



**FACTORS AFFECTING STAFF MORALE
WITHIN A SOUTH AFRICAN
CONSTRUCTION COMPANY**



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ABSTRACT

This study investigates staff morale within a South African construction company, recognizing its pivotal role in organizational success, particularly within the demanding construction sector context. Employee morale, a multifaceted construct influenced by various factors, including leadership styles, communication efficacy, compensation structures, work environment quality, and prospects for professional advancement, requires sustained attention to maintain optimal productivity levels. Effective communication, facilitating a symbiotic relationship between management and employees, emerges as a linchpin for nurturing high morale. Leadership styles significantly shape organizational culture, with autocratic leadership fostering an adverse work milieu, contrasting with democratic approaches that encourage feedback and participative decision-making, fostering morale and productivity.

Moreover, the construction industry's rewards landscape and working conditions often fall short, contributing to employee dissatisfaction and diminished morale. Hazardous work environments, prolonged work hours, and limited career growth prospects compound these challenges, undermining motivation and impeding skill development. The primary objective of this research endeavour is to delineate the determinants of low morale in the construction industry, focusing on skilled staff with tenure exceeding six months. By elucidating the factors, this study provides insights that help create strategies and policies to enhance industry standards.

In conclusion, the construction industry contends with various challenges, including escalating operational costs, material expenses, and a shortage of skilled labour. To maintain competitiveness, organizations must prioritize initiatives aimed at bolstering employee morale. Recognizing that investments in addressing staff morale issue's yield dividends in terms of heightened productivity and organizational vitality, companies are encouraged to proactively engage in measures conducive to fostering a positive workplace environment.

Keywords: employee morale, construction industry, South Africa, leadership, communication, benefits, work environment, career development.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction and Background

Chapter 1 allows the researcher to present the study's problem statement and its research aims. It discusses the research methodology regarding the empirical study, research design, measuring instruments, statistical analyses and the participants. The chapter concludes with an overview of the chapter's contents. This study details the South African construction industry, with around 1.3 million people employed permanently and on rotational contracts (van Den Berg, 2023). The study investigates the critical points regarding several issues the industry faces, ranging from safety to low productivity.

The construction industry, which the researcher is evaluating, is becoming increasingly more in tune with the reality that people are becoming more emotionally involved and present with what they are doing. The researcher has seen that increased emotional intelligence is required; thus, the topic examines factors affecting staff morale in a South African construction firm. The scope of the study covers staff morale being low within the construction industry (Legoabe & Mabindisa, 2021), which has an impact as it may see a reduction in productivity, an increase in absenteeism, high turnover in staff, a deteriorating safety culture and the decrease of an organisation's reputation. These factors are occurring in the field partly due to employees' unhappiness in this sector. The increased staff turnover is partly due to deteriorating safety cultures (Saldanha, 2021) from top to lower management. The industry is taking a hard knock from changed industry standards, and now people are becoming more aware of their surroundings.

The following two articles written by Dubihlela & Sandada (2014) and also Tooke (2017) touch on the importance of continuing to focus on staff morale because a lot of organisations only focus on profits and end up forgetting the common factor, which is the human element. Many organisations do not do a lot of listening but do a lot of talking, and before it is known, employers end up having staff who are depressed and low in morale, which in turn affects input and the drive to achieve something.

Moreover, this research topic explores the reasons behind increased or reduced staff morale and the reasons behind the increased or decreased staff morale within the South African construction industry. The purpose of the present investigation is to improve staff morale. Half (2023) defines staff morale as how employees feel at work, how they find daily motivation for themselves, and how they influence others to do their best. The key to the above is that the main focuses on a particular section of the industry, which is the plant and hire side of the industry, and this focuses on skilled workers who were selected through criteria including employee experience, as they would have had to be in the organisation for more than six months.

The construction industry continues to grow, and in the plant and hire space, one feels that the market is too small, making managing and controlling employees easy in the eyes of the owner, especially in a company built on family morale and or ethics. The purpose of this study is to show the importance of certain factors that motivate and demotivate employees within the construction industry in South Africa.

The study also allows the researcher to obtain reliable information from the employees in this industry and the researcher to develop proper strategies which will help deal with morale within the work environment, which will help the organisation grow positively, gain support from its employees, help everyone to build a stimulating, productive and healthy environment. This would help create a sense of warmth and security for all employees and employers.

The research will explore the importance of the following factors in managing a sound corporate culture within the construction industry: staff morale, site conditions, compensation and industry trends. These factors include using compensation as motivation to get the best out of our colleagues and employees, identifying what creates a culture of high morale, identifying how the organisation and industry go about the recognition process, and finally, looking at how non-cash incentives influence staff morale, be it negatively or positively.

The purpose of the study was driven by facts obtained from employees working within the South African economy in the construction sector under the plant and hire

field. The data was collected via semi-structured interviews. Then, the results were determined as to whether or not the employees were at peace where they were or if they would appreciate some changes that would benefit the company and the company, thereby increasing motivation levels and production.

The construction industry is one industry that is still hostile and one that is stuck to historical ways of doing things. What makes it more interesting is that family values drive some companies. In the narrow space where the study ventures, the plant and hire space, one can sense that previous norms and values still drive a few companies. Moreover, South Africa's construction industry is seen to be susceptible to economic changes and uncertainties in the market landscape. Mangwengwende (2018) states that economic instabilities have led to reduced project investments, companies downsizing and job insecurities in the construction market. Mangwengwende (2018) further states that these inconsistencies can lead to anxiety, decreased morale and decreased confidence among construction industry employees.

The construction industry is inherently riskier than most other industries, and South Africa faces many challenges. The high rates of workplace incidents and inadequate measures can instil great fear in the employees and apprehension among workers within the construction sector, which impacts employees' morale and job satisfaction (Statistics South Africa, 2021). Rycroft (2017) asserts that the industry being researched is no stranger to labour disputes, with issues related to collective bargaining and worker rights often making headlines. These problems can lead to a hostile work environment, and if they are not resolved, this can hugely impact employee morale and motivation.

Leaving behind the traditions prevalent in the construction industry will be difficult, and from this view, outdated information tends to create some problems. For example, if employers are not in tune with new methods which will benefit growth and enhance the view of the employees within the field, the firm will suffer. Many workers are unhappy and feel their voices are not being heard. The coming and going of skilled workers in the industry, especially in some companies, makes one question why a business always hires people and does not have stability in specific

positions, especially in the junior ranks. Staff morale is vital, especially currently, where people are becoming more emotionally aware and in tune with their rights and working conditions. Managing and promoting inclusivity among all workers from different backgrounds can be challenging, and in the Republic of South Africa (RSA), the construction industry is very diverse. Discrimination, cultural misunderstanding and a lack of inclusivity can result in feelings of alienation, directly affecting staff morale.

This research uses a company within this field to explore employees' morale within the South African construction field for office-based and field-based employees. The topic is a significant research area as it has become apparent over time and through different research studies that the success of many companies depends on the motivation and job satisfaction of the hired employees. Maslow's (2023) theoretical framework supports the above statement and helps us understand the above topic. Maslow's hierarchy is depicted in Figure 1.1 below:

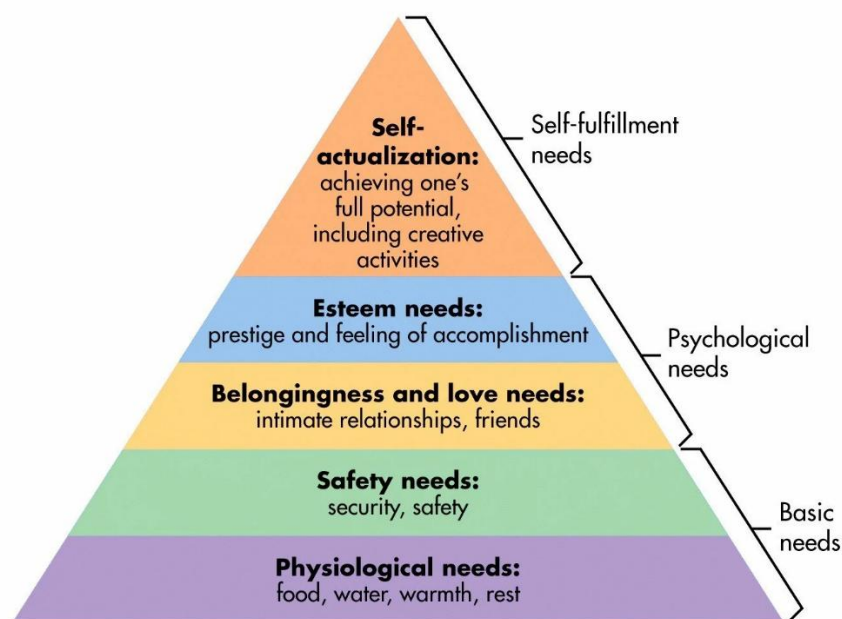


Figure 1.1: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Source: Mcleod (2023).

Maslow's framework describes the different levels of human needs, from the most basic being physiological needs to the highest point of self-actualisation. Within the context of the study and from researching and understanding it, Mcleod (2023)

posits that the need for security is high in a developing country like South Africa, which has a high crime rate and economic instability. Additionally, the construction industry can be dangerous, and the workers may be at risk of bodily harm when protocols are not followed. The need for safety touches on the need for employment security, which influences morale. This is due to the high unemployment rate, which increases employee anxiety about instability and lack of assurance. The above-stated factors can lead to decreased motivation and job satisfaction. This also touches on the second hierarchy level: safety and needs.

The fourth level of Maslow's hierarchy would be the need for esteem. The organisation's employees can feel power and satisfaction when they complete a project with a target and a deadline set by those above them, especially if they receive recognition. However, there can be an inverse effect on their emotions if their contributions are not valued or they feel that those around them do not respect them; thus, their morale may go down, negatively affecting performance, motivation and productivity.

This research simply believes that Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a viable tool for understanding the morale of a South African construction company. The two critical factors that can impact staff morale are the requirement for safety and security in terms of employment security and the requirement for esteem, including the need for achievement and respect for others. When we meet employee needs, companies can have a position of influence that could aid in motivating, engaging, improving productivity, and leading our teams, thereby assisting the businesses we are in to thrive.

1.2 Problem Statement

Several research studies have examined staff morale in the construction industry. For instance, a study by Song (2020) found that staff morale in the construction industry in the USA is declining. However, previous studies did not place a specific focus on skilled staff. Moreover, several studies were conducted in the context of other countries Mangwengwende (2018) around the globe. In South Africa, there has been an increase in staff turnover in the construction industry, and this scenario

is attributed to low morale among skilled staff. However, no previous studies have examined low staff morale in the construction industry in the context of South Africa Statistics South Africa (2021). A few prior studies examined staff morale in other sectors, such as education and healthcare, and adopted the quantitative approach Rycroft (2017). In light of the latter issues, the problem that this study addresses are determining the factors contributing to low staff morale among skilled staff in the construction industry in South Africa.

1.3 Aim and Importance of the Study

The study aims to identify the factors contributing to the prevailing low morale among skilled staff in the construction industry in South Africa. Because of the aim the purpose of this study is to make practical contributions by guiding management, specifically in the construction industry, on strategies for enhancing skilled staff morale, reducing staff turnover and promoting staff satisfaction with their job and the organisation. This is particularly important in South Africa, where the focus of this study appears not to have received research attention.

The main goal/aim of the study is to identify the factors affecting staff morale within a South African construction company and ultimately to assist the company in addressing these factors to improve staff morale. Throughout the study, the attitudes of employees, as well as their needs and expectations, will be observed and compared with the actual circumstances. It is crucial to determine whether this disjuncture affects staff morale. Staff morale is linked in theory to productivity and quality of work; should the initiative to improve staff morale succeed, then there is expected to be an increase in productivity and quality of work among employees. The improvements are measured through observations at the company over time.

1.4 Research Questions

- I. What are the most challenging aspects of working within the construction industry?
- II. Are resources readily available within the Construction industry for employees to perform their work?

- III. What seems to be causing a high turnover rate within the construction regarding skilled workers?
- IV. Are there any strategies within the industry that can be used to resolve the issues within the construction industry regarding the decrease in morale?

1.5 Research Objectives

The following are the objectives of this study:

- To determine the job-related factors contributing to low morale among the skilled staff in the construction industry in Johannesburg.
- To determine the organisational culture-related factors contributing to low morale among the skilled staff in the construction industry in Johannesburg.
- To determine the industry-related factors contributing to low morale among the skilled staff in the construction industry in Johannesburg.
- To establish strategies for enhancing staff morale in the construction industry.

1.6 Proposed Chapter Outline

Perry (1998) suggests using a six-chapter structure for a study in business and management. Accordingly, this research adopts the following structure. Chapter 1 puts forth the research problem as the central aspect that directs all other study aspects. It includes, among other things, the background of the study, which raises issues that direct the development of the research problem, questions and objectives, contributions of the study, an overview of the methods, an abbreviated literature review, ethical issues, limitations, timeline, budget and chapter summary. Chapter 2 offers a review of the theories underpinning the study. The applicability of the theories is justified using references. Chapter 3 looks at the research and methodology regarding the previous studies, and the findings are analysed to raise arguments and determine how they fit into the debate. While Chapter 1 has provided an overview of the methods for addressing the research problem, Chapter 4 details the methods and techniques used to address the issue. Chapter 5 presents the results, and the final chapter makes conclusions and recommendations based on the results.

1.7 Ethical Considerations

The researcher heeds that in need to conduct this study, several ethical issues must be adhered to, consistent with the requirements of the university education board and the industry in which data will be collected. Some of the ethical issues are as follows:

Ethical clearance: The researcher had to apply for an ethical clearance letter from the university's research committee to conduct the study, which looks at staff morale within the construction industry. The researcher completed and submitted the ethical clearance forms and all the required documents to receive the approval letter from the committee's board.

Data collection: Permission to access the employees for the interviews was obtained from the company's chief operations officer (COO), and written authorisation to gain access to the target participants was issued and added in the appendices.

Informed consent: Information regarding the purpose of the study was explained to the company's COO first and then presented to the participants, and their involvement in the interview was voluntary and not forced. The participants were well informed that they were free to withdraw from the interviews at any stage and that there were no rewards for their involvement. Once access and consent were received, the researcher got the interviewed parties to sign and accept that they were willing study participants (Fricker (2016)).

No harm to participants: The study did not expose the participants to emotional and physical risks. The researcher went on further to explain to the interviewed parties that they were free from damage or injury because of the nature of the data collection process. The researcher further detailed that respondents would not be exposed to harm and pain because data collection involved sitting in semi-structured interviews (Ghuri, Gronhaug, and Strange, 2020).

Confidentiality and anonymity: The researcher tried to ensure the participants knew their responses remained confidential. During the data collection process, the participants' names and identities would not be displayed or disclosed throughout the research document. Participants are described using alphanumeric codes, for example, P1 or participant 1 (Ghauri et al., 2020)

1.8 Scope and Limitations

The researcher decided it would be best to do this research to determine how staff morale affects productivity and work being done within the organization. Morale is an employee's attitude towards his job, environment, and Nauman's (2020) organization. It is an attitude that is either positive or negative. It is often reflected in the behaviour and work rate of employees. Many managers assume that high worker morale is increased by high satisfaction and vice versa. However, this is not a correct assumption. Although satisfaction and morale are related, it has been found that high staff morale causes job satisfaction and not vice versa. Since the end of the day, no project or absolute harmony and unity can succeed. When there is a problem with staff morale, it often leads to higher rates of absenteeism and employee turnover. Employees may form a union when staff morale is extremely low, and industrial action may manifest in severe cases. This significantly compromises productivity, and time delays are often incurred. Understanding when and why staff morale problems arise allows management to counteract appropriately and, if possible, prevent further morale decline.

1.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, the research problem was presented and formulated to the best of the researcher's ability. A discussion of both the general aim of the study and the specific aims of the study followed this. The research questions were also proposed, the chapter outline was given, and ethical considerations were put forth. Chapter 2 allows the researcher to present the literature review and factors influencing the morale of construction employees.

2. Preliminary Literature Review

2.1 Motivation

Motivation is the driving force that aids people's actions. It makes people wake up in the morning and go to work. In the construction industry, this is vital for ensuring that employees are productive and safe. Cherry (2023) states that motivation has a few components: persistence, intensity and activation. Cherry (2023) goes on to say that motivation pushes a human into action; that is, the process of motivation initiates, guides and maintains goal-oriented behaviours. Cherry (2023) further states that there are different types of motivation, which are intrinsic and extrinsic. Extrinsic motivation derives from external factors such as money, trophies, social recognition and praise from fellow employees; intrinsic motivation looks inward and comes from completing one's goals and reaching personal targets; thus, this is purely self-gratification from solving and achieving something.

Motivation also has many different aspects. Sounders (2019) touches on this by saying that motivation is more of an internal process, and it is the want or need that yearns for change, either in a personal capacity or an environmental shift. Sounders (2019) says that motivation is energised, and an internal force driven by goals. The latter researcher elaborates that we move forward and act when this force is driven.

Motivation is defined by Gajiwala (2023) as an action driven by a purpose. He states it is caused by emotional, biological, social and cognitive forces influencing behaviour. It is used, as stated by Gajiwala (2023), to describe someone's actions. Gajiwala (2023) asserts that psychologists have developed different theories, including drive theory, humanistic theory and instinct theory.

South Africa (SA) is a country that is at a developing stage Nauman (2020). Thus, many aspects are still seen in developed countries where they have ensured they do the right thing and continue to improve, which are not prevalent in SA. Much of it has to do with the welfare of people internally or externally, including the management of people and people's expectations. As an industry, we also need to

understand that morale is controlled by many factors within the workplace. The morale of people could be influenced by a handful of things, including salary and wages, management input, healthy or unhealthy work environment, and even the workplace setting itself. A lot of the time, we also see signs of a decrease in morale, causing employees to resign more, reducing their quality of work productivity, and increasing errors.

This report section will shed light on employee morale and the factors influencing workplace morale from different sources. The researcher aims to provide some sources of information to the selected construction company in South Africa so that the study can be used to address morale issues, good or bad, in the organisation, as well as other performance issues.

2.2 Theories of Motivation

Sands (2021) states that there are different motivational theories, the first being Maslow's' Hierarchy of needs created by Abraham Maslow McLeod (2021), who said motivation is reached when all needs are fulfilled. Sands (2021) believes that this hierarchy is followed, and the next level will not be contacted or fulfilled if the previous one has not been fulfilled. These levels range from the highest level of self-actualization to self-esteem, social, safety, and physiological needs, which is the lowest level.

Next is Herzberg's two-factor theory, in which Herzberg states that there are two broad categories: hygiene factors and motivating factors. He says hygiene factors range from working conditions to the supervisor and impact satisfying or dissatisfying employees. When hygiene factors are taken care of, job satisfaction increases (Sands 2021). The third theory is McClelland's theory. Sands (2021) explains all these theories and says there are three motivating factors that do not look at either age or sex; they are power, affiliation and achievement, and McClelland states merely that one of these will be more dominant than the others.

Sands (2021) continues to the fourth theory, Vroom's Expectancy Theory, which says one's motivation is affected by one's view of the future. The first factor here is

the expectancy theory, which is the increase in effort leading to a better performance. The second factor is instrumentality, which is the view that you perform well, and finally, there is the equation factor, which says motivation equals $\text{Valence} * \text{Instrumentality} * \text{Expectancy}$. McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y are the following theories. The first factor here is X, which looks at authoritarianism, while Y looks at participative management. Theory X has a hands-on approach, which means managers have an eye on everything. In contrast, theory Y has a laissez-faire approach, which allows employees to focus on their work and find motivation in their efforts.

The final theory relevant to this study is Alderfer's ERG Theory, which suggests that we as humans have three levels of core needs that we as humans have three levels of core needs. These align with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, mainly social, self-actualisation, and physiological. This theory touches on growth needs, which examine the internal desire for personal development (self-actualisation). Second, relatedness looks at protecting interpersonal relationships (social), which means we need to align social interactions. Finally, there are existence requirements, which touch on primary material needs that we need to live, including water, shelter, and clothes, as well as safety-related needs for job security (Maslow's physiological and safety needs).

2.3 Staff Morale

This researcher notes that morale has become a significant factor in the organisation's upward trend. Thus, it is vital to take the necessary steps to ensure that managers maintain high workplace spirits, creating a healthy work environment. Researchers must understand that staff morale measures employees' attitudes and motivation levels within all our organisations. It is usually looked at by assessing many factors, such as satisfaction, absenteeism and productivity. Many factors can affect staff morale, such as the organisation's management.

The organisation's employees are likely to be motivated and have high morale if the leaders are good, supportive and provide clear direction. The second factor is the work environment, as employees are more likely to have high morale and high

motivation if their environment is positive and supportive. Third is compensation and benefits; as we know, financial rewards are vital. We know that employees are more likely to be motivated and increase their staff morale when they receive reasonable compensation and benefits. At the same time, finally, growth opportunities are vital. In all organisations, we need to be open to the idea that high motivation and high morale also arise from high opportunities and growth.

We are at a point where we are starting to see the importance of a healthy work environment. As soon as motivation levels drop, the production levels of the organisation's low- and middle-level employees are affected differently. Various methods have been developed to improve the workplace environment. This would include other development programmes, training, recognition programmes and team-building activities. We must continually look at the outcomes of the methods that have been brought to increase morale and whether they yield the desired results.

The research at hand is a qualitative study to find the effectiveness of the different approaches used in improving staff morale in the chosen organisation while also detailing the various views of why morale is low and what the results would be with bad management. This research includes a literature review, one-on-one interviews and different focus groups to investigate the issues.

This research focuses on staff morale in the construction industry, which has not been researched for some time, and all previous research has seemed to prove the importance of morale. The sector focused on is demanding, and employees must be continually motivated and engaged daily to be productive. This issue of morale needs to be examined because an organisation needs to always look towards creating a positive and motivating work environment, which can improve staff morale and boost productivity.

2.4 Empirical Studies on Morale

The previous section, Section 2.3, indicates that mismanagement or the correct management and leadership of people can influence the outcome of staff behaviour.

Good management can quickly motivate them to work harder and to become successful in their field of expertise or their industry, and this is backed up by a case study done at the University of Warwick by Proto and Sgroi (2022), who explains that when we are happy as employees, we become more productive.

The above researchers went on to do more research and, in their study, discovered that production levels increased by about 12% when people were happy. Also, when people were in a healthy working environment, they began to invest more in their daily work activities. The authors took their research further by adding questions which had to do more with people's personal experiences, such as family tragedies. This was to assess whether a decrease in happiness affected the production levels. Sgroi (2020) further states that his research with his colleagues showed that happier employees ensure that they use their time wisely and become more effective while increasing the speed at which they work but not decreasing the quality of output results. Proto (2020) adds to Dr Sgroi's (2020) findings by saying that their research will guide many managers in different types of organisations. He alludes to the fact that organisations must ensure that their work environments are emotionally healthy for their employees to create a healthy work environment (Sgroi, 2020).

Millet (2010) stresses the importance of excellent staff morale and states that employees who are high in morale ensure that their productivity is high, and everyone works well. Millet (2010) further emphasizes that some people show their enjoyment of work by staying late or arriving early out of love and not because they want to be incentivised. Thus, the author concludes that if we want to achieve adequate productivity levels, we must ensure that our employees enjoy their workplace. The performance and creativity of your employees come from brainstorming and solving company issues.

Millet (2010) says it is essential to have everyone involved and make them feel included and important. The problem is if you have depressed, bored and inattentive workers, you may find that any work drags. They do not respond as they are not happy. Thus, if unsatisfied, this study allowed people to provide valuable information in their interviews.

Organisations that work on uplifting morale will see fewer staff resignations and more significant attention to detail. Millet (2010) states that positive emotions mean less negativity and less slacking at work. People would be far less inclined to let the team down and would instead attend appointments. This increase in detail would be because each employee would be far less likely to be distracted, thus making fewer mistakes and working quicker. Millet (2010) also says people begin to take safety more seriously as it coincides with high attention to detail and the increase in the quality of work there.

Millet (2010) further states that to increase staff morale; one must determine why problems occurred, including arguments between senior and lower staff, heavy workload, or increased feelings of being unappreciated. With some of these being stated, one would need to show concern for and appreciate employee feedback and be open, honest and genuine with their staff to improve morale. Managers could also take a step further by determining what the company could do to increase everyone's performance and what changes could be made.

Matsaung (2014:30) states that morale is the state of a person's mind and behaviour or the group's opinion of the environment. Matsaung (2014:30) states that a positive attitude results in high employee morale, while a less favourable perspective results in low morale. The researcher states that morale is an essential input that drives people to work, pushes their emotions to be happy, and drives their productivity and determination. Mastung (2014:31) believes that good morale comes from purpose and confidence in the future. He also goes on to say that it relates to mental and emotional well-being and the attitude of an employee's willingness to perform a task.

Businesses need to understand that improving staff morale should be the priority of all companies, and this not only looks at the lower-level employees but also improves the performance of managers and the executive team. It improves morale, maximises productivity, and eliminates employee resignations while increasing employee retention. A qualitative methodology was an effective method in this study to assess the various strategies used to improve staff morale while using the information received from the one-on-one interviews. In the end, this study will aid

the employers to understand the importance of staff morale and should also contribute to the company's overall success.

2.5 Impact if working conditions on employee satisfaction.

The reader must get a sense from the above that the working conditions of any employee profoundly influence how satisfied an employee is in the organisation they are working for, in this context within the construction industry, which has a high staff turnover rate. Elements such as office or site conditions, management quality, work scope, and health/safety standards are critical in generating a conducive work environment (Millet,2010).

2.6 Working conditions.

2.6.1 Conditions of Employment

Humans spend the majority of time in their workplaces; employment conditions encompass contractual agreements between both parties, including job roles, duties, and job responsibilities, which have a significant influence on the employee's experience within the sector they are in, in regard to the research being done, the constructing industry.

2.6.2 Working Time

The government takes care of this in most fields of employment, which means that regulating bodies governing working hours and working schedules profoundly impact the well-being and productivity in construction fields.

2.6.3 Salaries, wages and Benefits

Compensation is vital for your work, and most people work to receive compensation. Moreover, competitive compensation packages are crucial in ensuring that the construction industry becomes a cut above the rest and continues to attract and retain a skilled workforce.

2.6.4 Health and Safety

In any field and any space, it is vital that stringent health and safety measures are put into place, and it is imperative in mitigating workplace hazards such as gas leaks and pipe bursts. It also improves the promotion of employee well-being on different sites, be it on a mining site or construction.

2.6.5 Site Conditions

The physical environment of the construction site is vital to the health and morale of employees; this includes the infrastructure, amenities, and accessibility, which significantly impact how an employee in the field performs and how high or low their morale is.

2.6.6 Quality of work in the Construction Industry

The standard of quality and adherence to quality standards aid in the direction of the job and satisfaction of the employees, and finally, uptake in their performance.

2.7 Factors Affecting Morale in Construction Industry

In the construction industry, morale is vital and is influenced by factors such as leadership styles, the amount of work given and received by organisations, interpersonal relationships, and growth opportunities.

2.8 Chapter Summary

Chapter 2 represents the researcher's literature review related to staff morale within the workplace, focusing on the construction industry. The researcher realised that in South Africa, few studies have been conducted on employee morale. The main concepts relevant to the construction of this dissertation were also looked at, while the review also briefly examined the different behavioural theories. This chapter has allowed the researcher to investigate further the associations around all the

variables affecting staff morale within the construction industry. Chapter three discusses the research methodology and the research design of the study.

3. Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Chapter Two presents the literature review relating to the current study. The following chapter deliberates on the research methodology to ensure that the researcher achieves the objectives stated in Chapter one. Chapter three presents the techniques, sampling design, research methodology, target population, sample size, data collection process, how the questions were handled, and finally, the data analysis method.

3.2 Research Design

A research design has been defined as a strategy for answering the research question using empirical data. Research designs assist in making decisions about the overall research objectives and the approach, whether the researcher will conduct qualitative or quantitative research and assist with data collection and analysis techniques. There are several qualitative research designs, including grounded theory, phenomenological, ethnographic and case study research designs. A phenomenological research design was used for this study.

The phenomenological design explores the meaningful lived experiences of people and perceives those experiences. It seeks a deep understanding of people's perspectives, feelings, and behaviours in given situations. The researcher aims to uncover the essence of human experience without making assumptions or imposing preconceived ideas on the subjects. The phenomenological research design involves in-depth interviews or open-ended questions to gather comprehensive data about the participants' subjective experiences. This is the rationale for this researcher to choose this research design.

3.3 Research Philosophy:

According to Saunders et al. (2009), a research philosophy is a view of how primary data for a given study will be collected, analysed and applied to a situation. Several

researchers concur that many research philosophies are applied to an investigation depending on the research approach the researcher will subsequently use. For instance, in their research onion model, Saunders et al. (2009) identify research philosophies such as positivism, interpretivism, realism, pragmatism and critical realism. This study relied on collecting and analysing qualitative data; therefore, interpretivism is the research philosophy that identifies with the study.

The interpretivism philosophy has been defined as a sociological research method where data relating to a given phenomenon is analysed in line with the beliefs, norms and values of the society where an event occurred. Proponents of the philosophy hold that reality is subjective, and the core belief of the paradigm is that reality is socially constructed. Therefore, there is neither a right nor a wrong pathway to knowledge. Moreover, there are no universal standards for research, and the experiences of an individual constitute reality. The applicability of this research philosophy is that it was used to gather the subjective experiences of the staff regarding what is contributing to the prevailing low morale among the staff in the construction industry. The study used this approach to gain information detailing how staff view their work environment and how their workspace affects their morale.

3.4 Research Approach

Saunders et al. (2009) identify three research approaches: mono-method, which collects qualitative or quantitative data, mixed-methods, and multi-methods. Consistent with the interpretivism research philosophy related to this study, this study used the mono-method approach.

For this study, the mono-methods approach involved using a qualitative approach that relies on collecting detailed textual or primary data in the form of words. The researcher used semi-structured interviews to collect the primary textual data. The decision to use semi-structured interviews was made because the researcher could gather the participants' opinions or views. At the same time, conducting semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to ask follow-up questions, obtain rich information by asking open-ended questions and rephrase the questions so that participants understood better.

3.5 Units of Analysis

Units of analysis for this study were individual skilled staff involved in construction activities. Specifically, office-based staff were involved in the study. These units of analysis were used to understand the factors influencing low staff morale in the construction industry.

3.6 Sample Size

A sample is a portion of the target population with certain qualities or characteristics that qualify them to participate in a study. Researchers use samples because sometimes it may not be possible to involve the entire population because of the costs involved or time constraints. Thus, a representative sample was selected.

A statistical formula determines the minimum sample for quantitative research because it involves many participants. For this qualitative study, 15 skilled staff members at a construction company were interviewed. The decision to interview 15 participants was because several prior studies were conducted using such a sample that yielded credible results. In this study, the researcher planned to interview 15 skilled staff members in a construction company, but this might stop when saturation is reached. Saturation is the point in an interview data collection process where no new information comes from the participants. At that point, the researcher does not need to continue the interviews.

3.7 Sampling Technique

There are two main sampling techniques, namely probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is a technique in which the researcher chooses samples from a larger population based on probability theory. For participants to be considered for a probability sample, they must be selected using random selection.

This statistical method is used to select a sample from a population so that each member of the population has a known, non-zero chance of being selected. The most critical requirement of probability sampling is that everyone in the population

has a known and equal chance of getting selected. Probability sampling uses statistical theory to randomly select a small group of people (sample) from a large population and then predict that all their responses will match the overall population.

3.8 Pilot Study

A pilot study is defined as a pre-trial of the research tool before conducting the actual data collection. There are several reasons for conducting pilot studies, including determining if the participants will understand the questions that will be asked if the interview will be completed within the estimated completion time, and if there are any amendments to the questions that must be done. For this study, five skilled staff members at a construction company were interviewed, and any changes to the questions were affected accordingly.

3.9 Criteria for Inclusion in the Study

Involvement in the study was based on the following criteria:

- Only skilled staff in the construction industry were involved in the study. This, therefore, means that office-based staff are excluded from the study.
- Participants must have worked in their current construction company for at least six months. This enabled the participants to explain their feelings about their jobs, organisational culture, and the construction industry.

3.10 Data Collection

After obtaining permission to conduct the study in the company, the researcher contacted the target participants in person to request their consent to participate in the study (Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick 2008). Afterwards, the researcher made appointments at least a week before data collection so that the participants could prepare themselves for the interview. It was envisaged that the interviews would take place at participants' workstations as their familiar environments and during tea or lunch breaks to avoid interfering with participants' work activities.

On the scheduled day and time of the interview, the researcher explained to every participant that their involvement in the study would be voluntary; therefore, there was no payment or any form of reward for participating. Moreover, the participants reserved the right to withdraw from the study at any point without fear of being punished or victimised. During the interview, the researcher recorded the proceedings in writing or audio-recorded them after the participants consented to be audio-recorded. It was envisaged that the interview process would take not more than 15 minutes for each participant.

3.11 Data Analysis

Data analysis of the primary data was done using the thematic approach. This aligns with guidelines from several researchers (Braun and Clarke, 2012). The thematic analytic approach involves six steps the researcher must follow. The steps are summarised as follows:

3.11.1 Familiarising with the raw data

This stage involves reading Pedada (2023), re-reading the text, and taking notes so that the researcher gets an overview of the data before data analysis. If the proceedings were audio-recorded, the researcher will transcribe them.

3.11.2 Generating initial codes.

The coding Medelyan (2020) stages involve highlighting text sections, phrases or sentences and generating labels or codes explaining the content. At this stage, the researcher reviews the interview transcript and highlights phrases and sentences matching the codes. The codes depict an idea or feeling that is part of the text. Figure 3.1 below illustrates the thematic approach.

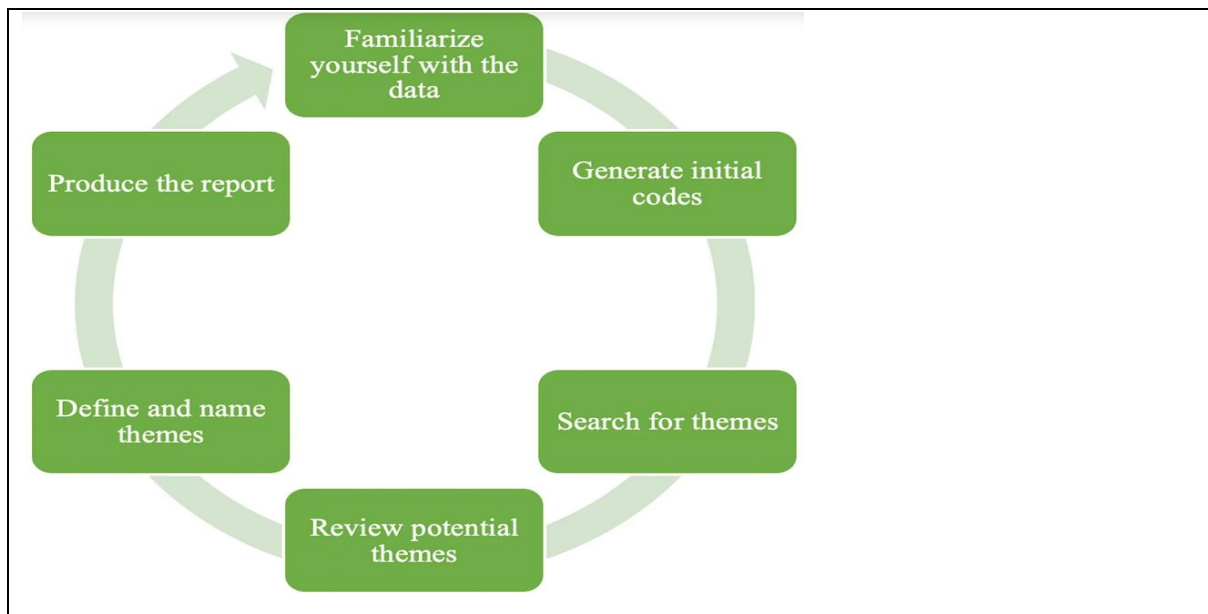


Figure 3.1: Stages in Thematic Analysis

Source: Braun and Clarke (2012)

3.11.3 Searching themes.

Patterns are determined from the codes, and the researcher starts generating themes. The themes are broader than the codes; several codes are combined to constitute a single theme. The researcher ensures that themes are not vague.

3.11.4 Reviewing potential theme:

At this stage, the themes must be more helpful and be a precise picture of the data. The themes generated in the previous stage are compared against the primary data, and the themes generated in the dataset are checked to see if anything is missing and if the themes are illustrative of the data. The review also involves checking if any changes must be made.

3.11.5 Defining and naming the themes.

The themes are named and defined. This involves formulating what each theme means and trying to understand how it assists the researcher in interpreting the data. Naming themes entails creating clear and intelligible names for each theme.

This researcher named the themes to determine the relationship between staff morale and the work environment.

3.11.6 Producing the report.

The results are presented, and each theme is reported at this stage. The researcher described the frequency with which the themes appeared and their meaning. Sometimes, the researcher could quote participants' responses word for word, where any critical point must be noted. In doing so, the researcher ensures that each objective is addressed.

3.12 Chapter Summary and Conclusion:

Chapter three deliberated on the research design and the methodology to achieve the research objectives. Chapter four analyses the data collected to explore factors affecting staff morale within the construction industry. The research methodology chapter is a vital feature of the whole research process. Since the study aims to investigate factors affecting staff morale within the construction industry, sample selection, sample size, measuring instruments, and methods are shown throughout the research methodology. Questionnaires were applied through semi-structured interviews, and the respondents participated. The collected data were captured and analysed using the thematic approach. Chapter four presents the results from participants' responses to the questions.

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter described the methods and techniques for collecting the information required to collect the data for analysis. The methodology chapter above, as a synopsis, indicates that the data would be collected through semi-structured interviews. The study involved male and female skilled employees within a construction company within the plant and hired space in South Africa. The researcher ended up conducting 15 Interviews using face-to-face sit-in interviews. This was to ensure a clear sense of participants' responses was received to gain the mood and understand the participants' feelings about every question.

This chapter presents the study results using a summarised view of the participants' responses and verbatim quotes. Then, the results are compared with those from the related studies in the literature review. The data from the related studies in the literature review and external links are built onto the data collected. The researcher used thematic analysis to analyse primary data. The researcher's results are presented by determining themes and sub-themes from the semi-structured interviews.

The section below goes into detail regarding the demographic data of the participants. The reasons for the data below are to describe the profiles of the participants and confirm that the primary data was collected from the correct participants, which raises the credibility of the results.

4.2 Profiles of Participants

A total of 15 skilled employees in the plant and hire space were interviewed within the construction industry. Six females (40%) and nine males (60%) were interviewed. The scale tilts more to the males' side, as the industry is still male-dominated and the reasons for that range from inequality in the past to opportunities being less for females within the industry.

In terms of the participants' selection criteria, their experience was looked at to ensure that all employees had been employed for over six months within the industry, had a basic understanding of English, and had at least a matric education to ensure that knowledge of the questions being asked was possible and that respondents could respond correctly. This simply means that the participants would be able to provide objective views about the issues under investigation and have some background experience about the morale of staff within their field, whether positive or negative.

In terms of experience, 10 (66.67%) out of the 15 employees had less than five years working within the industry, while five (33.33%) had five years or more within the industry and the companies in which they work. The distribution of experience went as follows: three (20%) participants were general workers, two (13.33%) were in management positions, and 10 (66.67%) were spread across the company.

4.3 Presentation and Discussion of the Results

4.3.1 Experiences around job-related factors contributing to low morale among the skilled staff in the construction industry in Johannesburg.

In the introductory interview question, the researcher sought to establish the participants' experiences in the organisation regarding job-related factors contributing to low morale among the skilled staff in the construction industry in Johannesburg, South Africa. The results revealed that most participants thought that the industry still had many racial differences, with one ethnic group benefiting more than the other. These results also revealed that the industry was not generally friendly to women, and this was indicated in that they were under-represented in the demographics. Female staff members indicated they were uncomfortable with the status quo. It was also discovered that some participants stated that the working hours were long, but they were not compensated for these. Communication between the management and employees was also poor.

Several participants (P1, P2, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11, P12, P13, P14 and P15) were specific that the company they work for has a communication problem; the

hours are high while not being compensated and material availability to perform their duties is of a low standard. In expressing their frustrations, most participants stated that they do not see things changing as management is unprepared to engage and correct anything. Participants 3 and 4 noted their frustrations regarding material availability. Moreover, they said there was nothing one could do as it is a private company, so in defeat, both noted that senior managers could run it how they liked. The researcher interprets that, from the participants' remarks from the outset, they seem to have a defeated attitude and accept that things might never change. Participant P6 simply said, "The hours are ridiculous. You are looked down upon when you talk about fatigue, and the treatment from management lays more on the dictatorship angle."

Based on their experiences, participants P1, P2, P3, and P4 indicated that a few years back, the company was not generating as much capital as it is now. Still, their general manager was more incentive-driven, to the point that there were different incentive structures such as quarterly bonuses, asset maintenance bonuses and yearly January bonuses to help with school fees and groceries for the children's new year. However, now the company, which is well more than generating profits of the well of R100 Million, does not even look at aiding and showing appreciation for its employees. In expressing their hopelessness, all participants except one agreed in some way or another that the company does not care how uncomfortable they are or whether or not the staff's challenging aspects matter; it is all about results, and you must find a way.

Notably, there have been attempts to gain information from employees regarding their struggles and difficulties using google forms, which are claimed to be anonymous. However, these forms are not being used to the extent they should be because people feel that the organisation is not being truthful regarding the documents' anonymity. Participants P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11, P12, P13, P14 and P15, who have been employed for under 5 years and above 6 months, predominantly see the company as one which is setting them up for failure. Hence, statements such as "The company will never fire you. You will just leave by yourself" and "These days and age, people are too sensitive and emotional" were confirmed by 60% of the participants. Participant P7 went deeper in stating that:

“as an employee working in this industry, particularly in this company, your opinion is always undermined and shut down because you are African firstly and secondly because you are a female, secondly tools are not available to perform your duty, you are usually set up to fail in this industry, going back to their arrogance in saying you will not get fired you will voluntarily leave, which means they know the organisation and industry is uncomfortable, and they will not change the norm”.

Failure to attend to the challenges seems to be the status quo within the industry. Having looked at other nations, South Africa does not have much research regarding this industry, and this may be because of the status quo. The previously disadvantaged group is under-represented, and tools are unavailable to attend to your duties. The results also reveal no mechanisms for transformation regarding gender, race, capital, or tools to improve the company. Most participants are pessimistic that they see any developments shortly to try to empower all employees and bring change to solve their employees' challenges.

4.3.2 Results on the job-related factors contributing to low morale among the skilled staff in the construction industry in Johannesburg.

The researcher is guided by the research objectives in Chapter One of the assignment to ensure a logical flow when presenting the study results. The researcher attempted to generate a methodological flow in the participants' responses. The results are presented in a table of themes and quotes extracted from Atlas.ti. This approach benefits the data collected as it allows for consistent results flow and ensures that each research question was adequately addressed. This ensures that every factor presented is shown in the research context, the results are precise, and all can be compared using the primary data from the literature. In the next section, two factors were identified to address the first research objective, which read as follows:

RO1: To determine the job-related factors contributing to low morale among skilled staff in the construction industry in Johannesburg.

Factor 1: Lack of Communication

The results revealed a lack of communication between employees and employers, whether at a lower or senior level. This obstructs staff from performing at their highest level, as they are not being heard. Lack of communication means there is no flow in message encryption and decryption, encoding and decoding processes. For this study, the lack of communication signifies that employees feel undervalued, and this creates a sense of uncertainty for the near future because if one's voice is shut down, one cannot express one's concerns. Usually, an unheard person is generally unhappy, leading to low morale. The table below depicts the results in their primary form. The themes and quotes were taken from the research questions and presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Factor I - Lack of Communication

Theme:	Subthemes:
Lack of Communication:	Communication is minimal, with no intention to improve it (P8, P10, P9, P2) Being undermined by management while suggesting things, especially females (P8, P7) Different departments not aligning in one communicable way (P1, P9, P11, P13, P2)

Participants P8, P10, P9 and P2 confirmed that communication is not at the highest level in the organisation. For instance, participant P8 stated, "Communication is one of the aspects which is the most challenging for us to perform our duties and attend to our responsibilities." In another view, the lack of communication also goes further in that some participants went into more detail regarding this, stating that communication and the lack thereof were more difficult for females, especially females of colour. Participant P7 went into detail saying that the company did not want to communicate with her and even her team, to the extent that the participant

felt undermined because the participant was a female; even when there was an opportunity to correct something, it was not valued because it came from a female.

Participants P9, P11, P13, and P2 further said that the lack of communication makes it difficult to achieve a seamless flow between the organisational departments internally and externally with clients. Participant P1 went on to touch on the factor that this issue affects the organisation not only internally but also externally, stating that because of the lack of urgency to generate a system which is open and fair, as well as inclusive in its approach to communication, the ripple effect sees morale being low and resulting in staff feeling no urgency to contact suppliers for invoices, which impacts the supply of stock which in turn impacts the production line internally, affecting the output of products to the clients in the market.

The results presented in Factor 1 confirm that communication is one of the reasons staff morale is low. The literature is unequivocal as (Millet, 2010) states that “it is essential to have everyone involved, this is to help the environment become more inclusive and make those who are around the environment feel important, the importance of inclusivity increases morale, and in the above you have people feeling undermined, through the lack of inclusivity through communication.”

Factor 2 - Limited Resources and Attention to Detail

Table 4. 2: Factor 2 - Limited Resources and Attention to Detail

Theme:	Subtheme:
Limited Resources and Attention to Detail.	Resources are limited, from spares and tools to complete tasks and to meet targets. (P1, P2, P10, P9, P1.P2.P10, P11, P12, P14, P4).

Participants 10,11,12,9,6 & 15 revealed that there are moments in business when tools are unavailable whenever they would like to perform their duties, affecting their production level. When this occurs, it appears that one is not productive, leading to the notion that you are a wasted company resource, while the reason is out of your hands. Resources requirements are different for the sales team as they need machines to be readily available to service clients; the bottleneck comes from the

fact that the mechanics and workshop do not have machines readily available, and also, mechanics cannot perform their duties due to the stores not having tools and spares available, which ends up creating a vicious cycle.

P4 went on to make a statement that sometimes the most challenging aspect arises from having to troubleshoot most problems they have from a technical point of view and when the problem has no solution. There are no resources to consult; they must think outside the box, and senior people usually decline the outcomes. Another thing which affects P4's job comes from the fact that the resources available are significantly limiting as the company does not want to move ahead with technology; thus, a lot of things are ancient, and the company does not recycle old for new, systems are old, technology is old, and the company is still too paper-driven. This becomes frustrating because, being in the 4th industrial revolution, many things would have been easier if technology had been brought in. When this was communicated to management, they were not receptive. P1 states that the most challenging part comes from an external source, which impacts the internal cause; for example, when parts, tools and resources are requested, these usually do not arrive or are short stocked, resulting in incorrect delivery. This affects progress internally, making staff members' jobs more frustrating, and they become demoralized and aggravated. Thus, they go home feeling torn apart because the impact of not bringing in the correct tools makes the internal people feel as though they are not doing their jobs. Once more, the outcome is an unforeseeable breakdown in communication, machines and a loss of trust between people.

In their study, Proto (2020) and Sgroi (2022) stress the importance of happiness within the organisation. They say that as employees, we become more productive if we are happy, according to their latest research. The doctors discovered that production levels increased by 12% when people were happy. Also, when people were in a healthy working environment, they began to invest more in their daily work activities. With the above being said, it is difficult to see where motivation and increased morale will come from in the chosen business if staff feel aggravated, held in a bottleneck, or stopped from finding a way forward. After all, the end goal for everyone is to find stability in what they do, and at this point, we are starting to see that.

RO2: To determine the organisational culture-related factors contributing to low morale among the skilled staff in the construction industry in Johannesburg.

The researcher aimed to provide the context of the results mentioned in the RO1 discussion above. In this discussion, the researcher sought to present the results of organisational culture-related factors that contribute to low morale among skilled staff in the construction industry in Johannesburg. This depends on a few things: resources, a healthy work environment and continued improvements within the industry and organisation. Apart from the expectation that employees should always perform according to their job descriptions, organisations have a duty to the employees to ensure that the correct tools are in place to perform their duties. Moreover, employees require feedback. They need to have trust in their managers, recognition, meaningful work, growth opportunities, positive company culture, and a supportive work environment.

Table 4.3: Compensation

Themes	Subthemes:
Compensation	The number of hours worked does not match the income (P7, P10, P11, P12, P13, P14).
Inconsistencies:	
Feedback from Company	Employees do not receive feedback frequently (P2, P7P4, P5, P6, P8, P9, P10, P11, P12, P13,P14,P15).
Stake- holders	

Several participants indicated that they had worked in the organisation for some time and were made to feel inferior. When they asked management about income, they were quickly made to feel inadequate. Many said it sometimes felt like they were in jail, as a bell rings at 7, 10H30, 13H00, and 16H45, making you feel like you are within a controlled facility. The company has senior managers interested in the business, so their decisions must benefit their dividends and pockets. Hence, the industry has below-average bonuses, market-related salaries, and compensation benefits.

Mainly, what worries the participants (P6, P7, P8, P5, P9, P11 and P14) is that they feel like they are in a “cult”; they have been drugged mentally to accept whatever

they are offered and are made to feel ungrateful about their compensation. Participant P6 went on to say that the feeling they have around the compensation they get for their job is that it is not enough compared to others in other companies and sectors in the same field of work.

The chosen company shows that shareholders come first, external stakeholders second and internal stakeholders last, but ethnicity plays a role, too. In conversation with many participants, the researcher discovered a trend or norm which was very scary: the continued reference to the fact that internally and externally, employees should not be surprised to be faced with racism. It is a norm within the industry, which is still monopolized and run by white owners (the minority in SA), to the extent that even internally, the organisation talks about external factors and stakeholders. Still, the minority benefit more than the majority, even regarding compensation structures.

The company also has not tried to improve on many of the aspects and concerns the employees have raised in the past. Dowra's (2020) research touches on a critical point. Section 4.3.1 of the researcher's report states that from their study, most participants said that "the industry was appalling; this was due to poor productivity at various levels of the different stakeholders, and a lack of accountability and a lack of good decision-making skills by management." The study participants also stated that the industry had many mistakes with no urgency before their resolution and no attempt to implement change, which seemed to have some comfortability in errors.

Another issue under this objective was that employees do not receive feedback from management and leaders. Feedback is vital in any organisation, and communication between staff and employees is the firm's lifeblood. Prayson & Rowe (2017) state that effective feedback is critical to creating a productive work environment. Prayson and Rowe (2017) further state that communication aids employees in gaining knowledge towards promoting their growth, mastering a new task or skill, finding out about their competency and allowing for "fodder for self-reflection while also getting the opportunity for potential inducement to improve their performance.'

P2 stated that the organisation's employees do not always give feedback as frequently as they should, but they try their best. P6 noted that staff do not get enough feedback sessions. Since she has been in the business, she has never had one. At the same time, P7 stated that there is no feedback of clearly stated goals and expectations outlined for them and the organisation. Furthermore, even if your thumb is sucked, incentive schemes are available, and your target keeps going up. Still, your incentive stays the same. For example, one of the departments has a target of R12 Million now, and the commission for the team is between R4000 and R6000; this was still in place when the target was below R10 Million. P2 queried, "So what are we doing? We are just being used and abused." The above is around 0.05% of what the firm has made, which is disrespectful.

Communication becomes vital because it helps everyone understand what is expected of them, helps them build confidence, and allows them to learn from their mistakes. Moreover, all constructive criticism is not about being harsh and hostile. Some hard conversations must be heard positively, and managers and executive teams must understand that it is not hard to find the correct words to have a constructive session and make their employees feel involved in the organisation. There is nothing wrong with congratulating someone for doing well and meeting their targets.

Figure 4.1 depicts the importance of organisational communication.

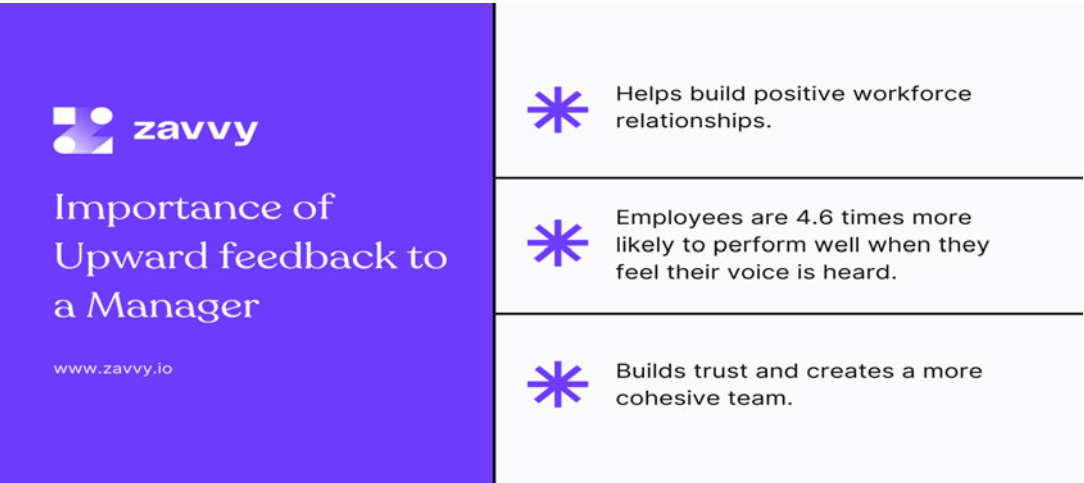


Figure 4. 1: Examining the value of Employee Feedback: What are the top Benefits?
Source: Kaikhosroshvili (2023)

Employee feedback is vital. Not going into too much detail, Kaikhosroshvili (2023) states the following key facts: feedback enhances performance. Kaikhosroshvili (2023) discovered that 69% of those employed actively work harder when their efforts are recognised with feedback from their seniors. Regarding retention rates in an industry struggling with retention rates, Kaikhosroshvili (2023) found that 24% of employees usually seek to leave their jobs if their managers do not communicate with them. "Employees who feel valued and feel truly back/supported with actionable feedback put themselves in a position which is most likely grounded in developing within the organisation and look to stay long term with the company. The one thing that stands out from the employees in the chosen firm is that the feedback was so poor that their efforts to open up were shut off, so most participants did not want to dwell on the company's and industry's culture-related issues, which affected them most. The findings show that people were defeated and just working with whatever went well. This is one of the reasons that allows one to go further and get more information while actively exploring other companies.

RO 3: To determine the industry-related factors contributing to low morale among the skilled staff in the construction industry in Johannesburg.

This objective aimed to determine what industry-related factors contribute to low morale among the skilled staff in this industry. The researcher first tried to unfold the realities that the staff faced: low morale among professional workers in the construction industry is a cause for concern. In all honesty, it has led to several negative consequences, ranging from a high staff turnover rate, poor quality of work and lowered efforts in productivity. All of these could have a significant effect in the long term. They could have a substantial effect in the long- or even in the short-run, and this impact could see profitability go down, an increase in unfair competitiveness and worse service delivery to the public.

Table 4.4: Poor working conditions and poor management

Themes	Sub-Themes
Poor Working Conditions:	The company has a very unclean feel to it.

Poor Management and Leadership	Leadership is not emotionally in tune and is very dictatorial.
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Participants held back in the beginning regarding the company's internal environment. Still, they suddenly allowed themselves to open up to industry-related issues, and what seemed to come up more was that industry-related issues also seemed more in line with internal matters. Employees first touched on that their low pay and benefits stood out more and continued to have an impact. This was because it seemed to be a norm in the construction industry that employees would be paid less than workers in other industries with similar skill levels doing less work. They also made it clear that they had fewer benefits, such as less vacation time, which led to a lot of them having financial stress and a sense that they had never felt valued by their employers.

Employees went on to link the two aspects and said that their lack of financial freedom and the industry wanting to see employees not succeed came from being pushed down and needing to be okay with whatever they got. Poor working conditions could result from the industry not caring and being more driven by targets and deadlines. Moreover, participants P2, P14, and P15 all touched on the fact that the environment is unhealthy and unsafe, to the point that throughout the year, the organisation used borehole water to flush toilets without filtering it. This has resulted in black water coming out of the bathrooms and a continued smell of excrement running through the whole organisation; however, management seems not to be bothered by this at all. Figure 4.2 below depicts basic workplace hygiene rules.

7 GOLDEN RULES: WORKPLACE HYGIENE



- 1 Wash hands regularly with warm water and soap
- 2 Drying hands is equally important as washing hands
- 3 Wipe your keyboard and phone regularly with sanitised wipes
- 4 Maintain good personal hygiene
- 5 Wear a mask in case of workplace epidemic
- 6 Regularly use sanitiser, especially after using the bathroom
- 7 Keep your workstation clean and tidy

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Figure 4. 2: Workplace Hygiene Etiquette Posters

Source: SWS Group (2020)

The importance of a healthy workplace allows people to feel more comfortable and freer to be at work because people usually spend more time at work than in other places besides their homes. Workplace hygiene is vital because it can enhance your business in many ways. (Yeung, 2019) states that keeping a hygienically sound workplace is essential.

This can lead to “a drastic reduction of illness, it can also increase staff attendance and also improve productivity”, and the inverse of that is the same if the environment is not healthy, it can lead to increased illnesses, leading to decreased staff attendance, impacting productivity and impacting profitability. As the chosen firm is financially secure, management must do their bit to ensure that workspaces are friendly. Another criticism from the respondents was regarding the leadership style.

Interviewees alleged that leadership is not emotionally in tune and very dictatorial. The organisation is a family business and is now run by one person who first has

personal interests at stake and has built a team around him that seems to be driven by power, which is why most employees mentioned that their managers and executive team used power to push employees to achieve unachievable targets; thus, the interviewees believed that power hunger was driving the leaders' targets.

Nevertheless, the participants have continually tried to get management to improve their management and leadership approaches; however, they have received a continued backlash from asking for more from their leaders. P1 mentioned that s/he wished they could get better treatment from their employers, while P7 stated that management needs to stop being hard on the employees; instead, they need to start approaching their employees to find out their concerns and try to create a work environment which is friendly enough for them to want to be there rather than always wanting to leave. P9 said the organisation did not make enough opportunities for change and requested that the company allow for together, enabling people to influence change while performing their duties. P9 elaborated that the organisation is failing them hugely; moreover, no one wants to assist people of colour, while no one of colour sits in the top seats. Instead, management tries to hide their racist antics and hide behind their suits. Instead, anyone who tries to raise a financial conversation gets shut down quickly or shipped out soon because management feels undermined.

The above shows the drive for management to have total control and ensure they are in control. This approach decreases morale and creates a very pressured environment where if you do not perform or do as they say, you are gone; thus, employees feel like they are walking on a tightrope and have no chance of achieving better prospects. Most participants indicated no succession plans in their organisation, and most stated that no clear policies and procedures are being executed. They simply do what they can daily. When problems occur, the business is comfortable reacting rather than pre-empting and stopping issues before their daily activities.

Employees felt that, from day one, they were on the back foot, and the organisation was okay if they made mistakes as that meant the organisation could replace them; hence, every month, they see new faces and usually, these do not last. Matsaung

(2014:31) states that a person with a sound mind comes with good intentions and confidence in the future. Mastung (2014) further elaborates that morale relates to mental and emotional well-being and is controlled by the employees' attitude regarding the willingness to perform their tasks. Thus, from the above, we see employees who seem to be suffocated by their environment, decreasing their desire to work as they have no purpose and no confidence. This results in low morale and the continued dictatorial drive of managers to maintain total control, which makes it challenging to perform. Moreover, the sad reality that the economy we have is not secure means people are subjected to staying in a hostile environment to feed their families and keep a roof over their heads.

Leadership problems are not the only reason for low morale. We need to understand that several industry-related factors can contribute. While the issues above (hygiene and leadership) have been named, in overview, industry-related other problems can include the following: low pay, no benefits, poor management and leadership styles from management, lack of job security, corruption, poor working conditions and nepotism, which still exists currently.

RO 4: To establish strategies for enhancing staff morale in the construction industry.

The final aim was to establish strategies to aid staff morale in the construction industry. Section 2.3 of this research dissertation speaks to Staff Morale. The researcher touched on a critical point, stating that staff morale is a measure of the attitude and levels of motivation of employees within all organisations, and different factors, such as satisfaction, absenteeism, and productivity levels, influence this. Therefore, one needs to create strategies aligning with the goal of better productivity and morale. Staff morale looks at the satisfaction level of one's work and employer. This is a vital factor in business as it helps with productivity, retention levels and, finally, the success of the organisation in general.

The construction industry in South Africa is still very backwards in terms of development. We must understand that it is an industry which can be hazardous and demanding on its employees, which means we need to create an environment with high staff morale for the safety and efficiency of the employees. In Section 2.4,

Millet (2010) states that heightened emotions mean less negativity and less slacking at work, and people would be less inclined to let their team down. Having stated the above, there are several ways that construction companies in South Africa can enhance staff morale. This requires the industry to consider intrinsic and extrinsic motivators boldly. External motivations would include incentives such as financial compensation, company benefits and award ceremonies. Internal motivators would consist of having a healthy work environment, creating a sense of belonging, a sense of purpose, achievement, and personal development within the organisation.

Table 4.5: Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivators

Themes	Subthemes:
Extrinsic motivators	Financial rewards, awards, and team-building activities. (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11, P12, P13, P14, P15).
Intrinsic Motivators	Achievement recognition and management are coming to the party (P1, P5, P6, P7).

Regarding the extrinsic motivators, financial rewards, awards and team-building activities, participants P1-15 all had the same view of becoming comfortable. The company would need to develop a new strategy to see employees receive fair and competitive financial rewards. No matter how much companies run away from this, it is all employees' most essential extrinsic motivator. In this highly demanding industry, the employees need to be paid fairly for their hard work, time spent away from home and the daily risks. Employees felt that employers should review their compensation packages regularly to ensure that they are in line with the industry's standards and that they are meeting the needs of their employees. Many of the employees felt that the employer simply brushed aside their requests. Participants stated that they would appreciate management moving away from the mindset that this is how it has been for years and how it will stay. Instead, they need to address

the crucial issues that have been raised. Thus, they need to review their people management styles.

The employees all felt that it was essential that, in addition to their financial packages being looked at, the employers needed to offer various benefits to ensure they retain employees. Employees came up with health insurance, retirement savings plans, paid time off and more educational assistance. Some out-of-the-box ideas that continually came up were that the employees would appreciate transportation assistance and wellness programmes as many suffer stress and have no one to go to. For example, the financial sector has a helpline all employees can call when they suffer emotionally and mentally. P5 further mentioned more team-building activities and long service recognition incentives. This refers to recognition and Marlow's need for self-esteem, as employees appreciate being seen for their hard work and accomplishments, even if these are not work-related. Employers should be looking to show their appreciation in many ways, such as award ceremonies, incentive skims and public praise.

Businesses always need to look at increasing the morale of their employees. This can come from continued employee engagement and allow for a positive work environment, motivating employees and thus improving overall performance. As intrinsic motivators, reward systems and management coming to the party were mentioned. Millet (2010) states that it is essential to have everyone involved to make them feel included and ensure everyone feels valued in the business. The problem is that if you have depressed employees, you have people who drag themselves through the day. The importance of targeting the intrinsic values of people comes into play. P7 touched on the importance of instilling a sense of importance, which looks at employees wanting to feel connected to their work and making a difference.

P7 required more effort from the employers' engagement and requested that employers find out more about the concerns of their employees and try to make the work environment friendlier. The employees further requested that the business become more involved in guiding their personal growth. Participant 14 stated that s/he would appreciate the industry becoming more aware of their employees' emotional well-being and increasing the effort to encourage a work-life balance. P14

would also like to see the workplace becoming healthier, be it in any field in the construction sector. Managers must concentrate more on supporting their workers by offering different personal growth opportunities and business development skills, which will help create a culture of continued learning and improvement.

The business needs to go to the extent of wanting to be in tune with employees' minds. There needs to be more awareness of cultural diversity within the workplace. South Africa is a country which is hugely diverse and has a comprehensive workforce. Employers should understand that having a wide range of employees should make them more mindful of cultural values and be sensitive to different views.

4.4 Summary

The above chapter aided the researcher in analysing the results, which were supported by the information discussed in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 unpacked the outcomes of the issues that impacted the staff morale within the construction industry. The study permitted empirical data collection, allowing the researcher to gain in-depth knowledge from the employees' responses to the research questions and objectives. The data collected was split into the vital standout areas, reflecting the different views on the morale of the skilled employees. The analysis was successfully done and concluded, and the researcher suggests that leaders within the construction field need to consider looking more into the morale of their employees to increase morale while also taking care of the high staff turnover rate. This will allow the employees to improve their performance, which will assist in the sustainability of the construction industry.

5. CHAPTER 5: Findings and Conclusions

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter unpacked the results that were collected from the interviews. In this chapter, the findings are presented, and the research objectives are used to structure the presentation of the details in the results. The chapter makes recommendations for the construction industry, policymakers, and people in senior management positions. The final few parts of the chapter will also present the limitations of the study, areas for further research and the conclusion required. In the next section of this chapter, the demographic information of the study is linked to the research questions. This is vital because the right participants for the study had to be used to raise and generate credibility of the results.

5.2 Demographic Information

The researcher interviewed a total of 15 participants in their research sample. Thus, 15 skilled participants in the plant and hire space were interviewed within the construction industry. Six participants were females (40%), while nine male participants (60%) were interviewed. The scale tilts more to the male side because the industry, as we have come to understand, is still male dominated. The participants all have experience in the field and at least have the aptitude to understand the English language and are literate, which was vital. Considering these results, the researcher can state that the participants were all prepared to participate in the research and provide clear and valid responses that could be relied on.

The participants came from the construction industry and were within the plant and hire space. Based on the data collected, the participants met the criteria for inclusion in the study. The following section presents the study's critical data, which were presented in the previous chapter and guided by the research objectives in Chapter 1.

5.3 Findings

The researcher took the opportunity to present the study's findings in the last chapter. The purpose of this section is merely to present the main findings in a summary format guided by the researcher's research objectives. The results are presented as follows:

5.3.1 Research Objective 1:

To determine the job-related factors contributing to low morale among the skilled staff in the construction industry in Johannesburg.

The job-related factor that contributed to the employees' low morale and stood out the most was the fact that the resources required were insufficient, from tools to communication to and from the seniors. In a study by (Mabindisa and Legoabe, 2021), it became clear that inconsistencies in leadership styles, poor or lack of management communication of organisational objectives and poor communication between employees and management influenced and contributed to low staff morale.

5.3.2 Research Objective 2:

To determine the organisational culture-related factors contributing to low morale among the skilled staff in the construction industry in Johannesburg.

The employees, about the culture-related factors within the organisation, stated that the key things that stood out were the following: a lack of safety, a lack of resources and the hygiene levels of the office. This hugely impacted the performance of the employees, as their morale dropped because employees felt as though they were not valued and listened to.

5.3.3 Research objective 3:

To determine the industry-related factors contributing to low morale among the skilled staff in the construction industry in Johannesburg.

The industry has a lot of factors that stand out regarding the impact of low morale, and while this is focused on skilled employees only, there is a sense that the same issues are spread across the firm. The participants interviewed highlighted that the things which stood out were mainly that the industry was still hugely dominated by racial minorities, the industry had a tremendous turnover rate regarding employees, which meant that job security was deficient. Dowra 2020) had a similar study focusing on lean construction principles. In section 4.3.1, one of the interviewees stated that the current construction industry is struggling financially but could improve if the thinking changed regarding how things were managed. One of the other participants in (Dowra's 2020) study noted that the sector was flooded with low-skilled labour, so transferring skills from international experts was low. This would go back to the industry-related issues that impacted the morale of this study.

5.3.4 Research Objective 4:

To establish strategies for enhancing staff morale in the construction industry.

The research took the time to understand what the employees touched on the most, and what stood out was more interaction between employees and management, the need for work-life balance improvement, and the space in which each employee finds themselves.

5.4 Recommendations

In light of the thematic approach, from the findings presented in the section preceding this one, this section seeks to make recommendations to policymakers, the construction industry and the government; the reason for the above is that these are parties who play an integral part in the development of the sector and in general, the public as a whole.

5.4.1 Policymakers

The key to aiding the environment in becoming more fruitful is that policymakers must create policies that protect workers' rights in the industry. This would include ensuring fair wages and salaries, safer working conditions, and workers' safety and respect. Furthermore, this can aid in increasing morale and decrease the turnover in the industry. The industry needs to come up with more financial incentives to help construction companies that invest in employee development and training. This will push the companies to invest in their employees, which could lead to improved morale and productivity.

Policymakers will need to ensure that in line with how the country is looking to build on their democratic line of work, they would need to promote more diversity and look at more inclusion schemes in the industry. This will create a more welcoming and supportive environment for all involved while improving education and training.

5.4.2 The construction industry

The promotion of a work-life balance is vital. This can be done by looking at different fields, from telecommuting and flexitime, offering flexible work arrangements, which would increase their hybrid view on work, which has gained more light after COVID-19. The industry would also need to look at investing more in the development of their employees while looking to create a positive and supportive work environment, which would look to foster a culture of respect, honour, transparency and teamwork while providing each employee with the resources required to support them to perform their duties effectively. The industry needs to look more into recognition and reward systems, which could come from the generation of formal programmes, such as performance bonus schemes and employee of the month awards.

5.4.3 Government

The government needs to foster a more positive light on the industry, take more control over it, invest more in projects while creating jobs and boosting the economy, and give entrepreneurial skills to the correct people in the majority space to kill the

monopolization by a small minority. The government would need to work with the construction industry to create regulations to enable the well-being of employees and ensure job security for all, as the industry has a high turnover rate.

The above is vital as the researcher believes that by making recommendations to the above-selected group of decision-makers, these people can improve staff morale within the South African construction industry. This may lead to more significant development and more productivity and competitiveness within the workforce, which will benefit the economy and the industry.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

The small sample size of around 15 participants would be the most significant limitation. The main concern for the researcher in this case is that the findings may not be generalised to the entire country, sector, or region. Moreover, the study used semi-structured interviews, which sometimes can be subjected to biased views, depending on how the researcher has positioned the questions and how the researchers interpret the data in their analysis.

The researcher also discovered that the research was done over a single period, so it could not be varied. Instead, one could understand different views and perspectives if this had been done over a long period. Another thing that stood out was that the participants were all from a single plant and hired construction company, so the findings may not represent the entire industry. Regardless of the above, the study helped us gain valuable insights into the factors affecting staff morale within a segment of the country's construction industry. The researcher believes that the findings can aid in the country generating drives to improve staff morale within the industry, which may lead to a more productive, driven and competitive environment.

5.6 Areas for Further Research

This researcher makes a few recommendations to further research morale within the construction industry. The researcher relied on qualitative data. Combining

qualitative and quantitative data would provide more information on the topic under investigation. The mixed method approach would allow us to objectively investigate the morale of the staff in the industry by allowing participants to open up more and justify their views more clearly while also scaling their satisfaction and dissatisfaction levels.

Another area is that the study focused only on one portion of the industry, the plant and hire space in the construction industry, and this is a very narrow focus. Thus, research into the entire sector would allow the results to be generalised across the industry. The researcher recommends that further studies include more sectors and employees, such as the mining space, contractors and operators. The researcher also believes there is room to investigate the impact that different leadership styles would have on every employee in the industry, the impact that diversity and inclusion would have on staff morale and the relationship between how the organisation performs and how it relates to the organisation's employee morale in the long.

5.7 Summary of the Study

The study aimed to determine the factors affecting staff morale within a construction company in South Africa. The researcher aimed to add to previous studies which have been done, as these focused more on the international market and other industries. There appear to be limited studies that have focused on the morale of staff in the construction industry in South Africa and the world in general. To deal with the research objectives, qualitative data was collected from employees who had at least six months of experience in the industry, allowing us to get a fresh perspective of the industry. Different generations were also included to see any similarities in views. Semi-structured interviews were used, which were conducted face-to-face.

The interviews were done face-to-face in a comfortable environment away from any pressures. A total of 15 interviews were conducted in the study, which was vital in trying to get to what was at the heart of the factors influencing staff morale, positively or negatively. The use of this method was critical because, previously, many studies regarding morale were done using quantitative methods. This researcher went for a

more pragmatic approach as the researcher wanted the face-to-face interaction to get solid information while connecting with the person telling their story.

As stated above, the researcher interviewed 15 participants in the research sample. As noted above, the participants were skilled in the plant and hire space and were interviewed within the construction industry. The results indicated that the right participants were recruited for the study, and the information can be relied on. The study emphasized that leadership is vital in any organisation, and what we learnt is that when leadership is not strong and balanced, you end up having employees who have low morale, especially when they feel less supported and respected. Here, the study revealed that communication was raised more than once as a problem, which meant that, in general, people enjoy being kept informed about the developments in their space; conversely, what poor communication did to them was that it decreased their morale and decreased their productivity.

Remuneration was also a central theme for the participants. Employees will always be looking to be well paid in anything they do because everyone works to put food on the table. So, in this case, the majority of the participants were unhappy with their compensation for their work and made it clear they did not have access to good benefits; moreover, the work-life balance was non-existent for the majority, and this was because they were more invested in trying to secure their job in an industry which has a high turn-over rate.

Hence, the volatility levels were not safe for anyone, which meant the business was more important than anything else, and this caused many employees to lose touch with themselves. In a nutshell, the research indicates that the construction industry is freezing and needs further investigation. In the end, the study made recommendations to the government for the construction sector, including its leaders and policymakers. It also suggested a few areas where the researcher believed other researchers could further go to and develop.

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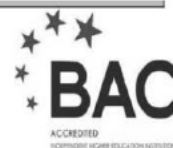
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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE



Our Ref: M.390623
Enquiries: research@iie.ac.za



24
July
2023



Interview Questions for Plant Hire Employees in the Construction Industry.



Student Name: Obakeng Kubu
Student number: [REDACTED]
Brand and campus: IIE/MSA



Dear Participant:

Please could you kindly assist in participating in the following Research Proposal: Factors Affecting Staff Morale Within a South African Construction Company. The Reason for the study is as follows



1. To determine the job-related factors contributing to low morale among the skilled staff in the construction industry in Johannesburg
2. TO determine the organisational culture-related factors contributing to low morale among the skilled staff in the Construction industry in Johannesburg
3. To determine the industry-related factors contributing to low morale among the skilled staff
4. To Establish strategies for enhancing staff morale within the construction industry.

PLEASE BE ADVISED YOUR INFORMATION WILL NOT BE SHARED AND DISPLAYED TO ANYONE, AS PER POPIA ACT, INFORMATION WILL BE STORED AND YOUR NAMES WILL NOT BE SHARED AND USED IN THE RESEARCH, AND WILL NOT BE

Name and Surname	[REDACTED]
Sign:	[REDACTED]
Date:	

QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW: please ANSWER AS BEST AS POSSIBLE:	ANSWERS:
1. Please describe the most challenging aspects of your job?	
2. Please explain how you feel about the Compensation (salary and incentives) you get for your job?	
3. Please explain how you feel about the adequacy of the resources you require to perform your job effectively?	
4. Please explain how you feel about your work in terms of whether it is meaningful to you and makes a difference?	
5. What do you say about the quality and frequency of the feedback from your seniors (managers Junior or Senior) ?	
6. What are your perceptions of your organisation in terms of fairness and equity? Please be honest	
7. What is your view about your company in terms of providing opportunities for professional development?	
8. What is your view about your organisation in terms of facilitating a positive work-life balance?	
9. How do you think the challenges in your organisation influence the morale among the workers?	
10. What do you think are some of the best ways Screenshot help improve morale of staff within your organisation?	

APPENDIX 2: INFORMED CONSENT FORM



Our Ref: M.390623
Enquiries: research@iie.ac.za



24
July
2023



Interview Questions for Plant Hire Employees in the Construction Industry.



Student Name: Obakeng Kubu
Student number: [REDACTED]
Brand and campus: IEMSA



Dear Participant:

Please could you kindly assist in participating in the following Research Proposal: Factors Affecting Staff Morale Within a South African Construction Company. The Reason for the study is as follows



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Name and Surname	[REDACTED]
Sign:	[REDACTED]
Date:	

APPENDIX 3: LANGUAGE EDITOR'S CERTIFICATION

Editing Service: Lee Kemp

14 Carlisle St

Mount Croix

Port Elizabeth

6001

16 Octber 2023

082 723 5408

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

EDITING OF TREATISE: MR OBAKENG LAURENCE KUBU (ST10222)

This serves to confirm that I edited Mr Kubu's MBA Treatise, which is to be submitted to the The Independent Institute of Education, (IIEMSA).

The editing focused on language errors, paraphrasing, flow and in-text referencing. I also edited the reference list. I have no knowledge if the author accepted all the corrections made; thus, I cannot be held responsible for any remaining errors.

Yours faithfully



Ms L Kemp

Screenshot

...ons English); MBA

Screenshot

ber: Nelson Mandela University Editors' Forum

ANNEXURE K

ANNEXURE K– ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF EXAMINER’S FEEDBACK (IIE007)

EXAMINATION OF MASTER’S DISSERTATION / DOCTORAL THESIS

Students having received feedback from the examiners with typographical, minor revisions, or resubmission must populate the below table with the examiner’s feedback and showcased how the feedback has been addressed. Should you need more lines kindly add on to the table and ensure that all examiner feedback is addressed accordingly.

Examiners’ feedback (List key recommendations/ concerns of Examiner)	Student’s reflection on recommendations/ concerns and understanding of action steps to be taken	Student’s indication of how and where changes were implemented in the dissertation/ thesis.	Supervisor(s) reflections and feedback on the implementation of student’s representation on examiners feedback.
1. Language Editing	Language editing to university standard to be improved, as the student will work on it. Grammatical and language errors need to be attended.	Language editing changes accepted, done by Lee Kemp. Used also extensive online tools including Microsoft word, for spell proofing and grammar checks. In text referencing corrected. Including the intext which was mostly in error.	

Examiners' feedback (List key recommendations/ concerns of Examiner)	Student's reflection on recommendations/ concerns and understanding of action steps to be taken	Student's indication of how and where changes were implemented in the dissertation/ thesis.	Supervisor(s) reflections and feedback on the implementation of student's representation on examiners feedback.
2. Abstract does provide clear and detailed description of the study	Abstract needs to detail what will be occurring within the study and needs to be clear and must reflect on the study.	Abstract was re-written to a standard which is acceptable. Page I-ii	
3. Chapter 2 literature review reworked.	Literature review added more detail to enhance the chapter	Subtitles were added to back up the theory, looking at the working conditions, looking at factors affecting morale in the construction industry, the salaries and wages, health & safety and finally having a glance look at working time. Page 17-18	
4. Academic references to back study	Student needs to find more, sources to back study, in order to build the argument and give it more legs to run with.	As stated, when submitting my proposal, this is field which people are not looking to investigate and do research on as it is a hostile environment. I myself can attest that it is still one of the industries which is still coming hard by for change and is still highly controlled and manipulated by the minority.	

I confirm that I addressed the feedback of examiners accordingly and provided correct details on where the updated changes can be found within the dissertation/ thesis.	
--	--

Signature of Student	Date
	07/05/2024
I confirm that the student addressed the feedback of examiners accordingly and provided correct details on where the updated changes can be found within the dissertation/thesis.	
Signature of Supervisor	Date
Signature of co-supervisor	Date