with loss of skills and the fact that the subsidy education scheme is not aligned with the employee retention strategy of the Council. The employees primarily studied to become more knowledgeable, advance their careers or change careers, if needed. Their education courses are broad and were only relevant to their current jobs if competencies gained from their education can be applied to their work duties. An administration clerk at the Registration section of the Department of Development Planning emphasised that:

> Interviewee 1:
>
> *"I studied [Para-legal] for personal growth, there is no relevance of my course to my current job, none whatsoever, it is totally too different things"*.

Other workers in the Land Use and Legal section felt that since the courses are broad, a significant portion of their courses are relevant to their current jobs. One worker said:

> Interviewee 5:
>
> *"It is relevant, remember I am doing law and I am in a law field, we do not do litigations but we legalise the development rights and I can actually be held responsible for it"*.

Another worker with more than one qualification said:

> Interviewee 4:
>
> *"I do not believe in over-education, I believe in life-long learning. My education is relevant to my job but even if it wasn't, it helps you also in general life scenarios, it will help you in being more assertive and being sure of yourself around your professional peers"*.

If the education is matched to the current job, it may help in job mobility or advancing a career within the same organisation or department.

In summary, the workers understood their education to be relevant to their current jobs if the knowledge could, in some other form, be applied to their work duties. Whether it is an improvement in decision making, opening one's mind and understanding or improving communication and confidence when amongst other professionals, no matter the knowledge gained, it is still applicable and relevant to their jobs. As one employee articulated:

> Interviewee 3:
>
> *"I did my B-Tech in Town Planning, I am working as a planner and its relevant because when you are applying for senior positions they normally look at your qualification and a B-Tech is one of the requirements, but I also want to study environmental management and I don't think I will be overeducated or overqualified because I will still use the education someday and I can use the knowledge to make informed decisions in my recommendation report for development applications in my current job. The education we receive from institutions is broad and it has helped me see Planning from different perspectives"*.

4.5 Work environment

The employees' view on whether the choices of their education are aligned with the department's skills needs was dependent on the type of work environment and their duties. The following codes emerged from the transcripts: work environment and general competencies. The workers opinions were analysed to answer this research question:

Sub-research question (d): Are the education choices aligned with the departmental skills needs?

Table 8: Work environment is the determining factor

Codes	Work environment	General competencies
Interviewee 1	Para-legal studies have conveyancing which is needed in the Legal Admin section of the department	Used law background to understand planning legislations and city bylaws.
Interviewee 2	A Master's degree in Construction within the built environment and can be used to work in the building control section.	The competencies gained are broad and I am able to understand impact of development on society and the economy.
Interviewee 3	A Public Admin degree used and needed in the Legal Admin section.	Gives a general overview of role of public sector and how to provide service.
Interviewee 4	A Masters in Development Management. Working in Land Use Management section dealing with land management.	Skills gained are general in nature and used in decision making processes.
Interviewee 5	Law degree working in the Legal Admin section but overeducated with Information Technology and Business management.	Only Property Conveyancing background meets the skills needs but other competencies gained are not used in the job.
Interviewee 6	B-Tech in Town Planning. Working for the Land Use Management section.	Town Planning principles learned are used in the job and other general skills such as research are used during evaluation of applications.

Interviewee 7	Human Resources education not used at all and not needed in the Planning department.	
Interviewee 8	Civil Engineering needed and used when evaluating stormwater issues in the department.	Used minimal lessons from the education but general lessons are used for personal knowledge development.
Interviewee 9	Honours in Town Planning. Working in the City Transformation section.	Only general competencies are used in the department.
Interviewee 10	Public Administration. Working in the administration section dealing with administration of planning applications.	General competencies of customer service are used as one clients submit and enquire at the office for their applications.

In most cases the employees' choices of education were aligned with the departmental skills needs. Property, development and land management is at the centre of the Department of Development Planning in the COJ. Although the department comprises mainly sections, all sections work in unison to achieve the objectives of the department. The employees convincingly stated that their choices of education are in most instances aligned with the department's skills needs but not always. One employee who studied Law and who is working in the Legal Administration section explained it this way,

> Interviewee 1:
>
> *[Partly] yes and no. On the 'Yes' part of it, I am in the field where you need to have conveyancing background because we deal with power of attorney, and for me to pass the transfer [of property] we deal with a lot of sections. You need to understand when you say 'in terms of Section 63' what do you mean. And my education is needed to do that and do my job. [On] the 'No' part, it is not always the case that what you study is actually in conjunction with exactly the current employment or skills needs of the department. I feel like 95% of what I have studied has nothing to do with my work because, like I said, law is very broad.*

Another employee studying Honours in Town Planning put it this way:

> Interviewee 9:
>
> *It is not aligned 100% I think maybe 70% of it is aligned to the needs of the department that I am in since it is town planning stuff.*

Education in institutions is not always designed in detail for a specific type of job in order to increase employability for graduates. It is for this reason that employees felt that their education is broad and that only certain aspects of the education are applied to their jobs and skills needs within the department. The education gave them general competencies needed to be employable and to better understand their job duties. An administrative clerk at the Registration section of the department studying Public

Administration articulated the alignment of education skills to the department in this fashion:

> Interviewee 7:
>
> *To an extent [the education] is aligned because there are certain things that I learn that is applicable to what I am doing, not in total, but to an extent. It fills particularly the gap of customer service of the department and it teaches me how to deal with difficult people to produce better customer service as I deal with the public every day*.

An engineer furthering his studies explained it in this manner,

> Interviewee 8:
>
> *Yes my education is aligned in terms of water, it is critical in a sense that the sewer, the stormwater floodlines and wetlands are all engineering and environmental issues that impact on property development*.

Others stated that their education was aligned to the department's skills needs because they were working in the built environment and their education was within the Construction and Built environment industry. Table 8 with the quotes of participants illustrates that skills needs are fulfilled by the education of workers in the department which depended on the type of work environment or situation.

4.6 Summary of the findings and analysis

In seeking to understand the relationship between education and employment within the public sector, this study was conducted on the value of qualifications employees received through the COJ's subsidy education scheme. One of the important aspects was to find out whether the education had any returns to the organisation and how it enhances the employees' careers, employability and work productivity or performance. The findings are summarised to answer this main research question:

How do COJ municipality employees from the Department of Development Planning perceive the value of their qualifications received through subsidised education in relation to their current jobs, future employability, career development, and work productivity?

Themes drawn from the coding analysis of the findings will be discussed in the next chapter. The key findings to answer the main research question are presented below. However, before determining if there was any education investment returns to the COJ, the reasons for employees furthering their education using the subsidy education scheme provided by the organisation need to be acknowledged as follows:

- The participants tended to agree with the fact that the education received was mainly for personal growth.
- A sense of financial security provided by the organisation also motivated the employees to further their studies in order to grow their professional knowledge and have the opportunity to advance their careers.
- The employees reiterated the concern that the competencies or skills gained from their education are not fully used by the organisation and they strongly felt that there was no growth within the department.
- The employees studied to enhance their opportunities to grow their careers outside the department or organisation as there seemed to be no opportunities for job mobility within the department.
- Most education had no relevance to current jobs, as the education is not within the current job field. This indicates mismatches.
- Work productivity or performance was influenced by work experience and application of education to the type of work environment.

The employees' education provided an opportunity to compete for preferred jobs with other professionals or graduates and to advance their careers. The findings regarding their career development in terms of an increase in job opportunities are listed below:

- The participants were concerned to ensure job stagnation was avoided. The issue of being in the same position for a long period of years in the same department motivated their persistence in gaining further education. Employees perceived education as a resolution to this problem.
- The education provided an opportunity to change professions when desired and to also be able to register with professional bodies in the appropriate field.
- Career development was important but participants felt that it could only be experienced if the education was also aligned to one's job experience.
- Lack of succession planning and job mobility hindered career development within the organisation.
- Employees recalled that there is no promotion policy and accessibility to job opportunities is experienced only if there is a vacant post in the department. The organisation did not create job opportunities for employees.
- Most participants were mismatched as the education received had no relevance to their current jobs.
- The issue of skills analysis was raised by the participants and the fact that the organisation should find a mechanism to identify skills and use them to benefit both the individual and the COJ.

The findings regarding the influence of the education received to enhance work productivity and performance was reported by both the employees and managers as follows:

- The workers and their managers agree that the skill gained by employees mainly builds professional confidence.
- The workers' productivity or performance improves significantly based on practical learning. The current undergraduate degrees as opposed to postgraduate degrees are sufficient to perform their duties. The issue was mainly about experience, with work performance and productivity being enhanced through work experience.

- Workers reported that when the education is applied to their current jobs, it had an effect on performance, but skills also need to be transferred from the older to the younger generation.
- The educational competencies that were not applicable to their current jobs, such as human resources knowledge, had no effect on work productivity in the department.
- The education obtained by the workers became valuable to the department when it was aligned to the skills needs of the department. The use of education was dependent on the work environment. If the education was applicable to the work environment or current position, productivity and performance improved.
- Since the educational courses that workers attend are not detailed for a specific job, the workers gain a variety of competencies or general competencies which could be used to gain a better understanding of the role of the public sector or the department. Moreover, the education provided general competencies which could also be used in other sections of the department.

CHAPTER 5. INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the findings and the thematic data analysis involving coding which was used to analyse the participants' responses. This chapter deals with the themes that emerged from the analysis and also links the findings to the pertinent literature. The findings and themes in relation to the literature review will also assist in creating a better interpretation and understanding of educational returns to the organisation. The five themes are: Self-enrichment, competitive advantage, work experience matters, job mobility and succession planning and work environment.

5.2 Theme 1: Self-enrichment

Sub-research question (a): What are the employees' perceptions of the investment returns of the COJ subsidised education scheme?

5.2.1 Lack of effective internal labour market and loss of skills

The value of higher education tends to focus on the factors of labour market entry for graduates, wages, job satisfaction and employability, but in this research study, career development and work productivity were included as well. Previous studies have focused on new graduate entry, destination and undergraduate surveys, such as the South African study by Maharasoa and Hay (2001). This study, however, has revealed that employability is dependent on other factors such as labour market, competencies and field of study and the working environment. Other studies (particularly in Australia where 70% of graduates saw some returns to education) demonstrated that human capital theory is correct in that employability should not be a concern Geyde, et al. (2004) as the provision of jobs is dependent on economic growth and the number of graduates meets the number of jobs in the economy. However, this has been countered by Coates and Edwards' (2011) results which challenge the human capital theory by explaining that an increase in the number of

educated graduates does not always meet the number of jobs in the economy due to evidence of mismatches. Baker (2009) has also criticised the theory by arguing that it should recognise how formal education can promote individualism which is needed for employability.

The findings of this research from the Department of Development Planning in the COJ is consistent with the argument of Coates and Edwards (2011) as there was evidence of mismatches and lack of job mobility rather than a direct causal link between educational attainment and economic growth. The current findings, therefore, challenge the human capital theory with the perception that education is for personal development and this has affected the employees' perceptions on investment returns from a human capital perspective (Loxley, Seery, & Walsh, 2014).

The COJ workers who participated in this study have, in many instances, repeated that their choice of continued higher education was based on personal growth and self-enrichment. The employees stated they have developed self-efficacy, self-esteem, strategic intelligence in making decisions to help grow their networks and close relationships with professionals and other members of society (Jamieson, Sabates, Woodley, & Feinstein, 2009). The employees report personal enrichment as an important factor of motivation for further study. This emphasis on self-enrichment or personal growth shows that the relationship between education and employment cannot only be focussed on human capital gains to recognise value but that the "identity and social capital gains" are also significant investments (Callender & Little, 2014, p. 20).

The COJ findings show that an employee in many cases does not experience a matched job after completion of their education as human capital theory suggests; employability and career development are influenced by other factors. The labour market within the organisation is a major factor in determining whether the employees will experience career development or not. The study reveals that in the COJ, external labour market seems to be the order of the day. The organisation does not promote the internal labour market due to the failure to recognise the value of

education in enhancing performance and the value of internal effectives (Giancristofaro, et al., 2009). The value and use of higher education needs to be emphasised to gain the returns which will benefit the organisation (Groeneveld & Hartog, 2004). Instead, lack of job opportunities within the organisation may have influenced the decision of employees' to further their studies for self-enrichment and for a competitive advantage in their job search, thus leading to a loss of skilled labour in the COJ (Livingstone, 2010).

5.2.2 Investment returns adversely affected by mismatches

Previous studies in sub-Saharan African countries have suggested that employers prefer higher degrees to get the required skills needed for employability and improving work performance and productivity (Al-Samarrai & Bennell, 2008; Chinwuba, 2013; Maharasoa & Hay, 2001). Although this may be the case, McGuiness & Sloane (2011) have demonstrated that such skills are not effectively used as organisations fail to successfully implement skills development policies. The need to address over-skilling in workplaces to prevent lack of growth and development for organisations is vital, as effective use of skilled labour acts as fuel to the success of an organisation (Payne, 2013).

The findings from this study show that education aligned to the departmental skills or current job is valuable in the workplace for productivity. This is demonstrated in the case of a few (3 out of 10) COJ employees who furthered their education and are presently well-matched as they have gained instrumental competencies that show their capacity to do their professional work tasks. Such competencies are vital in the workplace to increase internal effectiveness or the value and usability of education in the department (Giancristofaro et al., 2009; Teijero et al., 2013). They were able to analyse things from different perspectives and developed cognitive skills.

It is unfortunate that the remaining (7 out of 10) employees were mismatched and could only apply systemic and interpersonal competencies to their current jobs because the new skills focus only on personal characteristics and the ability to communicate and work with others in challenging situations. These employees were

over-skilled and this indicated that there was mass professionalism within the department, as the continuous growth of educated employees produced an oversupply of skills not used effectively to benefit the organisation (Baker, 2009; Teijero et al., 2013).

The organisation only benefits from the educational skills gained through use of the subsidy if the skills are aligned with employees' current jobs and the skills needs of the department. The findings show that there is only a small organisational benefit with no large investment returns from the use of the subsidy due to the lackadaisical attempt of the organisation to create horizontal matches and promote employee retention strategies. An employee retention strategy outlines the skills needs of the organisation and if the organisation effectively uses the educational competencies gained by employees, it will minimise loss of skilled labour (which may then have a negative effect on productivity). Ultimately, therefore, it appears that the subsidy education scheme does not bring the desired investment returns to the COJ but rather it has been used for personal enrichment of the employees and has led to an increase in mismatches.

When viewed from the global economic growth perspective, it seems that as the level of general education increases, the less the returns to educational investment. On the other hand, from an identity and social development perspective education is an investment as it develops human beings and changes communities. Consequently, the COJ study shows that self-enrichment outweighs organisational benefits. Although the literature emphasises the enhancement of good economic and social returns are not a waste of public resources as recommended by Callender and Little (2014, pp. 4-5), "it is time to formulate a new view of education that does not only focus on human capital development but recognises a new relationship of human, identity and social capital", it is also important to also recognise non-financial returns. With this new relationship one is more likely to see "what education can do beyond the demands of the labour market" (Loxley et al., 2014, p. 178).

5.3 Theme 2: Seeking competitive advantage

Sub-research question (b): How has the education received influenced work productivity and career development within the department and organisation?

5.3.1 Personal growth with no advancement

In the United Kingdom individuals took responsibility for their own employability through additional degrees in order to be competitive in the labour market (Geyde et al., 2004; De Graaf & Van Zenderen, 2013; Tomlinson, 2012; Wang et al., 2011). However, since individuals understood their future labour market to be complex due to increasing competition for jobs, their feelings of discouragement in terms of employability are understandable for several reasons: (a) some had just graduated; (b) some had just entered the labour market and (c) others were in a job search. Past studies have shown that graduates perceived the labour market to be competitive and that a technical or academic qualification was not enough to secure employment or advance their careers (Tomlison, 2008; Wang et al., 2011). Owing to this competition for jobs, individuals take responsibility of their own employability through addition of further educational qualification but stand at the risk of being over-educated (Tomlinson, 2008). According to Belfield (2010) and Mavromaras et al.'s (2012) analysis of over-education, a graduate's career growth is also challenged by how long they stay over-educated. Belfield (2010) argues that once a person is over-educated, that person is more likely to stay over-educated in their career unless he or she finds a horizontally matched job.

The employees in the Department of Development Planning do acknowledge that they are responsible for their own employability and career development as demonstrated by their desire and decision to use the COJ subsidy education scheme for personal advancement. It provides them with not only hard and soft skills but also a competitive advantage when searching for jobs (De Graaf & Van Zenderen, 2013). They understand their employability is enhanced by furthering their education while gaining working experience and they believe themselves to be highly employable. Personal growth and career development were highly valued by COJ employees.

Their desire to further their studies was influenced by personal growth, lack of job mobility, and seeking job opportunities within and outside the organisation. They viewed their education as a gateway to developing their careers and avoiding job stagnation.

However, there may be a high possibility that the COJ employees are most likely to stay mismatched or over-educated in future due to the failure of the organisation to hire internal personnel and also the lack of job mobility experienced by employees within the organisation. Both factors make it difficult to secure better matched jobs or equivalent jobs within the organisation. It seems as though entry into the labour market is difficult for graduates whilst career advancement is difficult where employees are mismatched. Since the majority (7 out of 10 participants) of the COJ's employees have additional qualifications not matched with their current jobs, their career advancement will not be experienced within the department unless succession planning and job mobility is implemented (Fredericksen, 2010). Should employees find themselves re-employed in jobs where their skills are not fully used, it may make them dissatisfied and lead them to seek jobs outside the organisation (Mavromaras et al., 2012). This, of course, would lead to a loss of skilled labour which could negatively affect the productivity of the organisation in its overall mandate of improving service delivery.

It is an interesting finding that employees were not worried about over-education. It can be assumed that the employees' perception of this as a non-threat to their career development or future employability depicts that they experience what Feldman & Ng (2007, p. 353) calls "subjective career success". This subjective career success implies that the employees are satisfied with their jobs and become committed to the organisation as they are influenced by benefits such as pensions, medical benefits and job security (Feldman & Ng, 2007). They have not experienced a personal advancement of "objective career success" that entails promotions or internal mobility within the department or organisation (Feldman & Ng, 2007, p. 353). In order for the employees to experience objective career success, there is a need to invest in occupational skills that can be transferable within the department and the

organisation (Feldman & Ng, 2007). It is also important to recognise that transferability should not overlook the need to create horizontal matches and that mentoring is important to enhance productivity and promote organisational commitment (Beduwe & Giret, 2011; Feldman & Ng, 2007).

5.3.2 A culture of life-long learning with no job-mobility

In terms of the career mobility theory, graduates deliberately prefer a low level job so that they can acquire the skills needed to get a matched job (Feldman & Ng, 2007). On the other hand, the job search theory states that over-educated workers will be matched over time through job search activity. Both theories posit that over-skilling and over-education can only be temporary and will fade as people search and find matched jobs or get promoted in the workplace (McGuinness & Wooden, 2009). According to these theories, it should be relatively easy for an over-educated or over-skilled worker eventually to be in a matched job in the future (McGuinness & Wooden, 2009). However, these theories have failed to explain the lack of job-mobility experienced by the COJ employees who have more than eight years of work experience but are stagnant and over-educated. A longitudinal study in Australia also demonstrated that most employees with ten years working experience were still engaged in jobs associated with their first or initial qualifications even though they had other qualifications to change their career-pathways (Fehring & Herring, 2013). The theories do not recognise that career pathways and growth are influenced by many circumstances and broad factors such as job mobility, networks, employability and work-life balance (Fehring & Herring, 2013).

In general, students and workers view additional qualifications as a highly vital commodity for their career development and employability. However, it should be noted that the value of additional qualifications does not necessarily mean that job prospects will be improved in the labour market or within a particular organisation (Tomlinson, 2008). For some COJ employees, the desire to obtain additional qualifications is seen as promoting life-long leaning as an “all purposeful learning activity undertaken on an on-going basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills

and competence" (Nilsson & Rubenson, 2014, p. 305). Life-long learning has always been seen as a key driver of economic growth as it ensures that working-age adults develop necessary skills to meet the changing demands of their labour market (Callender & Little, 2014). Nonetheless, it is important that such skills are adequately matched to employees' current jobs or skills demands of the organisation for them to gain not only a competitive advantage for career growth, but also for the organisation to benefit in terms of work productivity and performance (Livingstone, 2010).

Indeed, life-long learning is part of the educational discourse and emphasises the need for professionals to continually update their skills throughout their working lives (Jamieson, et al., 2009). The strong belief in life-long learning implies that the COJ employees are more "learning-oriented careerists" (learning for personal enrichment with a hope of growing one's career) than "goal-oriented careerists" (learning that is planned with an expected outcome) and demonstrates the department's failure towards achieving internal effectiveness (Ahola & Galli, 2012, p. 537). The COJ's career growth is not only affected by lack of job opportunities but by the inability of employees to be goal-orientated careerists rather than learning-oriented or 'drifter' careerists where career growth is unplanned and occurs by chance (Ahola & Galli, 2012).

With the exception of one employee, who applied internally and got a managerial position, it is clear from the findings that the education gained has not improved the COJ's employees' career growth due to lack of job mobility. In this case, a well-matched, up-to-date education or life-long learning coupled with work experience put the employee in a higher position. This signifies that formal learning and informal learning with job-matches may also influence employee job-mobility (Siivonen, 2016). An organisation such as the COJ can only improve its internal labour market (hiring internal candidates and enhancing job promotion) by developing employee retention strategies aligned with mentoring and succession planning that help employees to effectively plan their career growth. Not only will this improve internal effectiveness of the organisation but it will also ensure that

employees' careers are developed and simultaneously prevent loss of skilled labour (Giancristofaro et al., 2009). .

In terms of career growth, it is important to be conscious of the fact that "career trajectories will not always take a linear approach and are more likely to be undulate and include plateaus and spirals shaped by range of life factors" (Fehring & Herring, 2013, p. 501). If the education that COJ employees have gained has not improved their career growth due to lack of job mobility the organisation needs to create a continuous career development path for their employees. It will require the COJ as an employer to create positive productivity assessements with training plans as well as internal mobility schemes applicable to the organisation (Jeske & Robnagel, 2015).

5.4 Theme 3: Work experience matters

Informal learning or practical learning is more valuable in ensuring better work productivity and performance. The education gained when well-matched with a job has a positive effect in enhancing work productivity and this leads to an increase in human capital gains. The increased value of practical learning for productivity is created when the education achieved by the employees is not applied to current jobs or when there are mismatches.

5.4.1 Value of informal learning

Education and learning are not only an investment but a factor of production, and continuous learning is important in a rapidly changing labour market in which different forms of learning are more significant and at times a necessity (Nilsson & Rubenson, 2014). However, as noted earlier, the competencies and skills gained through continuous learning require constant monitoring. Past studies on productivity have proved that productivity is mostly enhanced through use of education competencies and skills policies in the workplace when they include monitoring and evaluation (Geyde et al., 2004; Giancristofaro et al., 2009; Nordlund et al., 2013; Payne, 2013; Romenti et al., 2012; Stevanovic, 2014). As stated above, the need to

create job-matches by aligning education to the work environment/work positions to enhance productivity is also supported by a longitudinal study in Australia by Teijero et al. (2013) where long-term workers mostly used their skills initially acquired in their first qualifications but then supplemented those skills with informal learning from work to enhance productivity (Fehring & Herring, 2013).

However, Werquin, (2012) has argued that the competencies gained from formal education are simply not sufficient to enhance work productivity due to its all-inclusive nature and that informal learning outcomes should also have credibility for employment similar to formal education. This further accentuates the fact that informal learning cannot be ignored when assessing employability and work productivity as it forms an integral part of skills development. However, there is the danger that while interactive informal learning increases employment opportunities it can be "hindered by restrictive organisational structures such as difficult working conditions", where one cannot fully apply one's competencies or where there is ineffective skills utilisation within the organisation (Nilsson & Rubenson, 2014, p. 307).

The use of education competencies in the Department of Development Planning has not been adequately monitored to ensure consistent improvement in employee productivity or performance because employees' skills have not been used effectively (Payne, 2013). Had this been done it would have dramatically increased productivity and performance. The current study has only shown a few cases where productivity or performance was enhanced. In those few cases, involving three participants, they were able to apply the education instrumental competencies gained to their daily work duties. The increase in work productivity and performance can also be attributed to the fact that the department invested in their employees in both formal and informal learning. Moreover, the employer believes that investment training is more effective with a highly educated group (Nilsson & Rubenson, 2014). So it would seem fair to posit that informal and formal learning produces human capital gains in terms of productivity and economic value (Siivonen, 2016).

With regard to the rest of the seven participants, the skills gained through working experience seemed to influence work productivity and performance largely because employees felt that their first graduate degrees were sufficient to perform their work duties and that working experience and informal learning were needed more than additional degrees. In this current study, the managers interviewed also acknowledged that work productivity is enhanced by informal learning gained through work experience, which would be expected as they depend more on employees having a combination of formal and informal education to enhance productivity (Nilsson & Rubenson, 2014). The findings show that while the managers perceived informal learning as one of the key factors to enhance productivity they also acknowledged the fact that high productivity is achieved with a combination of both formal and informal learning in a well-matched job. It is also interesting to note that the need for further informal and formal learning to enhance productivity is associated with those whose jobs are closely related to their initial education (Nilsson & Rubenson, 2014)

A question that will always arise is whether informal learning that develops out of a job necessity can adequately address the workforce skills development challenges of the organisation (Nilsson & Rubenson, 2014). The answer is that informal learning should be recognised as one of the ways to build relevant competencies suited for the labour market and to increase employability and career development of the workforce (Werquin, 2012). The fact is that COJ employees have relied on their initial educational attainment and work experience to perform their work duties rather than any acquired additional educational credentials or degrees. Furthermore, employees are to adopt a high "work centrality" attitude and behaviour (Sharabi & Harpaz, 2010, p. 389). Work centrality ensures that employees value their jobs in their lives in order to build their careers and enhance work performance (Sharabi & Harpaz, 2010).

Substantial informal learning beyond formal learning seems to suggest that knowledge generated from formal learning is rarely used in the workplace (Livingstone, 2010). Informal learning is on-going and increasing due to easy access

to technology that provides instant information and the fact that most adults spent their time at their working environments where constant learning occurs (Nilsson & Rubenson, 2014). This means that informal learning should be intertwined with formal learning and life-long learning in order to achieve the required outcomes, as skills need to be updated in an ever changing and competitive economic climate. It is apparent that "learning should be perceived as a continuum and not a dichotomy as both formal and informal learning structures" are vital for the productivity of the organisation (Nilsson & Rubenson, 2014, p. 305). It is therefore a matter of effective utilisation of such skills, whether gained informally or formally, that will determine the productivity success of the organisation.

5.4.2 Mismatches and education application

The fact remains that although subsidised educational courses provide extensive knowledge to employees, minimal new competencies are applied to their working environments or professions because of mismatches. As such, this has then a minimal effect on increasing work productivity and performance. However, something which workers from the COJ Department of Development Planning value from their education, and which they gave much emphasis to during their interviews, was the fact that education enhanced their decision making and problem-solving skills. This means there were more identity capital benefits than human capital benefits as work productivity was not enhanced due to mismatches (Jamieson et al., 2009). Past studies conducted in Spain have also demonstrated that graduates from the University of A Coruna (2003-2007) on average had sufficient competencies with a mean score of 4.76 out of 7 for employability (Teijero et al., 2013). In terms of individual competencies, scores for decision making was at a mean score of 5.44 out of 7 (Teijero et al., 2013). Furthermore, according to this study, companies required systemic competencies which are concerned with personal character of a candidate for a job, more than other competencies (Teijero et al., 2013).

In this current study, a director with 25 years of working experience emphasised that the education could only be seen after a long period and not immediately after

completion of worker education. The findings also reveal that the differences in employee performance or productivity were only evident after years of experience and only in cases where there is a horizontal match (Beduwe & Giret, 2011). For others, whose education was not matched, it was evident that the education provided some broad skills which could be used in their current jobs; such as systemic competency and interpersonal competency which relate to communication. These could then be used with personal characteristics such as responsibility, motivation, ethics and the ability to apply knowledge in practical situations (Teijeiro et al., 2013). However, it is only workers whose education was aligned with their current jobs who gained instrumental as well as interpersonal competencies (Teijero et al., 2013). The findings of the current study show that when productivity and performance are a concern, the systemic, instrumental and interpersonal competencies, (with emphasis on instrumental competencies) are vital to ensure that both the organisation and the employees benefit substantially.

Education is an intrinsic process where learning is part of training and development. Training and development participation within the workplace is, in principle, malleable enough to enhance productivity and performance (Jeske & Robnagel, 2015). To enhance work productivity, the performance score cards with ILPs are intended to be used to resolve skills utilisation and minimise mismatches to benefit both employees and the organisation. As an organisation, the COJ can have employees who possess all three competencies (systemic, instrumental and interpersonal) but it is important to remember that the educational competencies that employees have gained, can only be effectively used within a conducive climate that does not restrain application of own strategies and values learning (Teijeiro et al., 2013). The COJ managers and leaders should become aware that they play a critical role in allowing better use of skills and in shaping a positive work and training environment that enhances the employee capabilities to build a productive workforce (Jeske & Robnagel, 2015). The application of learning to an organisation's climate with leadership support is vital for productivity and provides for effective learning within the working environment.

5.4.3 Over-education and lack of job-mobility

Work productivity can also be affected by job dissatisfaction. The literature points out that over-education can reduce job satisfaction and adversely affect productivity, profits and service delivery (Belfield, 2010). The current study's results reaffirm past research in that fewer public sector employees report being over-educated than in the private sector (Belfield, 2010). Mavromaras et al. (2012) explains that this occurs due to the job security offered by large corporations such as the public sector in terms of permanent employment and other benefits. In a British self-reported credential survey in 2006, it was found that about 40% of the labour force was actually over-educated when they obtained their first jobs and this percentage continued to increase when skills were not effectively and appropriately used (Livingstone, 2010). Livingstone (2010) also argues that the notion of over-education should be nullified in the discourse as it is misconceived by the human capital theorists, although it should not be completely disregarded when it has an effect on work productivity and career growth.

In general, therefore, it can be said that mismatches do influence job satisfaction negatively; however, over-education can have positive effects on the organisation's productivity and labour market provided that education is monitored and channelled to bring investment returns to the workplace environment (Mavromaras et al., 2012). In this knowledge-based economy, an increasing number of jobs require post-school qualifications and additional degrees. With the growing tendency of educational qualifications exceeding job entry requirements in the labour market, there is high competition when applying for jobs (Livingstone, 2010). Not only does this mean an increase in the over-educated labour force, it also leads to job mismatches. Therefore, unless skills utilisation is at the forefront of skills development policies which are effectively implemented, over-education and job-mismatches are likely to continue to increase (Livingstone, 2010).

Over-education has been known to negatively affect employees' job satisfaction because it tends to increase their self-worth. This study's results showed that most employees believed they were capable of so much more in the workplace but they

did not experience job mobility. Those employees who were well-matched reported that their job satisfaction was affected by the lack of job opportunities to apply their extensive knowledge or demonstrate their self-worth within the organisation. Other employees, who were apparently mismatched, over-qualified and over-educated, were actually satisfied with their jobs (Mavromaras et al., 2012).

The permeability of the COJ internal labour market also seems to be a challenge for employees as it hinders opportunities to develop their careers (Feldman & Ng, 2007). Job mobility is important for employee career development and for work productivity, as it has also been known in certain cases to increase work centrality of employees (Sharabi & Harpaz, 2010). The issues of job mobility and career development within the organisation are complex but are not insurmountable with the support of good leadership and effective workforce development policies (Feldman & Ng, 2007). Career development gives employees meaning and value. This meaning increases their work centrality and maintaining "high work centrality" would have positive effects on departmental and organisational productivity and performance (Sharabi & Harpaz, 2010, p. 389) .

Interestingly, although most of the COJ employees were mismatched, they hardly reported that they had less knowledge or competencies to perform their jobs; therefore, informal leaning in terms of work experience appears to be sufficient for work productivity as Livingstone, (2010) suggests. However, while their career growth is not enhanced by informal or formal learning it is only adversely affected on account of lack of job mobility within the organisation (Feldman & Ng, 2007). When the COJ does not use the skills of the over-educated or the beneficiaries of the COJ subsidy education scheme, a depreciation of human capital will occur and affect work productivity (Rubb, 2006). It is possible that over-education may affect the future employability of employees or productivity due to lack of job experience in a specific work field and because employees feel demotivated (Livingstone, 2010; Rubb, 2006). For instance, one of the COJ employees has a Para-legal qualification but works in an administration office not related to law, subsequently the lack of job experience in the law field reduces the chances of employability in the organisation

and this may result in job stagnation. The COJ should favourably view using the skills of the over-educated for gaining highly prospective skilled employees to increase productivity (instead of spending time and cost on job-reforms) for it will be easier for such employees to adapt to rapidly changing jobs (Livingstone, 2010). Workforce development requires that skills utilisation (effective application of skills in a person's job or workplace to increase performance) is measured (Payne, 2013). The current study's findings have demonstrated that the COJ has not adequately measured their workers' skills utilisation. Within the discourse of education and employment, "underemployment or over-education is perceived as likely to become a societal problem" (Livingstone, 2010, p. 225). This problem can be averted by ensuring that significant changes are implemented by organisations in such a way that employees or workers' abilities are effectively used in their prospective jobs.

5.5 Theme 4: Job-mobility and succession planning

1.1 Sub-research question (c): What relation does education have with an individual's current job and future employability status within the organisation?

5.5.1 Education competencies not exploited

The employees from the Department of Development Planning in the COJ were inclined to further their education for their self-enrichment and career growth, rather than focus on being productive in their jobs (Friedman & Phillips, 2004). This contradicts the COJ Subsidy Education Scheme objectives to enhance public value through skills development of its employees. The COJ should also realise that the use of the subsidy education scheme actually reveals the ambitions of its workforce that it should be used for their advantage to enhance their employability and productivity (Gerards, De Grip, & Witlox, 2014). However, if the employees' educational competencies are utilised in line with adequate internal work practical learning and with a focus on job-matches, skills gaps can be filled within the department or organisation.

For the COJ, it was not the lack of higher education institutions' ability to provide the necessary competencies needed by the organisation but it was the organisation's inability to use those competencies effectively (Kelly et al., 2010; Teijero et al., 2013). The competencies that influence work productivity are only visible when the employees choose the study field related to their job requirements (Beduwe & Giret, 2011). Otherwise, it does not benefit the workers when there are no further job opportunities for promotion. Again it must be reiterated that skills gap programmes should be monitored in order to limit depreciation of human capital emanating from the non-usage of skills (Rubb, 2006).

While it has been assumed that employers are mostly inclined to support continued professional development through education competencies to benefit the organisation, this study shows that this has not been the case in the COJ. Consequently, this has led to the employees to perceive the subsidy education scheme as a passageway for personal development rather than professional development to improve the COJ's productivity (Friedman & Phillips, 2004). In addition, the employees' focus on personal development has unavoidably raised the issue of over-education (Giancristofaro et al., 2009). The results and analysis show increasing evidence of job-mismatches such as the two administrators, both in the Registration Town Planning section, with eight years of working experience, and one with para-legal studies and the other with human resources. This evidence is consistent with past studies on over-education. In addition, the COJ does not assess the competencies gained from the scheme and does not view it as an indication of the career ambitions of their workforce in order to channel skills to the appropriate jobs – all of which leads to negative effects on returns (Gerards et al., 2014). It is not enough for employees to gain a variety of competencies or skills and not effectively utilise the skills appropriately to enhance employability and productivity.

The existing mismatches in the COJ also suggest that the employers, in this case direct managers, are either relatively unaware of the undertakings of the professional development of their staff or are not concerned about their staff's professional development (Friedman & Phillips, 2004). These issues further emphasise the need

to effectively implement mentoring and succession planning as it is now far more significant than ever to build good public servants, and improve work productivity and service delivery (Reeves, 2010). With the understanding that "succession planning is more than just filling seats", it would be a timeous on-going process as it has great influence on work productivity (Fredericksen, 2010, p. 50)

The issue of job mobility within the department and organisation should not be neglected. The employees and their managers emphasised the fact that there are no internal job opportunities in the organisation, which means over-education will continue to increase if internal hiring is not improved (Groeneveld & Hartog, 2004). Over-education was not necessarily a hindrance to career development but employees raised two issues in this regard: (a) budgetary constraints of the organisation in creating job opportunities, and (b) the employment equity targets, which in certain instances may favour a certain group of people for a position, for example, females over males (due to past imbalances). The issue of budgetary constraints have led most local government bodies to view mentoring and succession planning as a lower priority (Reeves, 2010). Yet, if the aim is to develop reflexive work abilities of the employees and improve work centrality for enhanced productivity and performance, it requires constant monitoring of employees who have acquired a wealth of knowledge, skills and abilities (Reeves, 2010). Skills gained need to be exploited by the organisation as matching the skills supply to the demand to enhance work productivity (Callender & Little, 2014).

5.5.2 Future employability

The results and analysis of responses from employees of the COJ's Department of Development Planning distinctly reinforces previous findings on employability within the internal labour market. Similarly, studies in UK found that a field of study had a significant effect on employability within the internal labour market but only when there were job opportunities (Groeneveld & Hartog, 2004). This study's analysis is consistent with Giancristofaro et al.'s (2009) study, which indicated that there is little confidence in the probabilities of employees finding employment,

especially if the internal labour market or promotion of internal staff is not implemented effectively. It is also a concern that over-education and mismatches occur in the first eight years of employment in the COJ, in contrast to previous UK studies, where 19% of long-term employees who stay in a company for 13-16 years became over-educated and mismatched (Groeneveld & Hartog, 2004).

The COJ workers' employability was found not to be dependent on the demand for certain skills in the external labour market but on the availability of job opportunities within the organisation (Anyanwu, 2000; Maharasoa et al., 2001). The Department of Development Planning's employees who had stayed in the same job position had little to show by way of returns to education when observed from the human economic capital perspective (Callender & Little, 2014). Instead, the employees seemed to experience job and "departmental embeddedness" which keeps them in their current situation when it comes to their careers, as "inter-job mobility" is not experienced even within the department (Feldman & Ng, 2007, p. 352)

The issue of future employability or promotion for the COJ employees may also be affected by the lack of high "work centrality" which can only be enhanced through mentoring, "work autonomy and interest" (Sharabi & Harpaz, 2010, p. 388). Employees with high work centrality are often known to have a high work performance and their "future employability seems promising" (Sharabi & Harpaz, 2010, p. 390). In addition, employability is known to be an individual responsibility and employees who are goal-oriented careerists and have a "more internal locus of control" are mostly likely to use government schemes or the COJ subsidy education scheme effectively with a futuristic view of their career growth and employability in mind (Gerards et al., 2014, p. 954). The COJ's employees are more learning-oriented careerists and do not set goals pertaining to their career growth due to lack of awareness of their own employability within the department and organisation. What would improve career growth and help productivity would be employees who set career goals to combat their weaknesses in their professional careers (Gerards et al., 2014). It is unfortunate that career goal setting has not been a priority for COJ

employees as they continue adding more qualifications not necessarily required by the department.

It is also a concern when there are genuine mismatches within COJ (when an employee is has more qualifications than what is required in a job and is dissatisfied) (Brynin & Longhi., 2009; Mavromaras et al., 2012). Again, the example found of one of the City of Johannesburg's employees with a subsidised para-legal qualification whose new skills are not required within the Registration section of the department means certain job stagnation for that person until a job opportunity is created within the Legal Administration section. Without mentoring and succession planning, the issue of lack of experience in such a field may also be a hindrance to future employability for the candidate even if the opportunity became available. Succession planning not only ensures that talent is retained but effectively uses existing skills when linked with individual learning plans of employees, "gap analysis, aspiration mapping" and internal labour forecasting (Pandey & Sharma, 2014, p. 158).

The ineffective arrangement of the internal labour market in the organisation and implementation of skills policies can have an adverse impact on the employees in enhancing their employability and careers (Morrison, 2014; Jackson, 2014). Managers in the COJ reported that the department experienced a loss of highly qualified and skilled employees; however, this study found that the incidence of over-education is lower amongst employees that have resigned than amongst the employees who stayed in the organisation without job mobility. According to Saharabi and Harpaz (2010), progression in the workplace allows employees to have a deep understanding of their work, gives employees confidence and satisfaction which, in turn, enhances work centrality (Sharabi & Harpaz, 2010). The employees who have not experienced any promotion are less likely to report such positive changes and this reinforces the need to address job mobility and enhance future employability (Callender & Little, 2014). One would hope that eventually the increase of internal job-mobility prospects would reduce the incidence of over-education and mismatches in the COJ.

The findings therefore show that there are more mismatches than horizontal matches within the COJ and, furthermore, the competencies gained are not exploited to bring in returns to education. The mismatches indicate that there is no beneficial relationship between the education and current jobs to ensure workplace integration; instead, mass professionalism is created (Baker, 2009). All this reinforces the importance of monitoring of skills to create a better workforce, internal effectiveness and avoid a sense of depersonalisation within the organisation (Knani, 2013).

5.6 Theme 5: Work environment

Sub-research question (d): Are the choices of education choices aligned with the departmental skills needs?

In contrast to Giancristofaro et al.'s (2009) studies in Italy, the COJ findings demonstrate that not everything depends on the labour market and content of educational programmes but on the use of education within the working environment. Based on the literature, the importance of education in the workplace is dependent on the notion that productivity is influenced by education and the way changes occur at work (Baker, 2009).

Baker (2009) has also pointed to the fact that education not only changes productivity in workplaces but increases in the number of educated people to change the nature of the working environment. The Department of Development Planning in the COJ comprises eight sections. The results showed that there were few employees who used the scheme to gain skills for their current jobs or to improve their performance. Furthermore, there were less positive perceptions for the use of acquired broad skills in employment and the adequacy of education in relation to employment (Giancristofaro et al., 2009) as most of the employees interviewed gained the education that could only be applied in jobs located in other sections and not in their current jobs. Employees were also frustrated by the fact that they are not able to use the knowledge from their degrees in the workplace more directly, and mismatches and lack of employment opportunities also created frustration (Bennion, et al., 2011). On the other hand, they were pleased with the fact that the knowledge

from their degrees is broad and has increased other "intangible assets such as self-efficacy and self-esteem, leading to identity capital gains" which improve their work practices (Jamieson et al., 2009, p. 247). Although managers reported that internal effectiveness is only visible over a long-term period and only provided that the education is matched with the employees' current jobs, nonetheless, identity capital gains have been known to increase work autonomy which, in turn, enhances work productivity within the organisation and therefore should not be neglected, even in cases where the employee's education is not related to the current job (Callender & Little, 2014). It is also important for the department and the organisation to recognise that the work environment, or the context in which workplace learning is acquired, should not restrain workers from using their own strategies to perform their duties as this improves performance and productivity. The organisation's learning climate and workers' identity gains, if well managed and effectively utilised, are both job and personal resources that contribute positively to productivity (Jeske & Robnagel, 2015).

If education is to remain valuable for the department or organisation in terms of the skills alignment needed to not only enhance performance but retain employees it is vital that education is aligned with the current specialised jobs and that succession planning is applied. Ensuring constant education or skills alignment is challenging because the education and employment relationship should always require re-evaluation and monitoring (Morrison, 2014). It is not a one-time exercise, as it is not only important to determine the study programmes needed within the department, but how work characteristics influence job specialisation and how study programmes become useful for one's job (Storen & Aamodt, 2010). This would help understand work-related learning in the COJ and minimise over-education in future to ensure that education remains valuable within the department and the organisation.

5.7 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was primarily to discuss the analysis of the research findings in relation to the current literature. This chapter sought to better understand

the relationship between education and employment within the working environment of a public sector organisation. The most important findings which emerged from this study were discussed: namely:

(a) employees perceived the significance of their education to be for career development and self-enrichment;
(b) the education provided them with an opportunity to gain a competitive advantage in job search in the external labour market and gained them some identity and social capital benefits;
(c) the education did not have an effect on their future employability within the internal labour market due to lack of job mobility;
(d) the education enhanced their work productivity and performance only when it was horizontally matched with their jobs but most of the employees were mismatched and only informal learning through work experience influenced work productivity and performance; and furthermore
(e) a culture of life-long learning created state dependence because mentoring and succession planning were not implemented, subsequently leading to an increase in mismatches and feelings of depersonalisation.

The COJ employees from the Department of Development Planning perceived the value of qualifications received through the subsidised education scheme to be more self-beneficial to gain competitive advantage in the external labour market. It also provided confidence and opportunity for career advancement particularly outside the organisation. The findings suggest that education should not just be seen as a key element of human capital but as an investment in personal growth or gains which may lead to social growth and have a positive influence in society (Loxley et al., 2014).

It is also important to recognise that irrespective of whether the COJ's Department of Development Planning employees have experienced career advancement or not, they have reported identity capital (personal development or growth) and social capital benefits (networks, community and work relationships) of the subsidised education

scheme which affects work productivity. This implies that such benefits or gains are as significant as human (economic) capital gains (Callender & Little, 2014).

The findings of this study also indicated the fact that the education provides external credibility to employee knowledge and less tangible and non-financial benefits should not be over-looked completely nor under-estimated as such benefits can be used to benefit the organisation and enhance opportunities of employability (Callender & Little, 2014).

With regard to employability, the literature suggests that human capital theory challenges employability because of the changing labour market and the economy (Giancristofaro, et al., 2009). It is true that employability is dependent on the labour market but in order to ensure the consistency of employability, the internal effectiveness, horizontal and vertical matches are mandatory (Giancristofaro et al., 2009). The findings reveal that the value of education within the organisation depends on whether it can be integrated (matched) for future internal employability. The prospects for advancement within the organisation are bleak due to a lack of succession planning and job mobility, although there may be identity and social capital gains such as professional confidence, the organisation has forsaken, or rather neglected, a vital decision to provide opportunities of advancement, to retain skills and promote internal effectiveness within the organisation to avert loss of highly skilled labour (Giancristofaro et al., 2009).

The literature provided statistical evidence that job and education mismatches increase from over-education which leads to state dependence; however, this can be reduced by internal hiring (Mavromaras et al., 2012). The evidence from this current study supports this view, as most of the participants were mismatched and there was no evidence of career advancement within the organisation. A culture of life-long learning was created without addressing skills gaps which made the employees learning-oriented careerists rather than goal-oriented careerists (Ahola & Galli, 2012). Undoubtedly, employee career development will continue to be dampened when employees continue to acquire additional qualifications not matched with their current jobs, especially since there are no created or planned opportunities for

advancement within the department and organisation. As a result, their career development can only be found outside the organisation. In order for the employees to experience career development within the internal labour market, it is clear that succession planning needs to be implemented by the organisation. This is vital for the organisation's success but requires a proactive systematic approach and constant monitoring (Pandey & Sharma, 2014). Succession planning is a component of strategic workforce planning and an on-going process involving assessment and development of employees at all levels to enhance work productivity or performance (Fredericksen, 2010).

Finally, in terms of the value of education in relation to work productivity, the literature elucidates that due to its all-inclusive nature the competencies gained from formal education are simply not sufficient to enhance work productivity (Werquin, 2012). The findings are consistent with this viewpoint. The analysis indicates that the education the employees gained has enhanced work productivity when horizontal match is experienced but work productivity requires enhancement by informal learning through work experience. Furthermore, the employees did not concern themselves with using the subsidised education to improve their work productivity but rather their wider work prospects, and practical learning/informal learning was sufficient for them to perform their work duties and be productive (Nilsson & Rubenson, 2014). In fact, there were few employees who used the subsidy scheme to gain education skills for their current jobs or to improve their performance. Most of the workers gained the education that could only be applied in jobs located at other sections and not their current jobs. This indicates that internal effectiveness is vital although it is only visible over a long term period provided that the education is matched with the employees' current jobs (Giancristofaro et al., 2009). Enhancing work productivity requires a complementary relationship between formal and informal education with horizontal matches, and unfortunately this relationship was not experienced within the department. The fact is that work experience matters in improving work productivity and it is the work situation that should determine the use of education (Nilsson & Rubenson, 2014).

With a recognition that returns to education are evident over a period of time, the organisation's learning climate also needs to allow for a dynamic workplace relationship that does not restrain employees from applying their own strategies in performing their duties (self-selected and paced learning) to increase productivity and performance (Jeske & Robnagel, 2015). An organisation may have a positive learning and training climate and be empowered in both formal and informal learning, but great returns will be visible only when there is sufficient support and motivation for learning from management (Jeske & Robnagel, 2015). The employer also needs to embrace informal learning, training and development activities as continued professional development is important to enhance productivity and it is a state of transition (Friedman & Phillips, 2004). This means the policies and programmes needed to support skills development or continued professional development will always differ due to contextual changes in the workplace (Friedman & Phillips, 2004). In a knowledge-based economy, an increasing number of jobs require tertiary qualifications and additional degrees, leading to a rise in an over-educated labour force. Unless skills development policies are at the forefront and effectively implemented, such over-education will continue to increase in the workplace (Livingstone, 2010). Therefore, skills utilisation and workforce development will always need monitoring and if it is effectively done, human, identity and social capital gains can be achieved (Hordern, 2014). However, it may be that "debates on skills supply and demand need to move from questions of nature, quantity and quality of educational skills to effective skills utilisation within the workplace" (Callender & Little, 2014, p. 21). With a focus on a new envisaged relationship of human, identity and social capital, one is more likely to see what education can do beyond the demands of the labour market (Loxley et al., 2014).

The relationship between education and employment should not be "static but rather dynamic and inclusive" with an understanding that employees will always learn on and off jobs and their learning also influences the paradigm of workplace productivity, professional development and the society as a whole (Livingstone, 2010, p. 224). With this in mind, it is vital to remember that "a profession and education has a service, rather than a profit" (Friedman & Phillips, 2004, p. 372).

This chapter discussed and provide perspectives on the findings (perceptions of employees) in this study and introduced opportunities for future research, which are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will provide an overview of the key findings of this study in relation to the main research question. The findings of the study reveal a need to seek solutions, and recommendations are made with suggestions for further research.

6.2 Conclusions of the study

The study's conclusions centre on the purpose of the research. In the quest to explore the relationship between education and employment for the COJ the perceptions of a sample of beneficiaries of the subsidised education scheme were studied. Their perceptions were analysed to respond to the main research question: namely, whether the COJ employees perceive the qualifications received through subsidised education scheme to be of value to them and the organisation in relation to their current jobs, future employability, career development, and work productivity. The key finding which emerged was that the education had more value to the employees for self-enrichment than to the organisation. Through comparing the analysed findings of the relationship between education and employment to that of previous studies, a number of conclusions were drawn.

Firstly, the COJ employees' only perceived the significance of their education in relation to career development and self-enrichment. Furthermore, a sense of financial security was provided by the organisation and also the fear of job stagnation prompted employees to further their studies for professional and personal growth. Individuals decided to take responsibility for their own employability through additional degrees in order to be competitive in the labour market. This provided them with an opportunity to gain a competitive advantage in job searches in the external but not in the internal labour market.

Secondly, the study also shows that gaining competitive advantage also requires career planning but employees are more learning-oriented rather than goal-oriented careerists as they sought career development with no clear objective plan to enhance their own employability. As a result, their career development can only be found in the external labour market, which results in a loss of skilled labour for the organisation. Job mobility is also vital for career development and can only occur if employer support is an integral part of employees' success by the creation of employment opportunities within the organisation. Therefore, support of the employer in a form of mentoring and succession planning will also improve employability and encourage organisational commitment.

Thirdly, the lack of job mobility in COJ hinders future employability and career development and has also been influenced by horizontal mismatches and over-skilling within the organisation. The findings show that educational job mismatches do not dissolve overtime and that mismatches do not occur early in the employment process but later in workers' careers. This can be resolved by enhancing employability and closely analysing not only identity capital but both social and human capital to add value to the employees' career development as well as increase productivity of the organisation. Moreover, without skills analysis within the organisation it cannot be determined where opportunities need to be created to minimise both over-skilling and over-education. The employer should fully recognise the benefits of education for it has always been celebrated as a solution to non-productivity and many societal problems.

Fourthly, the study demonstrated that the workers' education is broad and not designed for specific jobs. It provides all-encompassing competencies which could be used to attain a job in other sections or departments of the organisation, but the lack of hands-on experience in that field can also become a hindrance for the workers future employability. The organisation should recognise the importance of (a) using education competencies gained by its employees on the job; (b) understand that changes of labour markets have an effect on employability; and (c) that it is possible for workers to get matched jobs depending on the demand of skills within the

internal labour market but it seems that COJ employees will most likely exit the internal labour market leading to a loss of skilled labour for the organisation. The permeability of the COJ internal labour market seems to be a challenge for the employees. They have gained new skills through continued higher education but it has not been easy for them to experience promotion or find alternative jobs within the department or organisation.

A fifth concern is that the skills gained from the employee's education are not fully utilised by the organisation thus bringing little back by way of returns. Under-utilisation of skills produces a culture of long-life learning that only benefits the employees by enhancing their personal growth instead of enhancing work productivity. The employees desire an organisational climate that effectively uses the application of individuals' own strategies and competencies for their work duties to improve the organisation. Although the COJ employees are not concerned about over-education, the mismatches experienced within the department may lead to state dependence (continuation of the presence of over-education) as employees continue to add qualifications not necessarily required by the employer.

Lastly, work productivity and performance in the department was largely influenced by work experience. The managers and workers reiterated the fact that productivity and performance improved significantly based on practical experience or informal learning and that the transfer of skills from the older generation to younger generation was vital for productivity. The study also revealed that the undergraduate education or first degree as opposed to postgraduate education was sufficient to enhance productivity provided informal learning is an integral part of the productivity process. Productivity was further enhanced in a situation where postgraduate education matches the job but this could only be seen after a period of time. It seems that an additional qualification if not well-matched with job requirements, is not an investment for career development, job mobility or productivity but leads to an increase in over-education. The use of the education is dependent on the work space or work environment that promotes a complementary relationship between formal and informal education with horizontal matches.

The above findings of this study emphasise the importance of using peoples' skills effectively to increase productivity and to assist in enhancing the positive relationship between education and employment in the future. The COJ workers believe that identity and social capital gains are as important as human capital gains considering that education has a positive personal, organisational and societal impact beyond the labour market. Furthermore, a broader and better understanding of the benefits of formal and informal learning in COJ in relation to human, identity and social capital gains is required for workforce development policy makers in an often precarious workplace.

6.3 Recommendations

The relationship between education and employment in the COJ needs to be enhanced by evaluating education and its impact on professional development. This requires they consider the benefits of succession planning. The organisation should implement a skills audit and transform the way work is organised to enhance productivity.

They then need to analyse the utilisation of skills in the workplace through a culture of cooperation with higher education institutions and employees. The educational programmes that are chosen should translate to the skills needs of the organisation. And therefore cooperation between higher education institutions and the employer is important to improve the value of education at work. Although higher education institutions cannot always meet employer expectations in terms of required skills, employers should ensure that there is a platform for education-job application and skills transfer in the workplace. This can be done as follows:

- The implementation of skills development polices to enhance productivity and performance should be monitored and evaluated against COJ skills needs and objectives.
- Continued professional development through education should be measured by inputs designed to update technical, instrumental and systemic skills and

ensure that there is compliance with the objectives of skills development policies of the organisation.

- Developing measures to assess the non-financial returns of skills acquisition and utilisation and its impact in the organisation is vital as the work-environment, knowledge and skills gained affect how employees go about their daily work practices.
- Using the actual skills gained and the potential abilities of the COJ employees who benefited from the subsidy education scheme of the organisation and the rest of the COJ workforce by recognising the following:
    - Human thoughts and efforts are essential resources that influence levels of productivity in the workplace.
    - Job mobility, formal and informal learning have a role in building employees' work centrality which involves valuing their work.
    - Creation of job-matches is important for productivity and informal learning in a form of work experience is to be valued.
    - Work experience opportunities should be given to employees if new educational skills have been gained, by collaborating with other departments and filling gaps in cases of shortage of skills.
    - Design of jobs should at least allow workers to apply or exercise their own judgement to develop management and leadership skills.
    - Mentoring and succession planning should be implemented to address loss of skilled workforce, enhance productivity and employability and should involve a continuous process of learning and reflecting on progress made.
- The practice of monitoring professional development and skills utilisation should involve ensuring that the workers' competences can be linked to the performance of their professions or skill demands of COJ.

- Employees should become goal-oriented careerists by planning their career paths with expected outcomes and clear objectives that can be measured in order to experience career development within the internal labour market.

6.4 Suggestions for further research

This study has provided interesting insights on the relationship between education and employment but there is still more to learn particularly within the local public government workplaces in South Africa.

While the relationship between education and employment is important in any sphere of government it requires monitoring. The returns to education in terms of improvement in workers' productivity, performance and career growth in the City of Johannesburg have been challenged by under-utilisation of skills, lack of job mobility and lack of adequate monitoring. Therefore, the effectiveness of the tools that are currently being used to measure skills utilisation in the municipality also need to be researched, precisely to better understand the issue of under-utilisation.

This study has also shown that productivity is mostly enhanced by a match of education competencies with jobs in the workplace. Since most workers were mismatched, it is important in future to find out the extent to which the knowledge application of the formal education in comparison to informal learning has influenced productivity and performance. This should be done amongst horizontally matched and mismatched employees not utilising the City of Johannesburg's subsidy education scheme. This will help better understand the gaps that exist between education and employment.

Furthermore, the effects of life-long learning and skills utilisation in the workplace on the specific context of a working environment need more in-depth research. The assumption that more training, skills and qualifications leads to high productivity or performance is not always true. There is a need to research on the interrelation of human, social and identity capital benefits. The reasoning behind continued higher

education such as for enjoyment as opposed to job progression may also significantly improve work productivity.

Another area of research is that of factors prohibiting job mobility within the organisation. This needs to be further investigated in relation to mentoring and succession planning and the existing social dynamics of skills utilisation in the workplace. The research may help to formulate policies to improve internal effectiveness within the organisation. The question is how important is succession planning for the education and employment debate. The succession plans of the City of Johannesburg are to be developed and analysed to better understand whether the gap between education and employment should be filled by succession planning or not.

REFERENCES

Ahola, S., & Galli, L. (2012). New degree for new career? Career development of Finnish polytechnic master's degree graduates. *Journal of Education and Work, 25*(5), 537-553.

Al-Samarrai, S., & Bennell, P. (2007). Where has all the education gone in sub-Saharan Africa? *The Journal of Development Studies, 43*(7), 1270-1300.

Anyanwu, G. (2000). *Graduates' Transition From Study to Employment: A Study of the Arts and Agriculture Gradautes of University of Nigeria in the World of Work.* Department of Home Science and Nutrition. Nigeria, Nsukka: Association of African Universities.

Baker, D. P. (2009). The educational transformation of work: towards a new synthesis. *Journal of Education and Work, 22*(3), 163-191.

Beduwe, C., & Giret, J.-F. (2011). Mismatch of vocational graduates: What penalty on French labour market? *Jounal of Vocational Behaviour, 78*, 68-79.

Belfield, C. (2010). Over-education: What influence does the workplace have? *Economics of Education Review, 29*, 236-245.

Bennion, A., Scesa, A., & Williams, R. (2011). The Benefits of Part-Time Undergraduate Study and UK Higher Education Policy: a Literature Review. *Higher Education Quartely, 65*(3), 145-163.

Bryman, A. (2012). *social research methods* (4th ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

Brynin, M., & Longhi, S. (2009). Overqualification: Major or minor mismatch? *Economics of Education Review, 28*, 114-121.

Callender, C., & Little, B. (2014). The hidden benefits of part-time higher education study to working practices: is there a case for making them more visible? *Journal of Education and Work*, 1-23.

Chinwuba, N. N. (2013). Education as a Strategy for Renegotiating the Nigerian Dream. *Development*, *56*(2), 190-201.

City of Johannesburg. (2008, December 12). Training and Development Policy. Johannesburg, South Africa.

Coates, H., & Edwards, D. (2011). The Graduate Pathways Survey: New Insights on Education and Employment Outcomes Five Years after Bachelor Degree Completion. *Higher Education Quartely*, *65*(1), 74-93.

De Graaf, W., & Van Zenderen, K. (2013). School-work transition: the interplay between institutional and individual processes. *Journal of Education and Work, 26*(2), 121-142.

Fehring, H., & Herring, K. (2013). The Working Lives project: a window into Australian education and workforce participation. *Journal of Education and Work, 26*(5), 494-513.

Feldman, D. C., & Ng, T. W. (2007). Careers: Mobility, Embeddedness, and Success. *Journal of Management, 33*(3), 350-377.

Fredericksen, E. (2010). When the Music Stops: Succession Is More Than Filling Seats. *State and Local Government Review*, *42*(1), 50-60.

Friedman, A., & Phillips, M. (2004). Continuing professional development: Developing a vision. *Journal of Education and Work, 17*(3), 361-376.

Gerards, R., De Grip, A., & Witlox, M. (2014). 'Employability-miles' and worker employability awareness. *Applied Economics, 46*(9), 952-965.

Geyde, S., Fender, E., & Chalkley, B. (2004). Students' Undergraduate Expectations and Post-graduation Experiencces of the Value of a Degree. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education, 28*(3), 381-396.

Giancristofaro, R. A., Bonnini, S., & Salmaso, L. (2009). Employment status and education/employment relationship of PhD graduates from the University of Ferrara. *Journal of Applied Statistics, 36*(12), 1329-1344.

Gracia, L. (2009). Employability and higher education: contextualising female students' workplace experiences to enhance understanding of employability development. *Journal of Education and Work, 22*(4), 301-318.

Groeneveld, S., & Hartog, J. (2004). Overeducation, wages and promotions within the firm. *Labour Economics, 11*, 701-714.

Hordern, J. (2014). Workforce development, higher education and productive systems. *Journal of Education and Work, 27*(4), 409-431.

Jackson, D. (2014). Testing a model of undergraduate competence in employability skills and its implications for stakeholders. *Journal of Education and Work, 27*(2), 220-242.

Jamieson, A., Sabates, R., Woodley, A., & Feinstein, L. (2009). The benefits of higher education study for part-time students. *Studies in Higher Education, 34*(3), 245-262.

Jeske, D., & Robnagel, C. S. (2015). Learning capability and performance in later working life: towards a contextual view. *Education and Training, 57*(4), 378-391.

Kelly, E., O'Connell, P. J., & Smyth, E. (2010). The economic returns to field of study and competencies among higher education graduates in Ireland. *Economics of Education, 29*, 650-657.

Knani, M. (2013). Burnout, Job Characteristics, and Intent to Leave: Does work Experience Have Any Effect. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Economics and Management Sciences, 4*(4), 403-408.

Korpi, T., & Tahlin, M. (2009). Educational mismatch, wages and wage growth: Overeducation in Sweden, 1974-2000. *Labour Economics, 16*, 183-193.

Kruss, G. (2004). Employment and employability: expectations of higher education responsiveness in South Africa. *Journal of Education Policy, 9*(6), 673-689.

Livingstone, D. W. (2010). Job requirements and worker' learning: formal gaps, informal closure, systemic limits. *Journal of Education and Work, 23*(3), 207-231.

Long, M. C. (2010). Changes in the returns to education and college quality. *Economics of Education Review, 29*, 338-347.

Loxley, A., Seery, A., & Walsh, J. (2014). Investment in Education and the tests of time. *Irish Educational Studies, 33*(2), 173-191.

Maharasoa, M., & Hay, D. (2001). Higher Education and Graduate Employment in South Africa. *Quality in Higher Education, 7*(2), 139-147.

Mavromaras, K., & McGuinness, S. (2012). Overskilling dynamics and education pathway. *Economics of Education Review, 31*, 619-628.

Mavromaras, K., Sloane, P., & Wei, Z. (2012). The role of education pathways in the relationship between job mismatch, wages and job satisfaction: a panel estimation approach. *Education Economics, 20*(3), 303-321.

McGuinness, S., & Sloane, P. J. (2011). Labour market mismatch among UK graduates: An analysis using REFLEX data. *Economics of Education Review, 30*, 130-145.

McGuinness, S., & Wooden, M. (2009). Overskilling, Job Security and Career Mobility. *Industrial Relations, 48*(2), 265-286.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education.* San Francisco, United States of America: Jossey-Bass A Wiley Imprint.

Mora, J.-G., Vila, L. E., & Garcia-Aracil, A. (2005). European Higher Education Graduates and Job Satisfaction. *European Journal of Education, 40*(1), 35-44.

Morrison, A. R. (2014). 'You have to be well-spoken': Student's views on employability within the graduate labour market. *Journal of Education and Work, 27*(2), 179-198.

Neuman, W. L. (2011). *Social Research Methods.* Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.

Nilsson, S., & Rubenson, K. (2014). On the determinants of employment-related organised education and informal learning. *Studies in Continuing Education, 36*(3), 304-321.

Nordlund, M., Stehlik, T., & Strandh, M. (2013). Investment in Second-Chance Education for adults and income development in Sweden. *Journal of Education and Work, 26*(5), 514-538.

Pandey, S., & Sharma, D. (2014). Succession Planning Practices and Challenges: Study of Indian Organisations. *Procedia Economics and Finance, 11*, 152-165.

Payne, J. (2013). Measure for measure: towards a measurement and evaluation framework for skills utilisation policy in the UK. *Journal of Education and Work, 26*(2), 143-161.

Reeves, Z. (2010). Mentoring Programs in Succession Planning. *State and Local Government Review, 42*(1), 61-66.

Romenti, S., Invernizzi, E., & Biraghi, S. (2012). Engaging employers to develop quality in higher education: the case of communication studies in Italy. *Quality in Higher Education, 18*(2), 205-220.

Rubb, S. (2006). Educational Mismatches and Earnings: Extensions of Occupational Mobility Theory and Evidence of Human Capital Depreciation. *Education Economics, 14*(2), 135-154.

Schomburg, H. (2007). The Professional Success of Higher Education Graduates. *European Journal of Education, 42*(1), 35-57.

Serban, A. (2013). The Employability of Young Higher Education Graduates: Social Problem Quality Assessment Criterion. *Revista de Asistenja Sociala, 1*, 95-101.

Sharabi, M., & Harpaz, I. (2010). Improving employees' work centrality improves organizational performance: work events and work centrality relationship. *Human Resource Development International, 13*(4), 379-392.

Siivonen, P. (2016). Becoming an educable lifelong learning subject: adult graduates' transitions in education and working life. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 1-15.

Statistics, S. A. (2008). *Quarterly Labour Force Survey.* Pretoria: Statistics South Africa.

Statistics, S. A. (2014). *Youth employment, unemployment, skills and economic growth, 1994–2014* . Pretoria: Statistics South Africa.

Stevanovic, B. (2014). Recruitment and workplace integration of men and women engineers in France: the case of EPF Ecole d'Ingenieurs graduates. *27*(3), 243-264.

Storen, L. A., & Aamodt, P. O. (2010). The Quality of Higher Education and Employability of Graduates. *Quality in Higher Education, 16*(3), 297-313.

Teijeiro, M., Rungo, P., & Freire, M. (2013). Graduate competencies and employability: The impact of matching firms' needs and personal attainments. *Economics of Education Review, 34*, 286-295.

Tomlinson, M. (2008). A degree is not enough: students' perceptions of the role of higher education credentials to graduate work and employability. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 29*(1), 49-61.

Tomlinson, M. (2012). Graduate Employability: A Review of Conceptual and Empirical Themes. *Higher Education Policy, 25*, 407-431.

Verhaest, D., & Van der Velden, R. (2013). Cross-country Differences in Graduate Overeducation. *European Sociologicall Review, 29*(3), 642-653.

Wang, D., Liu, D., & Lai, C. (2012). Expansion of higher education and the employment crisis: policy innovations China. *On the Horison, 20*(4), 336-344.

Werquin, P. (2012). The missing link to connect education and employment: recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes. *Journal of Education and Work, 25*(3), 259-278.

Yin, R. K. (2011). *Qualitative Research from Start to Finish.* New York: The Guilford Press.

APPENDIX A

Actual Research Instrument

Ms. Petje

P. O. Box 5969

Cresta

2118

Cell: 0724249917

Email: ledites@gmail.com/

boledip@joburg.org.za

Student no: 760745

Employee of Department of Development Planning

City of Johannesburg Council

158 Civic Boulevard

Braamfontein

2017

Dear Sir/ Madam

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY: THE RETURNS TO EDUCATION IN THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG MUNICIPALITY

I hereby write this letter to invite you to participate in this research study. My name is Grace Boledi Petje. I am a postgraduate student at the University of Witwatersrand studying towards a Masters' Degree in Management in the field of Public Development and Management. I am doing a qualitative research study on the returns to education in the municipality as part of the degree. I am conducting a research on the perceptions and experiences of the recipients of subsidy education scheme and the education effect on employment.

I have attached to this letter an information sheet on the details of participating research and a consent form to sign should you chose to participate in the research study.

Kindly read the information sheet and should you have any queries, you may contact me on the email address and cell phone number on boledip@joburg.org.za, ledites@gmail.com and 0724249917.

Yours sincerely,

Ms. Grace Boledi Petje

Information Sheet

You have been chosen to participate in this research study. Thank you very much for your participation. This information sheet explains the purpose of the research study and your role of participation.

The purpose of this research study is to explore the relationship between education and employment with a focus on the value of the City of Johannesburg Municipality's (COJ) subsidised education scheme in enhancing of productivity, employability, and career development within the workplace.

In order to use your views for this research, I would like your views to be audio recorded during an interview. Please take note that you may chose to remain anonymous and withdraw from the interview if you feel that you no longer want to participate. The interview will only take approximately 1hour 30 minutes. The information you provide in the interview will be kept strictly confidential. The records from your participation may be reviewed by the University of Witwatersrand, including the members of the ethics committee of the Human Sciences Research Council. Information that identifies your personal details will be used for others to see on account that permission has been granted by you. The study will not bring any risk or harm to you. The information you provide will assist the research committee and organisations to develop better policies regarding skills, employability and career development to enhance work productivity.

Should you require a copy of the recordings or feedback on the study, the information will be sent to you via email or by postal to your address. If you have any questions about the research at any stage, you may contact the researcher.

[Ms. Petje 072 424 9917 ledites@gmail.com / boledip@joburg.org.za]

Consent form

I, the undersigned read and understood the Information Sheet.

I understand and agree to the audio recordings of the interview.

I was provided with an opportunity to ask questions about the study.

I understand that my words may be quoted in the research study.

I understand that my personal details will not be revealed to other people outside the research without my permission.

I understand that I can withdraw my participation from the research study any time if I no longer want to take part in it and there will be no consequences of any kind.

Name of Interviewee/ Participant: _____ Date:

Interview Guide

Research Purpose

The purpose of this research is to explore the relationship between education and employment with a focus on the value of the City of Johannesburg Municipality's (COJ) subsidised education scheme in enhancing of productivity, employability, and career development within the workplace.

Research Questions

1. How do COJ municipality employees from the Development Planning Department perceive the value of qualifications received through subsidised education in relation to their current jobs, employability, career development, and work productivity?

1.2 What are the employees' perceptions of the investment returns of the COJ subsidised education scheme?
1.3 How has the education received influenced work productivity and career development within the department and organisation?
1.4 What relation does education have with an individual's current job and future employability status within the organisation?
1.5 Are the education choices aligned with the departmental skills needs?

Interview Process

Introduce yourself and the purpose of the research. Fill in the demographic information to know some background about the participant. Explain the information sheet and the consent form to the participant. Request permission to record the interview, if the participant agrees, asks the participant to sign the consent form and choose a pseudonym.

Face-sheet

Gender:

- Male
- Female

Age:

- 18-34
- 35 and above

Job Skills Position:

- Skilled (Director, manager, professional and technician)
- Semi-skilled (Clerk, Secretaries, Administrators and Officers)
- Low-skilled (Elementary jobs)

Years of working for the organisation: _____

Course Subsidy Studied/ Studying: **_____**

Completed Qualifications: _____

Interview Questions

Question 1: What do you think about the subsidy education scheme provided by the organisation?

Ice breaker

Question 2: Why do/did you use the subsidy scheme?

Probe: How do/did you feel about using the scheme for reasons you just mentioned?

Question 3: How do you understand career development in your professional life?

Question 4: How does the subsidy education help you to develop your career?

Probe: How easy is it to develop your career in the department and organisation?

Question 5: How important is the subsidy education for accessing future employment within or outside the organisation? Why?

Question 6: How relevant is/are your subsidy qualification/s to your current job? Why?

Questions 7: One of the subsidy objectives is to ensure that employees develop the right skills for their jobs to reduce over-education and over-skilling. Do you think the competencies gained through the subsidy are sufficient and matched with your job?

Question 8: How is the education aligned with the skills needs of the department?

Question 9: How do you feel is/was the skills or competencies gained important for improving your work performance? Why?

Probe: Tell me any experiences of how your education enhances your work productivity.

Question 10: How does the education affect your satisfaction or dissatisfaction with your job?

Management Interview Questions

Position:

Manager ☐

Director ☐

Question1: What do you think about the subsidy education scheme?

Question 2: How relevant are the employees' education skills to their current jobs?

Question 3: How is their education aligned with the departmental skills needs?

Question 4: How significant is their education for enhancing work productivity?

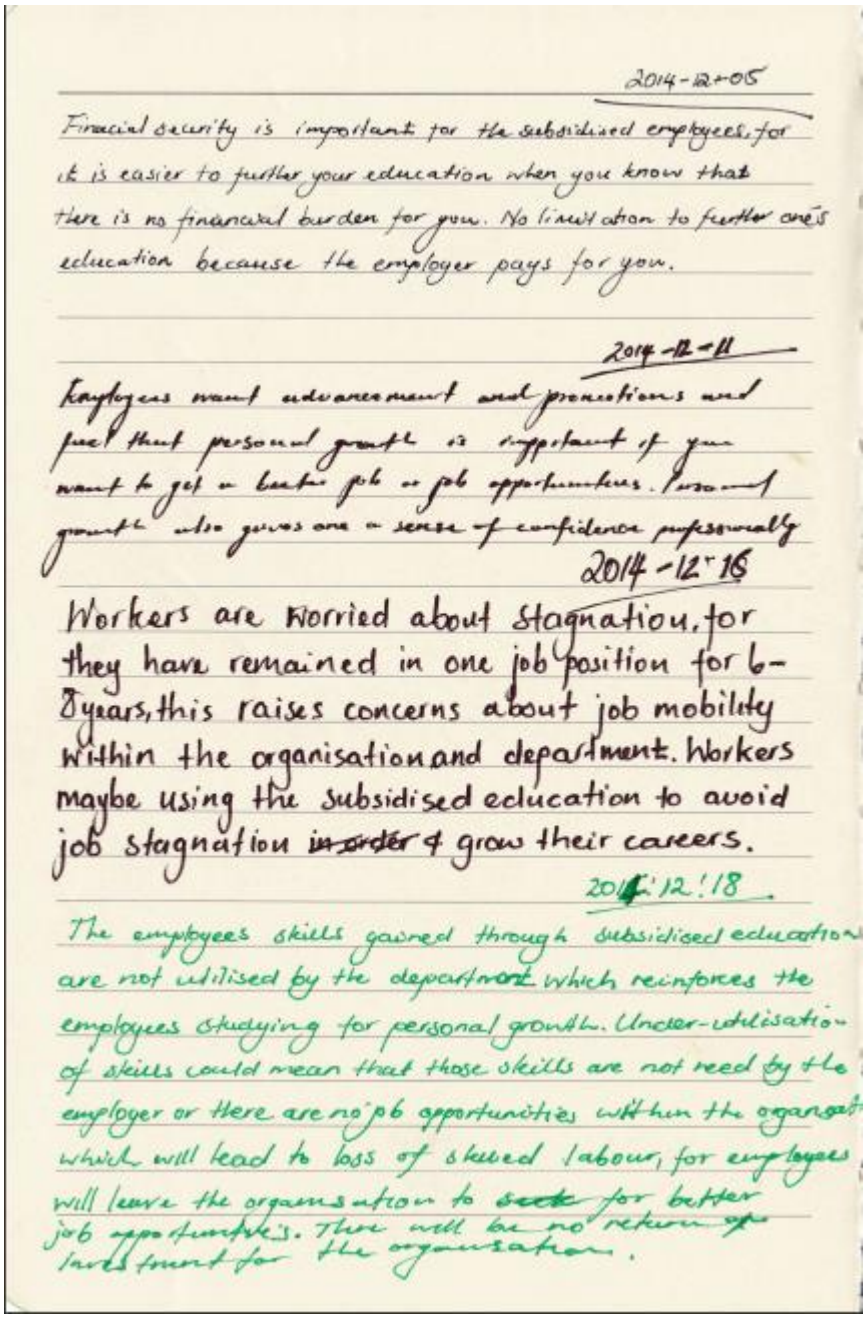
Question 5: How does their education influencing their performance at work?

Question 6: How has the department and organisation benefited from the education scheme?

Probe: *Promotion and occupation mobility*

APPENDIX B

Example of a Memo



2014-12-05

Financial security is important for the subsidised employees, for it is easier to further your education when you know that there is no financial burden for you. No limitation to further one's education because the employer pays for you.

2014-12-11

Employees want advancement and promotions and fact that personal growth is important if you want to get a better job or job opportunities. Personal growth also gives one a sense of confidence professionally

2014-12-16

Workers are worried about stagnation, for they have remained in one job position for 6-8years, this raises concerns about job mobility within the organisation and department. Workers maybe using the subsidised education to avoid job stagnation ~~in order~~ & grow their careers.

2014-12-18

The employees skills gained through subsidised education are not utilised by the department which reinforces the employees studying for personal growth. Under-utilisation of skills could mean that those skills are not need by the employer or there are no job opportunities within the organisation which will lead to loss of skilled labour, for employees will leave the organisation to ~~seek~~ for better job opportunities. There will be no return of investment for the organisation.

APPENDIX C

Example of Transcripts

Interview 2: I

1. **What do you think about the subsidy education scheme provided by the organisation?**

I: I think is a very good scheme in terms of skills development we need to be constantly upgrading ourselves so it good that they have such a scheme in place because financially these institutions are very expensive and not everyone has that opportunity to further their studies while working so I think it is a very very good scheme.

2. Ok. **Why did you use the subsidy education scheme?**

I: I used the scheme as I mentioned that financially I cannot afford it my course is around 60000 of which by my own capacity I am not in the position to be funding my education hence I am opting to the scheme to further my studies.

How do you feel about using the subsidy?

I: I feel that I am generally very advantaged I think it is good because if you do not pass you are supposed to pay the money back so I think that motivates you so for those purposes I think you worry what will happen because they will take the money if you don't pass but I think it also motivates you to apply yourself and make sure that you use it for the intended purposes which is to further your skills and obtain this masters.

3. **How do you understand career development in your professional life?**

I: I understand it to be very necessary because we are in a day and age were you consistently need to be advancing yourself and one of the ways is experience and also education I mean I am in the position where am still young and I would like to have an option to change professions if need be or when circumstance call for that and in certain profession you cannot get in by experience alone you need to have the qualifications so I fell and understand for this

scheme to be very important for my career development in the profession.

4. **How does the subsidy education help you develop your career?**

I: Right now I am a qualified town planner but I am doing a course which is Masters in Science in Building particularly project management in construction it is a very very broad course its got about 5 different avenues for example it got a health and safety aspect it got a quality control aspect a procurement and contracts law and management so after I qualify for this course I am in a position to move into the construction industry move into a project management area I can move within the city [COJ] and I can move into the private sector it would allow me to either stay in the public sector or advance privately so in that instance I think will have a skill that allows me to move around and hence further my career.

5. **How important is the subsidy education for accessing future employment within or outside the organisation? Why?**

I: I think within the organisation I have already identified for example there was a post that was advertised I think a month ago at the Department of Housing within the city for project management as I have mentioned this is a project management in construction and had I been qualified it would be a position that I would gladly apply for I know that we work a lot with contractors a lot there is a procurement department and there is a lot of MOE's [municipal organisation entities] that need the skill that I am currently acquiring so I think within the city I have a very good chance I have already identified one post but it is not just limited to project management there is a lot of sectors within the city that I will when am qualified I will have an opportunity to move around.

6. **How relevant is your subsidy qualification to your current job? Why?**

I: I think it is very relevant had I chosen to further my studies in town planning I would also need this subsidy education for me to get my Masters degree which would also come in handy if I wanted to apply for a managerial position I would be in a good position as I am currently getting experience as I would have both experience and a higher or postgraduate degree to further my career in this current position as a town planner in Land Use.

Do you think what you are studying is aligned to your day to day job duties or you can apply what you have learned to your current job?

I: I think to large extent it is broad and variant as the degree it is also very relevant because it is still within the built environment and as town planners we interact with a lot of other disciplines within the built environment we interact with engineers with architects we interact with quantity surveyors basically all the people within the built environment domain most of them would have a good understanding of town planning I mean some of them even do town planning jobs so I think it is relevant because it gives me a broad and better understanding of what the other disciplines who interact with us on a daily basis do I think it helps you to understand even further or better certain developments and know how they fund it and know the different impacts they have so I think it is quite relevant

7. **One of the subsidy objectives is to ensure that employees develop the right skills for their jobs to reduce over-education and over-skilling. Do you think the competencies gained through the subsidy are sufficient and matched with your job?**

I: Currently what I am gaining I think It would not be matched should I choose to stay in the Land Use because it is such a different sphere it is not particularly town planning it is construction so for me the dedication I had to put in to get this qualification would be good for where I am sitting in I

mean my job requires me to be dedicated and work under pressure sometimes that alone I think would be matched. In advancing my career I think I would need to leave and practice that particular sector but sitting here as a project manager in construction working as a town planner it would be two different things I would really need to go work in that specific field for me to be matched in what I am doing because they are related but they are entirely two different things so I think I would have an over-skill and over-education to be sitting here.

8. **How is the education aligned with the skills needs of the department?**

I: I think it is aligned I mean we are working in the built environment as I mentioned we work with different professions there is a need to know how the economy works and that is something that one of the course that I have done you need to know how the private sector funds the projects that we decide that they can have or not have we need to know the impact it has on the environment we need to know the impact on health and safety we affect society as a whole I mean we are a discipline that is about ensuring that the public needs are met and so know the impact the kind of development in construction construction happens in the public domain we need to make sure that the kind of construction activities that we are allowing are serving the public and the people that exist in that sphere there is a lot of courses that are aligned to that instance as I mentioned for example we need to understand the function of the economy and you need to understand that these people are funded by different institutions and the impact of sitting with an application here what it is costing the other person on the other hand there is a need for me to apply myself and make sure that I work and people do not become liquidated because I took 10 months to complete an application if I

understand how it is funded and deliberate delays on my side affects so you need to understand that.

9. **How do you feel is/was the skills or competencies gained important for improving your work performance? Why?**

I: Well currently I have my honours degree in town planning I feel that I have sufficient skills from a qualified background I am in a position where I feel I need experience more than paper qualification so I am in a position where I need to personally apply myself and I think that is the most important skill where I need to improve my work self-dedication and my own drive I feel that I already have the qualification and there is no amount of qualifications I can acquire to improve my skills expect for experience at this point in life the current skills I am gaining are more for my future career advancement although acquiring this degree has taught me to balance my work I have had to apply extra dedication to work harder and that is what I am currently doing with the files [applications] every application is the same but unique at the same time so it is just something that I am personally sitting here and applying it is not a paper base skill that I am applying but it something that I sit and just have the drive to gain understanding and to be more efficient at my work but I think what I am currently acquiring just acquiring it alone the diligence that comes with it but in terms of skills I feel that I already have the qualifications prior that are sufficient but most important is my own self application at this point.

10. **How does the education affect your satisfaction or dissatisfaction with your job?**

I: I don't currently feel that my education in any affects my satisfaction I think my education more than anything is for my own self-enrichment we are at a position where as I said technologies change economies change and life as we know it changes on a daily basis and one cannot be satisfied where they are one needs to constantly keep up with the markets and have a competitive advantage so my education really is

for my own personal growth and just to make sure that I am in a position where I can compete and not take anything for granted or should anything happen to my job I want to be in a position to know that I have got something else to fall back on. But my satisfaction with my job really is just something that I am satisfied with my job it has nothing to do with the skills that I am acquiring It is related but the skills are really just to keep myself on edge.

Management

Interview 12: Peter Conchar

1. **What do you think about the subsidy education scheme provided by the organisation?**

   P: Well I think it is a good thing because it gives you an opportunity to at least while you have a job and you were only able to get to a certain stage in your professional career to study so far with subsidised education you can at least while you are earning money you can further your knowledge and develop yourself and aspire if you've got aspirations in life then you've got that opportunity it is there.

2. **How relevant are the employees' education skills to their current jobs?**

   P: I think the subsidised education that we allow employees it must be something that you can utilise in the council it might not even be in the same department although we would prefer that it would be something to do with your job but you do get some other people who do subsidised education that is not directly related or relevant to our department but it does allow to do further studies in another direction which can be benefited by another employer or by the council maybe in another department the education can be relevant and aligned with department but it is not always tangible you know someone goes on a subsidised education course and for a year or two they have now acquired that diploma or that certificate or whatever it might be it is not as if you can immediately see the difference but you can I think in a long term you will definitely see that there is a difference because many of these courses that the people do go onto is not always very specific it is not all that specialised but it gives you a broader knowledge that you can apply through to your work I am sure it must benefit you at some stage or other through your career.

3. **How significant are their education for enhancing work productivity?**

P: I believe it is significant but as I say it is not as if it is a clear cut thing today something is black and tomorrow after someone has done a course or something then tomorrow is white that you can immediately see the improvement but I believe with that broader knowledge if I take in our instance now if you go and do some subsidised education in planning field or whatever that will suddenly come out when you who has done this course when you get applications to evaluate that sort of stuff will come out in your mind when you are doing your reports and doing your evaluation it is not that you immediately see an improvement but I am sure that it does benefit one in producing better reports having a broader insight into your subject that you have done a course in.

4. **How does their education influence their performance at work?**

P: The employees that have done B-Tech in planning influences their performance because it helps them broaden their minds and see things from another perspective I am not going to mention names but I could see it in some of the reports of the some of the people who are working here and as I say not immediately but if I compare how this guy would have done a report a year ago and how it looks now after he has completed the course and maybe it is because it is specific to our field of work that I would pick up something like that but I definitely think that it had a benefit towards improving work performance.

5. **How has the department and organisation benefited from the education scheme?**

P: I would like to think that there is some kind of an invest return but the problem that we have had in the past number years we were not able to fill in positions and there was not much advancement opportunities for people am just taking

for instance from being a professional officer to a senior professional officer if I think about 5 or 6 years ago in this 5 years we were only able to fill four or five positions and that was only because people set out of those positions they left the organisation and they left because there wasn't any further opportunities for them so if you look at it in that sense there wasn't any benefits to the organisation and the department and those people who have acquired those qualifications there wasn't an opportunity for them to grow and make progress within our own organisation have left use and went somewhere else where they did get those opportunities and I can mention just a few of them over quite a number of years that gave done that and if you can look at where those people are sitting today you can't believe what positions they have so in our organisation itself unfortunately its budget its always budget it is this and that there is always excuses that we can't open the path for people to grow a hypothetical example is if I just had my diploma I do my work I work here and I sort of feel that I am on top of my job I know what I am doing now I am aspiring to improve myself I go and do a B-Tech now I am expecting now I must be given other opportunities to test myself this additional knowledge that I have now got what can I do with that I must test myself but what happens I am sitting in this position there is no advancement for me I can't become a senior professional where a bigger responsibility will be given to me so then I will get despondent at a point in time because I might feel I am sure I got this additional knowledge now but I am not being tested with it the platform to utilise my knowledge is not there there are no opportunities yes we have tried to ensure that were certain things were done by senior then junior can also do it so in that sense opportunities are provided to test your skills that you have gained.

APPENDIX D

Example of a Signed Consent Form

Information Sheet

You have been chosen to participate in this research study. Thank you very much for your participation. This information sheet explains the purpose of the research study and your role of participation.

The purpose of this research study is to explore the relationship between education and employment with a focus on the value of the City of Johannesburg Municipality's (COJ) subsidised education scheme in enhancing of productivity, employability, and career development within the workplace.

In order to use your views for this research, I would like your views to be audio recorded during an interview. Please take note that you may chose to remain anonymous and withdraw from the interview if you feel that you no longer want to participate. The interview will only take approximately 1hour 30 minutes. The information you provide in the interview will be kept strictly confidential. The records from your participation may be reviewed by the University of Witwatersrand, including the members of the ethics committee of the Human Sciences Research Council. Information that identifies your personal details will be used for others to see on account that permission has been granted by you. The study will not bring any risk or harm to you. The information you provide will assist the research committee and organisations to develop better policies regarding skills, employability and career development to enhance work productivity.

Should you require a copy of the recordings or feedback on the study, the information will be sent to you via email or by postal to your address. If you have any questions about the research at any stage, you may contact the researcher.

[Ms. Petje 072 424 9917 ledites@gmail.com / boledip@joburg.org.za]

Consent form

I, the undersigned read and understood the Information Sheet.

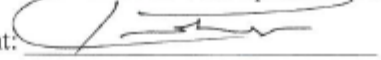
I understand and agree to the audio recordings of the interview.

I was provided with an opportunity to ask questions about the study.

I understand that my words may be quoted in the research study.

I understand that my personal details will not be revealed to other people outside the research without my permission.

I understand that I can withdraw my participation from the research study any time if I no longer want to take part in it and there will be no consequences of any kind.

Name of Interviewee/ Participant:  Date: 18/12/2014