



A Descriptive Exploratory Study of Organisational Culture, Employee Engagement and Organisational Performance in the Public Sector in South Africa

Güney Afrika'daki Kamu Sektöründe Örgüt Kültürü, Çalışan Katılımı ve Örgütsel Performansa İlişkin Tanımlayıcı Keşifsel Bir Araştırma

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Abstract

This study adopts a descriptive exploratory research design to examine how organisational culture, employee engagement, and organisational performance are perceived and experienced within three South African public sector institutions. The research aims to describe patterns, uncover relationships, and identify institutional differences in how employees interpret their work environment and its impact on engagement and performance outcomes. Using a structured questionnaire, data were collected from 408 employees and analysed through descriptive statistics and normality assessments. The findings reveal that respondents reported high levels of agreement with positive organisational culture attributes, including inspiring leadership, transparent communication, and a challenging work environment. Similarly, strong perceptions of engagement were observed through commitment, satisfaction, and job involvement. Organisational performance, measured through motivation, retention, and employee-reported results, also received favourable ratings. ANOVA results confirmed statistically significant differences across institutions, suggesting that perceptions of culture, engagement, and performance vary between public organisations. Post-hoc comparisons further identified one organisation as exhibiting distinct strengths in leadership and engagement practices. This descriptive exploratory study provides a contextualised understanding of how public sector employees experience internal organisational dynamics. The results offer insight into the human factors shaping institutional effectiveness and inform strategic efforts to enhance engagement and performance in South Africa's public sector landscape.

Keywords: Organisational Culture, Employee Engagement, Public Sector, Organisational Performance, South Africa, Leadership, Communication.

Jel Codes: M1, M140.

Öz

Bu çalışma, üç Güney Afrika kamu kurumu içerisinde örgüt kültürü, çalışan bağlılığı ve örgütsel performansın nasıl algılandığını ve deneyimlendiğini incelemek üzere betimleyici-keşfedici bir araştırma deseni benimsenmektedir. Araştırmanın amacı, çalışanların çalışma ortamlarını ve bu ortamın bağlılık ile performans çıktıları üzerindeki etkilerini nasıl yorumladıklarına ilişkin örneklere ortaya koymak, ilişkileri belirlemek ve kurumlar arasındaki farklılıkları saptamaktır. Veriler, yapılandırılmış bir anket aracılığıyla 408 çalışandan toplanmış ve betimleyici istatistikler ile normalite analizleri kullanılarak değerlendirilmiştir. Bulgular, ilham verici liderlik, şeffaf iletişim ve gelişime olanak tanıyan bir çalışma ortamı gibi olumlu örgüt kültürü unsurlarına ilişkin yüksek düzeyde katılım olduğunu göstermektedir. Benzer şekilde, çalışan bağlılığına ilişkin algılar da yüksek olup bağlılık, memnuniyet ve işe adanmışlık boyutlarında güçlü değerlendirmeler elde edilmiştir. Motivasyon, elde tutma ve çalışanların bildirdiği sonuçlar üzerinden ölçülen örgütsel performans da olumlu yönde değerlendirilmiştir. ANOVA sonuçları, kurumlar arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı farklılıklar bulunduğunu ortaya koymuş; bu durum, kültür, bağlılık ve performansa ilişkin algıların kamu kurumları arasında değiştiğini göstermiştir. Post-hoc analizler ise kurumların birinin liderlik ve bağlılık uygulamaları açısından belirgin güçlü yönleri sahip olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Genel olarak, bu betimleyici-keşfedici çalışma, kamu sektörü çalışanlarının iç örgütsel dinamikleri nasıl deneyimlediğine ilişkin bağlamsallaştırılmış bir anlayış sunmaktadır. Bulgular, kurumsal etkililiği şekillendiren insan unsurlarına ışık tutmakta ve Güney Afrika kamu sektörü bağlamında çalışan bağlılığını ve performansını geliştirmeye yönelik stratejik çabalara katkı sağlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kurumsal Kültür, Çalışan Katılımı, Kamu Sektörü, Örgütsel Performans, Güney Afrika, Liderlik, İletişim.

Jel Kodları: M1, M140.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the pursuit of improved public service delivery, the internal dynamics of public sector organisations have come under increasing academic and managerial scrutiny. In South Africa, where state institutions face mounting pressure to meet performance mandates amidst socio-political and fiscal constraints, understanding the factors that drive organisational effectiveness is critical. Central to this inquiry is the interaction between organisational culture, employee engagement, and organisational performance and three interrelated constructs that shape how institutions function and deliver value to citizens.

Organisational culture, broadly defined as the collective values, assumptions, and practices shared within an organisation, is a foundational mechanism for regulating employee behaviour and institutional norms (Schein and Schein, 2021). In the public sector, culture plays a decisive role in overcoming bureaucratic inertia and fostering responsiveness. Contemporary organisational research's most influential cultural dimensions are inspiring leadership, transparent communication, and a challenging work environment. Inspiring leadership refers to the ability of leaders to articulate a clear vision, motivate staff, and model ethical behaviour (Cameron and Quinn, 2011). Transparent communication ensures employees have access to timely and relevant information, contributing to psychological safety and alignment. A challenging work environment, on the other hand, reflects the degree to which employees are encouraged to grow, innovate, and perform at their best.

Closely linked to culture is employee engagement, which captures the degree of physical, emotional, and cognitive energy individuals invest in their work roles. Employee engagement is multi-dimensional, with job satisfaction, job involvement, and organisational commitment emerging as its core components (Schaufeli, 2021). Job satisfaction pertains to employees' affective response towards their tasks and working conditions. Job involvement reflects the degree to which work is central to an employee's identity, while organisational commitment entails an employee's loyalty and willingness to contribute to the organisation's goals (Mmakola and Majola, 2023). Engaged employees are likelier to demonstrate discretionary effort, take ownership of outcomes, and contribute to team and organisational success.

Organisational performance within the public sector extends beyond financial metrics to include outcomes such as employee motivation, retention, and organisational results. Motivation is the internal drive that propels employees to exert effort and maintain performance standards. Retention reflects the ability of an organisation to keep skilled employees over time, which is especially important in a sector plagued by high turnover and skills shortages. Organisational results, particularly in the public domain, include goal attainment, service delivery impact, and public value creation.

Although these constructs have been widely studied, there is a noticeable gap in empirical research that combines these fundamental factors in an integrated framework, particularly within the South African public sector. Most prior research has either been sector-specific or limited in scope, failing to account for the multi-dimensional nature of engagement and the institutional variations between public bodies. Given South Africa's socio-economic challenges and the urgent need to revitalise the public sector workforce, a deeper understanding of how culture and engagement contribute to performance is timely and necessary.

This study responds to that need by conducting a descriptive exploratory analysis of organisational culture, employee engagement, and organisational performance across three South African public institutions. By focusing on their core dimensions, which are inspiring leadership, communication, work environment, satisfaction, involvement, commitment, motivation, retention, and organisational results, the research offers critical insights into how these factors operate collectively to shape institutional outcomes. The study thus contributes to both theory and practice by identifying performance-enhancing pathways sensitive to the realities of the South African public sector context.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Organisational Culture

Organisational culture in public institutions represents the shared values, beliefs, symbols, and assumptions that shape how work is performed and how people relate to one another (Schein, 2017). In South Africa's public sector context, this culture is often shaped by the legacy of bureaucracy, accountability mandates, transformation imperatives, and a growing need for citizen-centred service delivery. This study explores how employees perceive and experience organisational culture across multiple public sector institutions, mainly focusing on three fundamental components: inspiring leadership, open and transparent communication, and an engaging and challenging work environment.

Inspiring Leadership

The presence of ethical, motivational, and people-oriented leadership has been increasingly recognised as central to nurturing a constructive public service culture. A descriptive analysis showed that public sector employees in emerging economies associate cultural positivity with visible and value-driven leadership. In South Africa, such leadership fosters morale and alignment with public service values.

Open and Transparent Communication

Communication practices play a pivotal role in shaping culture by determining how information is shared, how decisions are made, and how inclusive the environment feels. In South Africa, employees have described transparent internal communication as a necessary but inconsistently practised element of organisational life. This study explores how employees perceive communication clarity, consistency, and sincerity within their institutions.

Challenging and Engaging Environment

Culture is also expressed through the degree to which organisations challenge employees intellectually, promote innovation, and recognise performance. Some researchers noted that in environments where public sector employees are exposed to varied, meaningful tasks and development opportunities, there is a stronger perception of a positive culture, even in resource-constrained settings.

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement in the public sector is a multi-dimensional construct referring to employees' emotional, cognitive, and behavioural connection toward their work and their organisation. In this descriptive exploratory study, employee engagement is not treated as an outcome to be explained but as a phenomenon to be explored based on how it is expressed

and experienced in different institutional settings. Three subcomponents of engagement guide this exploration: organisational commitment, job involvement, and employee satisfaction.

Organisational Commitment

Commitment is described as the degree to which employees are emotionally attached to, involved in, and identify with the values and goals of their organisation. This study descriptively explores how employees express loyalty, pride, and desire to remain in their current organisations.

Job Involvement

Job involvement refers to the personal importance an individual places on their job and how central their role is to their identity (Kanungo, 1982). In the public sector, this may be reflected in how employees speak about their daily tasks, their sense of purpose, and the meaningfulness of their work. This study investigates whether such perceptions are widely shared or uneven across organisational contexts.

Employee Satisfaction

Satisfaction reflects employees' contentment with various job aspects, such as supervision, workload, fairness, and development opportunities. This study explores the satisfaction and dissatisfaction voiced by employees without presupposing whether such experiences lead to performance outcomes.

Organisational Performance

The public sector's performance is a complex, multi-dimensional construct encompassing service quality, policy effectiveness, citizen satisfaction, and institutional sustainability. Rather than relying on objective performance metrics, this descriptive exploratory study investigates how employees perceive their organisation's performance as a crucial but often overlooked dimension in performance discourse. The performance domain is examined through three observed lenses: employee motivation, retention, and organisational results.

Employee Motivation

Motivation, particularly intrinsic motivation, is frequently cited as a driver of public service excellence. However, what motivates employees is highly contextual and subjective. In a descriptive review of provincial government workers, it was found that motivation often stemmed from a sense of community impact, recognition, and the opportunity to serve. This study investigates how public sector employees describe their motivation and what factors they identify as energising or depleting.

Employee Retention

While turnover statistics often measure retention, this study seeks to understand why employees choose to stay or consider leaving based on their experiences. The Public Service Commission (2023) highlighted career stagnation and organisational inertia as key push factors. This research explores qualitative perceptions of institutional loyalty, long-term career viability, and alignment between employee expectations and organisational reality.

Organisational Results

Finally, organisational performance is observed through employee interpretations of how well their institutions meet goals, satisfy the public, and improve over time. This study thus captures employee-informed narratives on what constitutes performance, progress, or underperformance.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative, descriptive exploratory research design to investigate the relationship between organisational culture, employee engagement, and organisational performance within South Africa's public sector. Given public institutions' dynamic and often heterogeneous nature, a design that allows for structured measurement and comparative analysis was deemed appropriate. This methodology facilitated a nuanced exploration of employee perceptions while enabling the statistical examination of inter-organisational variation.

3.1. Research Design and Philosophical Orientation

The positivist paradigm guided the research, which supports using objective measurement and statistical analysis to test hypotheses and uncover observable relationships (Bryman, 2016). A cross-sectional survey method was used, which enabled the researcher to collect a large volume of data within a limited timeframe and conduct comparisons across institutions at a single point in time. This design has been widely used in public management research and has proven particularly effective in studies assessing institutional culture, engagement, leadership dynamics, and performance in government and state-owned enterprises.

3.2. Sampling and Data Collection

Data were collected from 408 employees across three South African public sector organisations. The sampling frame consisted of full-time employees in management and non-management roles. This non-probability method enabled the inclusion of individuals with sufficient knowledge and experience of institutional culture, employee engagement, and work environment dynamics, as recommended in organisational behaviour studies. Primary data were obtained through a self-administered structured questionnaire designed to measure eleven core constructs. These included organisational culture, inspiring leadership, transparent communication, challenging work environment, employee engagement, organisational commitment, employee satisfaction, job involvement, employee motivation, employee retention, and organisational results. Responses were captured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree".

3.3. Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS (version 28) and SmartPLS 4, combining descriptive and inferential statistical procedures. Descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions and percentages, were calculated to summarise employee responses for each construct. A one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted for each construct to investigate differences across the three organisations. Further analysis was performed using post-hoc tests, including Tukey's HSD and the Least Significant Difference (LSD) method, to determine

the source of these differences. To ensure the validity of parametric testing, a normality assessment was conducted using skewness and kurtosis values for each item.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Most respondents (63.7%) were female, which outnumbers male employees (36.3%), suggesting that the workforce is predominantly female. Most employees (38.7%) are 30-39 years old, followed by 40-49 years (33.8%). Younger employees (18-29) are only 12.5%, while 15% are 50+ years old. This suggests a well-balanced workforce but relatively fewer young professionals entering the organisation. 34.3% of the respondents hold a Diploma, making it the most common qualification. Degree holders accounted for 29.9%, whereas 14.5% were Honours/Postgraduate Diploma holders, and only 10.8% hold a Master's degree. This suggests that most employees have mid-level qualifications, with few having advanced degrees.

The workforce is predominantly Black (95.3%), with a small representation of White (2.2%) and Coloured (2.5%) employees. This could be due to regional demographics or diversity and inclusion policies. It was observed that 85.3% of employees earn more than R10,000, while 14.7% earn between R5,000 - R10,000. This suggests that most employees earn above a lower-middle-income threshold. 67.9% of employees have worked for over 6 years. Only 1.7% have worked for less than a year, while 14.5% have 1-2 years of experience. This indicates a stable workforce with long-term employees, suggesting strong retention policies or limited job mobility in South Africa's public sector.

The data reveals that 77.5% are in non-management roles, while 22.5% are in management positions. This suggests that most employees do not hold leadership positions and are in operational roles. Semi-skilled (30.9%), and Semi-technical (35.5%) employees comprise the largest groups. Those who are professionally qualified constitute 21.6%, followed by those who are unskilled, presenting 9.8%, with only 2.2% of top management employees suggesting limited upward mobility or a hierarchical structure.

Those interacting with their manager daily accounted for 36.0%, while 21.1% have weekly contact. This was followed by those who interact with their manager monthly, which accounted for 20.1%, whereas those with very little contact accounted for 4.2% of the respondents. Surprisingly, 18.6% have no managerial contact, which could indicate communication gaps in certain roles.

4.1. Summary of Descriptive Findings

The sections that follow provide diagrammatic representations of how participants responded to the individual questions on Organisational Culture, Inspiring Leadership, Transparent Communication, Challenging Environment, Employee Engagement, Organisational Commitment, Employee Satisfaction, Job Involvement, Employee Motivation, Employee Retention and lastly Organizational Results.

Organisational Culture

The Organizational Culture was assessed using six measurement items. Table 1 depicts the responses.

Table 1. Organisational Culture

Item	Valid N	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
OC1	408	11	2,7	59	14,5	43	10,5	287	70,3	8	2,0
OC2	408	10	2,5	53	13,0	39	9,6	294	72,1	12	2,9
OC3	408	11	2,7	45	11,0	45	11,0	291	71,3	16	3,9
OC4	408	11	2,7	46	11,3	42	10,3	290	71,1	19	4,7
OC5	408	12	2,9	43	10,5	50	12,3	289	70,8	14	3,4
OC6	408	12	2,9	45	11,0	48	11,8	287	70,3	16	3,9

The Organisational Culture survey provides insight into how employees perceive the culture within the organisation. This section presents responses from 408 participants regarding six different organisational constructs (OC1 to OC6).

OC1: Employees are flexible and adaptable to changes when necessary

OC2: Our organisation’s core values guide performance and decision-making

OC3: Individuals and teams have clear goals aligned with the organisation’s mission

OC4: We prioritise meeting client needs and solving their problems effectively

OC5: People are encouraged to collaborate and utilise each other’s strengths

OC6: Employees are kept informed about organisational changes and their purpose

The survey results show a generally positive perception of the organisational culture, but there are several opportunities for improvement. The organisation demonstrates a solid organisational culture with room for growth in key areas such as communication, goal alignment, and fostering collaboration.

Inspiring Leadership (IL)

The Inspiring Leadership was assessed using six measurement items. Table 2 depicts the responses.

Table 2. Inspiring Leadership (IL)

Item	Valid N	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
IL1	408	15	3,7	44	10,8	57	14,0	276	67,6	16	3,9
IL2	408	15	3,7	50	12,3	49	12,0	276	67,6	18	4,4
IL3	408	13	3,2	50	12,3	52	12,7	273	66,9	20	3,9
IL4	408	16	3,9	45	11,0	53	13,0	274	67,2	20	3,9
IL5	408	14	3,4	54	13,2	57	14,0	266	65,2	17	4,2
IL6	408	17	4,2	45	11,0	62	15,2	269	65,9	15	3,7

The Inspiring Leadership survey assesses the role of leadership in motivating, guiding, and supporting employees. The section below provides the results of each item (IL1 to IL6):

IL1: Leaders in this organisation inspire employees to pursue excellence

IL3: Top management is involved in improving best practices

IL4: Leaders consistently communicate a clear vision for the future

IL5: Employees feel motivated to perform well due to leadership support

IL6: Leaders are approachable and open to feedback from employees

The results indicate that leadership in organisations is generally seen as inspiring, supportive, and engaged. In conclusion, the organisation is viewed positively in terms of leadership, but there are opportunities to enhance leadership's impact on motivation, knowledge sharing, and feedback openness.

Transparent Communication

Transparent Communication was assessed using six measurement items. Table 3 depicts the responses.

Table 3. Transparent Communication

Item	Valid N	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
TC1	408	16	3,9	53	13,0	56	13,7	272	66,7	11	2,7
TC2	408	14	3,4	55	13,5	56	13,7	271	66,4	12	2,9
TC3	408	15	3,7	50	12,3	59	11,0	267	65,4	17	4,2
TC4	408	16	3,9	49	12,0	61	14,5	266	65,2	16	3,9
TC5	408	16	3,9	46	11,3	60	14,7	270	66,2	16	3,9
TC6	408	15	3,7	62	15,2	53	13,0	264	64,7	14	3,4

The Transparent Communication survey explores the effectiveness of communication within the organisation, focusing on transparency, accessibility, feedback, and inclusive. The section below provides the results of each item (TC1 to TC6):

TC1: There is open and honest communication across the organisation

TC2: Information flows smoothly, regardless of employee roles.

TC3: Leaders are accessible and communicate effectively with all staff

TC4: Feedback is regularly provided to employees about their performance

TC5: The organisation's goals and objectives are clearly communicated

TC6: Employees feel included in discussions about organisational matters.

The results show that, overall, employees perceive communication to be relatively open and effective. However, there are areas for improvement:

Challenging Environment

The Challenging Environment was assessed using six measurement items. Table 4 depicts the responses.

Table 4. Challenging Environment

Item	Valid N	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
CE1	408	20	4,9	60	14,7	55	13,5	261	64,0	12	2,9
CE2	408	16	3,9	62	15,2	60	14,7	257	63,0	13	3,2
CE3	408	16	3,9	66	16,2	56	13,7	258	63,2	12	2,9
CE4	408	16	3,9	60	14,7	64	15,7	254	62,3	14	3,4
CE5	408	20	4,9	58	14,2	50	12,3	263	64,4	17	4,2
CE6	408	20	4,9	59	14,5	53	13,0	259	63,4	17	4,2

The Challenging Environment survey assesses how well the work environment supports employee productivity, growth, and performance. The section below provides a breakdown results of each item(CE1 to CE6):

CE1: Work environment supports productivity and growth

CE2: Managers encourage peak performance

CE3: Employees are motivated to find innovative solutions

CE4: Strong peer support to enhance job satisfaction

CE5: Work-life balance is valued and supported

CE6: High performance is recognised and rewarded

Overall, the results indicate a generally positive environment for employees, with most feeling supported in their roles, motivated to perform well, and satisfied with work-life balance.

Employee Engagement

Employee Engagement was assessed using six measurement items. Table 5 reflects the responses.

Table 5. Employee Engagement

Item	Valid N	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
EE1	408	9	2,2	49	12,0	52	12,7	282	69,1	16	3,9
EE2	408	10	2,5	46	11,3	46	11,3	284	69,6	22	5,4
EE3	408	12	2,9	46	11,3	55	13,5	279	68,4	16	3,9
EE4	408	12	2,9	47	11,5	55	13,5	275	67,4	19	4,7
EE5	408	12	2,9	43	10,5	52	12,7	278	68,1	23	5,6
EE6	408	12	2,9	43	10,5	47	11,5	278	68,1	28	6,9

The Employee Engagement instruments assess how connected and motivated employees feel toward their work and their organisation. Below is a breakdown and interpretation of each item (EE1 to EE6):

EE1: Feeling Energised and Motivated While Working

EE2: Work Has Meaning and Purpose

EE3: Enthusiasm About the Work

EE4: Immersion in Work During Working Hours

EE5: Resilience and Persistence in Facing Challenges

EE6: I take pride in the work that I accomplish.

Overall, the results show a strong level of engagement among employees, with many feeling motivated, enthusiastic, and committed to their work. The agreement percentages range from 67.4% to 69.6%, indicating that most participants hold a favourable view of employee engagement within their organisation.

Organisational Commitment (ORC)

The Organisational Commitment was assessed using six measurement items. Table 6, reflects the response.

Table 6. Organisational Commitment

Item	Valid N	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
ORC1	408	14	3,4	43	10,5	57	14,0	280	68,7	14	3,4
ORC2	408	12	2,9	38	9,3	53	13,0	288	70,6	17	4,2
ORC3	408	11	2,7	44	10,8	49	12,0	281	68,9	23	5,6
ORC4	408	15	3,6	50	12,3	58	14,2	270	66,2	15	3,7
ORC5	408	12	2,9	39	9,6	66	16,2	270	66,2	21	5,1
ORC6	408	13	3,2	43	10,5	58	14,2	271	66,5	23	5,6

The Organizational Commitment survey assesses how strongly employees feel connected and dedicated to their organisation. The section below provides an interpretation of each item (OC1 to OC6):

ORC1: I have a strong desire to continue working for this organisation.

ORC2: I believe in and am aligned with the organisation's values

ORC3: I am willing to put in extra effort for the success of this organisation.

ORC4: I feel loyal to this organisation and would not consider leaving.

OC5: I am proud to be part of this organisation.

ORC6: I am committed to the organisation's long-term success.

Overall, employees demonstrate relatively strong organisational commitment, with the majority expressing willingness to stay with the company, alignment with its values, and dedication to its success.

Employee Satisfaction (ES)

Employee Satisfaction was assessed using six measurement items. Table 7 depicts the responses.

Table 7. Employee Satisfaction

Item	Valid N	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
ES1	408	17	4,2	46	11,2	57	14,0	271	66,4	17	4,2
ES2	408	13	3,2	41	10,0	53	13,06	273	66,9	28	6,9
ES3	408	15	3,7	46	11,3	56	13,7	271	66,4	20	4,9
ES4	408	28	6,9	53	13,0	50	12,2	263	64,5	14	3,4
ES5	408	22	5,4	55	13,5	54	13,2	261	64,0	16	3,9
ES6	408	24	5,9	47	11,5	59	14,5	260	63,7	18	4,4

The Employee Satisfaction survey assesses various aspects of employees' overall contentment with their roles, relationships at work, compensation, work-life balance, and career development opportunities. The section below provides a detailed interpretation of each item (ES1 to ES6):

ES1: I am satisfied with my role and responsibilities at work.

ES2: I have good relationships with my colleagues and supervisors

ES3: I feel a sense of accomplishment in my work.

ES4: I am satisfied with the compensation and benefits provided.

ES6: I am satisfied with the career development opportunities available.

The survey results show that employees are generally satisfied with their roles, relationships, and sense of accomplishment at work.

Job Involvement Survey

Employee Satisfaction was assessed using six measurement items. Table 8 depicts the response.

Table 8. Job Involvement

Item	Valid N	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
J11	408	9	2,2	42	10,3	50	12,3	286	70,1	21	5,1
J12	408	7	1,7	35	8,6	60	14,7	279	68,4	27	6,6
J13	408	15	3,7	41	10,0	59	14,5	274	67,2	19	4,7
J14	408	15	3,7	38	9,3	67	16,4	272	66,7	16	3,9
J15	408	10	2,5	37	9,0	55	13,5	281	68,9	25	6,1
J16	408	12	2,9	39	9,6	58	14,2	279	68,4	20	4,9

The Job Involvement survey measures employees' interest in their jobs, the importance they attach to their jobs, and how personally invested they feel in their work. Below is a detailed interpretation of each item:

J11: I am very interested in my job.

J12: My job is very important to me.

J13: I would feel uncomfortable if I had to stop working in my current job.

J14: I like to spend time thinking about my work.

JI5: I am committed to achieving success in my job.

JI6: I often think about the implications of my work beyond just the tasks.

The survey results indicate a generally high level of job involvement among most employees, with many feeling emotionally attached to their jobs, committed to success, and mentally engaged in their work.

Employee Motivation Survey Results

Employee Satisfaction was assessed using six measurement items. Table 9 depicts the responses.

Table 9. Employee Motivation

Item	Valid N	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
EM1	408	11	2,7	35	8,6	63	15,4	285	69,9	14	3,4
EM2	408	11	2,7	39	9,6	60	14,7	282	69,1	16	3,9
EM3	408	14	3,4	41	10,1	56	13,7	276	67,6	21	5,2
EM4	408	14	3,4	39	9,6	59	14,5	281	68,9	15	3,7
EM5	408	13	3,2	37	9,1	59	14,5	282	69,1	17	4,2
EM6	408	13	3,2	37	9,1	60	14,7	274	67,1	24	5,9

The survey results reflect the responses of 408 employees regarding various aspects of motivation in the workplace. The section below provides responses across the six items (EM1 to EM6), each assessing different facets of employee motivation.

EM1: I feel enthusiastic about doing my job well.

EM2: I feel inspired to go above and beyond in my work.

EM4: I find my job to be a source of personal motivation

EM5: I feel driven to meet the goals set for my job.

EM6: I am eager to complete my tasks on time, regardless of difficulty.

Employee Retention

Employee Retention was assessed using six measurement items. Table 10 depicts the responses.

Table 10. Employee Retention Results

Item	Valid N	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
ER1	408	23	5,6	45	11,0	59	14,5	266	65,2	15	3,7
ER2	408	11	2,7	42	10,3	57	14,0	279	68,4	19	4,7
ER3	408	20	4,9	52	12,7	61	15,0	260	63,7	15	3,7
ER4	408	20	4,9	47	11,5	66	16,2	259	63,5	16	3,9
ER5	408	26	6,4	51	12,5	61	15,0	257	63,0	13	3,2
ER6	408	14	3,4	36	8,8	63	15,4	273	66,9	22	5,4

The survey data reflect the responses of 408 employees regarding their intention to stay with their current employer, their satisfaction with their job, opportunities for advancement, and their overall commitment to the organisation. Below is a detailed interpretation of each of the six items.

ER1: I intend to stay with my current employer for the foreseeable future.

ER2: I am happy with my decision to work at this organisation.

ER3: I am satisfied with the opportunities for career advancement in my company.

ER4: I see myself working at this organisation for many more years.

ER5: I rarely consider looking for a job at another company.

ER6: I feel committed to the organisation and its goals.

The survey results indicate that overall, employees are generally satisfied with their work environment, with a significant majority expressing positive sentiments about their job, organisational commitment, and long-term prospects.

Organisational Results

The Organizational Results were assessed using six measurement items. Table 11 depicts the responses.

Table 11. Organisational Results Survey

Item	Valid N	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
OR1	408	12	2,9	38	9,3	96	23,5	237	58,1	25	6,1
OR2	408	10	2,5	34	8,3	98	24,0	241	59,1	25	6,1
OR3	408	16	3,9	36	8,8	91	22,3	240	58,9	25	6,1
OR4	408	12	2,9	37	9,1	89	21,83	242	59,3	28	6,9
OR5	408	11	2,7	41	10,0	94	23,1	239	58,6	23	5,6
OR6	408	11	2,9	36	8,8	91	22,3	242	59,3	28	6,9

The section below presents insights into the organisation's achievements and performance across various metrics. Below is a detailed interpretation of each of the six items.

OR1: The organisation has successfully achieved its financial goals.

OR2: The organisation consistently meets customer satisfaction targets

OR3: The company is effective at managing its internal processes.

OR4: The company has demonstrated significant growth over the past year

OR5: The company performs well in terms of its market share.

OR6: The organisation consistently improves its performance metrics.

The survey results show that overall, employees have a positive view of the organisation's performance in various key areas, with particularly strong ratings for customer satisfaction, internal processes, and market share.

4.2. Inferential Statistical Analysis Results

In order to determine the homogeneity of the public sector, an ANOVA was conducted on all the constructs measured with Organisation A, B and C as a grouping variable. The results are reported in Table 12.

Table 12. ANOVA Results

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
OC	Between Groups	9.712	2	4.856	8.057	,000
	Within Groups	244.082	405	,603		
	Total	253.794	407			
IL	Between Groups	11.727	2	5.863	8.604	,000
	Within Groups	275.992	405	,681		
	Total	287.719	407			
TC	Between Groups	11.682	2	5.841	8.369	,000
	Within Groups	282.665	405	,698		
	Total	294.346	407			
CE	Between Groups	16.404	2	8.202	10.822	,000
	Within Groups	306.933	405	,758		
	Total	323.337	407			
EE	Between Groups	15.664	2	7.832	12.904	,000
	Within Groups	245.809	405	,607		
	Total	261.473	407			
ORC	Between Groups	14.927	2	7.464	12.320	,000
	Within Groups	245.367	405	,606		
	Total	260.294	407			
ES	Between Groups	14.410	2	7.205	10.349	,000
	Within Groups	281.957	405	,696		
	Total	296.367	407			
JI	Between Groups	17.880	2	8.940	16.252	,000
	Within Groups	222.785	405	,550		
	Total	240.665	407			
EM	Between Groups	13.313	2	6.656	11.366	,000
	Within Groups	237.184	405	,586		
	Total	250.496	407			
ER	Between Groups	6.344	2	3.172	4.580	,011
	Within Groups	280.471	405	,693		
	Total	286.815	407			
ORR	Between Groups	10.280	2	5.140	8.830	,000
	Within Groups	235.749	405	,582		
	Total	246.029	407			

The findings derived from the ANOVA analysis offer significant insights into the intricate relationships that exist among organisational culture, employee engagement, and organisational performance within the context of South Africa's public sector. The results, with all variables demonstrating statistical significance ($p < 0.05$), serve to reinforce essential theoretical assumptions while also illuminating specific areas that necessitate strategic focus

within public institutions. This essay delves into the implications of the findings, thoughtfully aligning them with the research objectives and hypotheses outlined in the study.

Organisational Culture and Employee Engagement

The findings of the analysis reveal that organisational culture is crucial in influencing employee engagement. This is evidenced by an F-value of 8.057, alongside a p-value that is less than 0.001, highlighting the statistical significance of this relationship. This finding reinforces that a well-defined and nurturing organisational culture significantly enhances employee engagement. Within the public sector of South Africa, the presence of bureaucratic challenges often hinders the ability to engage in a meaningful and effective manner. Nonetheless, fostering an environment characterised by inclusivity, acknowledgement, and shared values can enhance employee morale and overall productivity within the workforce. Institutions need to prioritise initiatives that foster collaboration among individuals, enhance the flow of communication, and promote opportunities for professional growth and development.

The findings indicate that employee engagement plays a crucial role, as evidenced by an F-value of 12.904 and a p-value of less than 0.001. This underscores its significant impact on enhancing organisational performance. Individuals in the workforce who exhibit high levels of engagement tend to demonstrate extraordinary dedication, creativity, and efficiency in their roles. It is crucial for those in positions of authority within the public sector, including policymakers and managers, to prioritise developing and implementing strategies that foster greater employee engagement.

Leadership and Communication as Drivers of Commitment and Satisfaction

The findings underscore the significant impact that leadership and communication have on fostering commitment to the organisation, enhancing engagement in work, and ultimately influencing overall employee satisfaction. The significance of inspiring leadership cannot be overstated, particularly in its role in fostering employee commitment and engagement, as evidenced by the results ($F = 8.604$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that leadership approaches that inspire, direct, and enable employees tend to enhance job satisfaction and a stronger commitment to their roles. Consequently, public institutions must allocate resources towards initiatives that foster the development of leadership skills, with a particular emphasis on transformational and participatory methodologies.

Similarly, it has been demonstrated that open and transparent communication ($F = 12.320$, $p < 0.001$) significantly influences both organisational commitment and employee satisfaction. This observation reinforces the notion that when employees perceive communication as transparent and sincere, they are more likely to experience a sense of value and engagement within their roles. Public sector organisations need to place a high priority on the establishment of precise feedback mechanisms and the promotion of a culture rooted in transparency. Such initiatives are crucial for enhancing employee commitment and fostering a more engaged workforce.

The Role of a Challenging Work Environment in Employee Outcomes

The findings indicate that a challenging and engaging work environment ($F = 10.822$, $p < 0.001$) significantly shapes organisational commitment, job involvement, and employee satisfaction.

This finding lends credence to the hypothesis that employees flourish in dynamic environments that actively promote learning, facilitate skill development, and foster effective problem-solving. The public sector, frequently scrutinised for its inflexible frameworks and constrained avenues for advancement, stands to gain significantly from adopting policies that foster innovation and promote professional growth. Offering employees avenues for skill enhancement and engaging work assignments plays a significant role in fostering elevated levels of engagement within the workforce.

Job Involvement and Employee Motivation as Predictors of Organisational Performance

Job involvement ($F = 16.252$, $p < 0.001$) has been identified as a significant factor influencing employee motivation, retention, and the overall success of organisational outcomes. Individuals who experience a profound sense of engagement in their professional responsibilities are generally more dedicated and exhibit higher productivity. This finding lends credence to the hypothesis that job involvement plays a crucial role in cultivating sustained engagement among employees while simultaneously mitigating turnover rates. The findings indicate that employee motivation ($F = 11.366$, $p < 0.001$) significantly predicts organisational success. Motivated employees tend to exhibit a greater likelihood of remaining with an organisation, actively contributing to its overarching goals, and enhancing overall performance outcomes. This supports the hypothesis that motivation improves retention rates and overall organisational effectiveness. Public institutions must prioritise the implementation of recognition programs, career development initiatives, and performance-based incentives to sustain and enhance employee motivation effectively.

Employee Retention and Organisational Results

The analysis revealed that employee retention ($F = 4.580$, $p = 0.011$) holds statistical significance; however, it is noteworthy that this F-value is comparatively lower than those associated with other variables examined in the study. Although retention holds significant importance, this observation indicates that additional elements, including motivation and job involvement, might substantially influence organisational performance. The proposition that retention is significantly shaped by both engagement and job satisfaction continues to find support in current research. This underscores the imperative for public sector institutions to prioritise enhancements in overall job conditions and create more robust career advancement opportunities. The findings regarding organisational results ($F = 8.830$, $p < 0.001$) reveal a significant and strong relationship between organisational culture, employee engagement, and performance outcomes. This finding lends credence to the hypothesis that a supportive work environment, coupled with engaged employees, plays a significant role in enhancing service delivery and operational efficiency. Strengthening performance management systems that effectively align individuals' contributions with the organisation's overarching goals is essential to maintain and improve positive outcomes.

Table 13. ANOVA Results Interpretation and Implications for Organisational Performance

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
EM	Between Groups	189.230	22	8.601	54.052	,000
	Within Groups	61.266	385	,159		
	Total	250.496	407			
ER	Between Groups	201.482	22	9.158	41.320	,000
	Within Groups	85.333	385	,222		
	Total	286.815	407			
ORR	Between Groups	127.283	22	5.786	18.758	,000
	Within Groups	118.746	385	,308		
	Total	246.029	407			

The presented ANOVA results offer significant insights into the factors that impact organisational performance. These findings are essential for understanding the dynamics within an organisation and can inform strategies for improvement and development. The model investigates three fundamental components: Employee Motivation (EM), Employee Retention (ER), and Organisational Results (ORR). These components are treated as dependent variables and are assessed in relation to various predictor groups. The statistical analysis reveals noteworthy findings, particularly with regard to the significance values (Sig. = .000 for all three variables), which suggest robust relationships between the factors under examination and organisational performance. The following section provides a comprehensive analysis of the results obtained.

Employee Motivation (EM)

In the context of Employee Motivation, the analysis reveals that the Between-Groups Sum of Squares amounts to 189.230, while the Within-Groups Sum of Squares is recorded at 61.266. Consequently, the overall total for these sums is 250.496. The F-value of 54.052 is notably elevated, indicating a strong effect, while the p-value of .000 further reinforces the notion of statistical significance in this context. This suggests that differences in organisational culture and levels of employee engagement play a crucial role in elucidating the variations observed in employee motivation. From a practical perspective, motivated employees are more likely to be engaged, committed, and productive, directly enhancing organisational performance. The robust findings from the ANOVA analysis provide compelling evidence that elements such as motivating leadership, transparent communication, and a stimulating work environment significantly enhance motivation levels among individuals. Organisations must prioritise investments in leadership development, establish transparent communication policies, and cultivate a stimulating work culture to maintain and improve employee motivation.

Employee Retention (ER)

The analysis of employee retention reveals noteworthy findings, as evidenced by the Between-Groups Sum of Squares, which stands at 201.482. In contrast, the Within-Groups Sum of Squares is recorded at 85.333, culminating in 286.815. This data underscores the importance of examining employee retention factors within organisational contexts. The F-value of 41.320 underscores the model's robustness in elucidating the factors contributing to employee retention. Furthermore, the p-value of .000 provides compelling evidence of the model's statistical significance. Retention plays a crucial role in the sustainability of organisations.

High employee turnover rates can result in significant costs associated with hiring and training new staff, the erosion of valuable institutional knowledge, and interruptions in overall productivity. The results indicate that fostering a positive organisational culture, coupled with elevated levels of employee engagement, significantly reduces turnover intentions and promotes a sustained commitment among employees. Organisations that actively promote job involvement, enhance employee satisfaction, and cultivate a strong sense of organisational commitment are likely to experience higher employee retention rates. The findings suggest that human resource strategies ought to prioritise career development opportunities, implement recognition programs, and promote work-life balance initiatives as essential measures to improve employee retention rates.

Organisational Results (ORR)

Organisational Results (ORR) exhibit a notable statistical significance, as evidenced by the Between-Groups Sum of Squares measuring 127.283 and the Within-Groups Sum of Squares recorded at 118.746, culminating in 246.029. The F-value of 18.758 indicates a significant influence of organisational culture and employee engagement on various organisational outcomes. This finding underscores the importance of these factors in shaping an organisation's overall effectiveness and success. The outcomes of an organisation are multifaceted, reflecting various dimensions such as overall productivity, financial performance, customer satisfaction, and operational efficiency. Each of these elements plays a crucial role in determining the success and sustainability of the organisation in a competitive landscape. The findings indicate that organisations characterised by robust leadership, effective communication, and an actively engaged workforce tend to achieve greater overall success. The results of this study strongly support the notion that strategies focused on the well-being and engagement of employees directly influence the overall financial performance of an organisation. For businesses striving to enhance efficiency and profitability, it is essential to emphasise workforce engagement strongly. This engagement is a crucial link between the organisational culture and the resulting performance outcomes.

Table 14. Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable		(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound
OC	Tukey HSD	Group 1	Group 2	,20909	,12087	,195	-,0752	,4934
			Group 3	,42269*	,11329	,001	,1562	,6892
		Group 2	Group 1	-,20909	,12087	,195	-,4934	,0752
			Group 3	,21359*	,08577	,035	,0118	,4153
		Group 3	Group 1	-,42269*	,11329	,001	-,6892	-,1562
			Group 2	-,21359*	,08577	,035	-,4153	-,0118
	LSD	Group 1	Group 2	,20909	,12087	,084	-,0285	,4467
			Group 3	,42269*	,11329	,000	,2000	,6454
		Group 2	Group 1	-,20909	,12087	,084	-,4467	,0285
			Group 3	,21359*	,08577	,013	,0450	,3822
		Group 3	Group 1	-,42269*	,11329	,000	-,6454	-,2000
			Group 2	-,21359*	,08577	,013	-,3822	-,0450
IL	Tukey	Group 1	Group 2	,34924*	,12853	,019	,0469	,6516

	HSD	Group 2	Group 3	,49676*	,12047	,000	,2134	,7801	
			Group 1	-,34924*	,12853	,019	-,6516	-,0469	
			Group 3	,14752	,09120	,239	-,0670	,3621	
		Group 3	Group 1	-,49676*	,12047	,000	-,7801	-,2134	
			Group 2	-,14752	,09120	,239	-,3621	,0670	
			Group 3	,14752	,09120	,239	-,0670	,3621	
	LSD	Group 1	Group 2	,34924*	,12853	,007	,0966	,6019	
			Group 3	,49676*	,12047	,000	,2599	,7336	
			Group 3	,14752	,09120	,107	-,0318	,3268	
		Group 2	Group 1	-,34924*	,12853	,007	-,6019	-,0966	
			Group 3	,14752	,09120	,107	-,0318	,3268	
			Group 3	,14752	,09120	,107	-,0318	,3268	
TC	Tukey HSD	Group 1	Group 2	,29823	,13008	,058	-,0078	,6042	
			Group 3	,48580*	,12192	,000	,1990	,7726	
			Group 3	,18757	,09230	,106	-,0295	,4047	
		Group 2	Group 1	-,29823	,13008	,058	-,6042	,0078	
			Group 3	,18757	,09230	,106	-,0295	,4047	
			Group 3	,18757	,09230	,106	-,0295	,4047	
	LSD	Group 1	Group 2	,29823*	,13008	,022	,0425	,5539	
			Group 3	,48580*	,12192	,000	,2461	,7255	
			Group 3	,18757*	,09230	,043	,0061	,3690	
		Group 2	Group 1	-,29823*	,13008	,022	-,5539	-,0425	
			Group 3	,18757*	,09230	,043	,0061	,3690	
			Group 3	,18757*	,09230	,043	,0061	,3690	
	CE	Tukey HSD	Group 1	Group 2	,43586*	,13554	,004	,1170	,7547
				Group 3	,58997*	,12704	,000	,2911	,8888
				Group 3	,15411	,09618	,246	-,0721	,3804
			Group 2	Group 1	-,43586*	,13554	,004	-,7547	-,1170
				Group 3	,15411	,09618	,246	-,0721	,3804
				Group 3	,15411	,09618	,246	-,0721	,3804
		LSD	Group 1	Group 2	,43586*	,13554	,001	,1694	,7023
				Group 3	,58997*	,12704	,000	,3402	,8397
				Group 3	,15411	,09618	,110	-,0350	,3432
			Group 2	Group 1	-,43586*	,13554	,001	-,7023	-,1694
				Group 3	,15411	,09618	,110	-,0350	,3432
				Group 3	,15411	,09618	,110	-,0350	,3432
EE	Tukey HSD	Group 1	Group 2	,19899	,12130	,230	-,0864	,4843	
			Group 3	,50833*	,11369	,000	,2409	,7758	
			Group 3	,30934*	,08607	,001	,1069	,5118	
		Group 2	Group 1	-,19899	,12130	,230	-,4843	,0864	
			Group 3	,30934*	,08607	,001	,1069	,5118	
			Group 3	,30934*	,08607	,001	,1069	,5118	
	LSD	Group 1	Group 2	,19899	,12130	,102	-,0395	,4374	
			Group 3	,50833*	,11369	,000	,2848	,7318	
			Group 3	,30934*	,08607	,000	,1401	,4785	
		Group 2	Group 1	-,19899	,12130	,102	-,4374	,0395	
			Group 3	,30934*	,08607	,000	,1401	,4785	
			Group 3	,30934*	,08607	,000	,1401	,4785	
LSD	Group 1	Group 2	,19899	,12130	,102	-,0395	,4374		
		Group 3	,50833*	,11369	,000	,2848	,7318		
		Group 3	,30934*	,08607	,000	,1401	,4785		
	Group 2	Group 1	-,19899	,12130	,102	-,4374	,0395		
		Group 3	,30934*	,08607	,000	,1401	,4785		
		Group 3	,30934*	,08607	,000	,1401	,4785		

ORC	Tukey HSD	Group 1	Group 2	,25934	,12119	,083	-,0257	,5444
			Group 3	,52407*	,11359	,000	,2569	,7913
		Group 2	Group 1	-,25934	,12119	,083	-,5444	,0257
			Group 3	,26473*	,08599	,006	,0624	,4670
		Group 3	Group 1	-,52407*	,11359	,000	-,7913	-,2569
			Group 2	-,26473*	,08599	,006	-,4670	-,0624
	LSD	Group 1	Group 2	,25934*	,12119	,033	,0211	,4976
			Group 3	,52407*	,11359	,000	,3008	,7474
		Group 2	Group 1	-,25934*	,12119	,033	-,4976	-,0211
			Group 3	,26473*	,08599	,002	,0957	,4338
		Group 3	Group 1	-,52407*	,11359	,000	-,7474	-,3008
			Group 2	-,26473*	,08599	,002	-,4338	-,0957
ES	Tukey HSD	Group 1	Group 2	,20960	,12991	,241	-,0960	,5152
			Group 3	,49614*	,12176	,000	,2097	,7826
		Group 2	Group 1	-,20960	,12991	,241	-,5152	,0960
			Group 3	,28655*	,09218	,006	,0697	,5034
		Group 3	Group 1	-,49614*	,12176	,000	-,7826	-,2097
			Group 2	-,28655*	,09218	,006	-,5034	-,0697
	LSD	Group 1	Group 2	,20960	,12991	,107	-,0458	,4650
			Group 3	,49614*	,12176	,000	,2568	,7355
		Group 2	Group 1	-,20960	,12991	,107	-,4650	,0458
			Group 3	,28655*	,09218	,002	,1053	,4678
		Group 3	Group 1	-,49614*	,12176	,000	-,7355	-,2568
			Group 2	-,28655*	,09218	,002	-,4678	-,1053
JI	Tukey HSD	Group 1	Group 2	,18611	,11548	,242	-,0855	,4578
			Group 3	,53025*	,10824	,000	,2756	,7849
		Group 2	Group 1	-,18611	,11548	,242	-,4578	,0855
			Group 3	,34414*	,08194	,000	,1514	,5369
		Group 3	Group 1	-,53025*	,10824	,000	-,7849	-,2756
			Group 2	-,34414*	,08194	,000	-,5369	-,1514
	LSD	Group 1	Group 2	,18611	,11548	,108	-,0409	,4131
			Group 3	,53025*	,10824	,000	,3175	,7430
		Group 2	Group 1	-,18611	,11548	,108	-,4131	,0409
			Group 3	,34414*	,08194	,000	,1831	,5052
		Group 3	Group 1	-,53025*	,10824	,000	-,7430	-,3175
			Group 2	-,34414*	,08194	,000	-,5052	-,1831
EM	Tukey HSD	Group 1	Group 2	,15328	,11915	,404	-,1270	,4336
			Group 3	,45386*	,11168	,000	,1912	,7166
		Group 2	Group 1	-,15328	,11915	,404	-,4336	,1270
			Group 3	,30058*	,08455	,001	,1017	,4995
		Group 3	Group 1	-,45386*	,11168	,000	-,7166	-,1912
			Group 2	-,30058*	,08455	,001	-,4995	-,1017
	LSD	Group 1	Group 2	,15328	,11915	,199	-,0810	,3875
			Group 3	,45386*	,11168	,000	,2343	,6734
		Group 2	Group 1	-,15328	,11915	,199	-,3875	,0810
			Group 3	,30058*	,08455	,000	,1344	,4668
		Group 3	Group 1	-,45386*	,11168	,000	-,6734	-,2343

			Group 2	-,30058*	,08455	,000	-,4668	-,1344
ER	Tukey HSD	Group 1	Group 2	,20227	,12957	,264	-,1025	,5071
			Group 3	,35309*	,12144	,011	,0674	,6388
		Group 2	Group 1	-,20227	,12957	,264	-,5071	,1025
			Group 3	,15081	,09194	,230	-,0655	,3671
		Group 3	Group 1	-,35309*	,12144	,011	-,6388	-,0674
			Group 2	-,15081	,09194	,230	-,3671	,0655
	LSD	Group 1	Group 2	,20227	,12957	,119	-,0524	,4570
			Group 3	,35309*	,12144	,004	,1144	,5918
		Group 2	Group 1	-,20227	,12957	,119	-,4570	,0524
			Group 3	,15081	,09194	,102	-,0299	,3315
		Group 3	Group 1	-,35309*	,12144	,004	-,5918	-,1144
			Group 2	-,15081	,09194	,102	-,3315	,0299
ORR	Tukey HSD	Group 1	Group 2	,44722*	,11879	,001	,1678	,7267
			Group 3	,44877*	,11134	,000	,1869	,7107
		Group 2	Group 1	-,44722*	,11879	,001	-,7267	-,1678
			Group 3	,00154	,08429	1,000	-,1967	,1998
		Group 3	Group 1	-,44877*	,11134	,000	-,7107	-,1869
			Group 2	-,00154	,08429	1,000	-,1998	,1967
	LSD	Group 1	Group 2	,44722*	,11879	,000	,2137	,6807
			Group 3	,44877*	,11134	,000	,2299	,6676
		Group 2	Group 1	-,44722*	,11879	,000	-,6807	-,2137
			Group 3	,00154	,08429	,985	-,1642	,1672
		Group 3	Group 1	-,44877*	,11134	,000	-,6676	-,2299
			Group 2	-,00154	,08429	,985	-,1672	,1642
*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.								

Post-Hoc Analysis Commentary

The post hoc analysis offers a more nuanced understanding of the differences among groups revealed in the ANOVA results. This is especially pertinent when examining factors such as organisational culture (OC), inspiring leadership (IL), transparency in communication (ORC), and employee engagement (EE). The Tukey HSD and LSD tests indicate notable mean differences across several dependent variables, strengthening essential hypotheses concerning the interplay between organisational culture, leadership, communication, and employee outcomes.

Organisational Culture (OC) and Employee Engagement (EE)

The post hoc analysis reveals notable differences in organisational culture between Group 1 and Group 3, with a significance level of $p = .001$. A significant difference is also observed between Group 2 and Group 3, indicated by a p-value of .035. The results of this study suggest that Group 3, potentially comprising employees situated within a distinct work environment or organisational framework, encounters a significantly divergent organisational culture when contrasted with Groups 1 and 2. In a similar vein, notable disparities in employee engagement were identified between Group 1 and Group 3 ($p < .001$), as well as between Group 2 and Group 3 ($p = .001$). These findings underscore the variations in engagement levels across distinct organisational contexts.

Leadership and Communication as Key Differentiators

The analysis of inspiring leadership revealed significant differences in the means observed between Group 1 and Group 3, with a p-value of less than .001, and between Group 1 and Group 2, which yielded a p-value of .019. This statement affirms that different leadership styles significantly impact both organisational commitment and job involvement among employees. Furthermore, the analysis revealed significant disparities in transparent communication, particularly between Group 1 and Group 3 ($p < .001$), as well as between Group 2 and Group 3 ($p = .006$). This evidence reinforces that fostering open communication channels significantly enhances organisational employee satisfaction and retention rates.

Job Involvement, Motivation, and Retention

The results pertaining to job involvement, employee motivation, and employee retention reveal significant distinctions, particularly when comparing Group 1 with Group 3 and Group 2 with Group 3. The employee retention analysis indicated significant disparities between Group 1 and Group 3, with a p-value of .011. This finding implies that retention strategies may require tailoring to address the unique needs of different groups within the organisation.

The results concerning job involvement, employee motivation, and employee retention reveal significant distinctions, particularly when comparing Group 1 with Group 3 and Group 2 with Group 3. For instance, employee retention analysis indicated significant disparities between Group 1 and Group 3 ($p = .011$). This finding implies that retention strategies may require tailoring to meet the distinct needs of different groups within the organisation.

Normality assessment

According to Hatem, Zeidan, Goossens and Moreira (2022), normality of data is present when excess kurtosis values are between -3 and +3, and skewness values are between -1 and 1. The values for skewness and excess kurtosis for the measurement items are shown in Table 15. This study's assessment of excess kurtosis and skewness values revealed that excess kurtosis values ranged from -0.175 to 2.103, while skewness values ranged from -1.518 to -1.014. A positive skewness value indicates that the distribution's right tail is longer than the left tail and that most values reside to the left of the mean. On the other hand, a negative skewness value indicates that the left tail of the distribution is longer than the right tail and that most values reside to the right of the mean. Distributions with positive excess kurtosis values are leptokurtic distributions, indicating a high peak. In contrast, distributions with negative excess kurtosis values are known as platykurtic distributions, indicating a flat-topped curve. According to the study's results on excess kurtosis and skewness, the data appear to have a normal distribution.

Table 15. Normality Assessment Results

	Excess kurtosis	Skewness
EC1	0,345	-1,156
EC2	0,296	-1,103
EC3	0,175	-1,085
EC4	0,332	-1,092
EC5	0,441	-1,160

EC6	0,363	-1,125
EM1	2,103	-1,529
EM2	1,774	-1,448
EM3	1,497	-1,371
EM4	1,715	-1,468
EM5	1,876	-1,477
EM6	1,684	-1,365
ER1	0,888	-1,298
ER2	1,536	-1,375
ER3	0,619	-1,198
ER4	0,799	-1,227
ER5	0,461	-1,188
ER6	1,700	-1,381
IL1	1,321	-1,376
IL2	1,041	-1,313
IL3	1,016	-1,269
IL4	1,218	-1,333
IL5	0,722	-1,201
IL6	1,105	-1,322
JI1	1,706	-1,408
JI2	1,870	-1,318
JI3	1,435	-1,369
JI4	1,553	-1,396
JI5	1,878	-1,393
JI6	1,699	-1,404
ES1	1,094	-1,317
ES2	1,456	-1,312
ES3	1,136	-1,296
ES4	0,395	-1,197
ES5	0,476	-1,174
ES6	0,699	-1,222
OR1	0,941	-1,020
OR2	1,145	-1,037
OR3	1,054	-1,105
OR4	1,048	-1,055
OR5	0,844	-1,014
OR6	1,081	-1,043
ORC1	1,471	-1,428
ORC2	1,987	-1,518
ORC3	1,487	-1,359
ORC4	0,935	-1,280
ORC5	1,492	-1,316
ORC6	1,306	-1,295

TC1	0,818	-1,298
TC2	0,748	-1,261
TC3	0,890	-1,246
TC4	0,901	-1,255
TC5	1,097	-1,312
TC6	0,386	-1,144

CE= Challenging Environment; EM = Employee Motivation; ER = Employee Retention; IL= Inspiring leadership; JI = Job Involvement; ES = Employee Satisfaction; ORC = Organisational Commitment; OR = Organizational Results; TC = Open and transparent communication

The sample's demographic profile reveals that most respondents were female (63.7%) and of Black African descent (95.3%), reflecting the broader demographic composition of the public sector workforce in South Africa. A significant proportion of respondents (34.3%) held diplomas, while 67.9% reported more than six years of work experience, suggesting a workforce with moderate educational attainment and substantial institutional knowledge. Furthermore, 77.5% of participants occupied non-management roles and most earned above R10,000, indicating a predominantly operational staff base with mid-level income brackets and limited representation in leadership positions.

Descriptive statistics and Likert-scale responses indicated that employees generally viewed their organisational culture favourably, particularly appreciating aspects such as adaptability to change, alignment with core values, and a collaborative work atmosphere. Similarly, leadership was seen as motivating and vision-driven, while communication practices were perceived as open and inclusive. However, the findings also pointed to specific areas requiring stronger encouragement of innovation and more consistent feedback mechanisms to support continuous improvement and employee development.

The ANOVA analysis revealed statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) across the three public sector organisations in all measured constructs, highlighting notable variations in organisational culture, leadership styles, communication practices, and employee engagement levels. Post-hoc comparisons further indicated that Group 3 significantly differed from the other two organisations, particularly in organisational culture and employee engagement dimensions, suggesting a unique institutional environment or management approach that warrants deeper investigation.

4. DISCUSSION

This descriptive exploratory study sought to understand how employees in three South African public sector organisations perceive key dimensions of organisational culture, employee engagement, and organisational performance. The analysis of Likert-scale responses from 408 participants revealed several observable patterns and insights into the internal climate of these institutions.

The results showed that employees view their organisational culture favourably, particularly core values, adaptability, and collaboration. For instance, 72.1% of respondents agreed that their organisation's values guide performance and decision-making, and 70.8% agreed that collaboration is encouraged. These findings reflect prior literature that links constructive

organisational culture with employee alignment and shared purpose (Schein and Schein, 2021; Cameron and Quinn, 2011). Nonetheless, approximately 10–12% of participants selected neutral responses across these items, suggesting that while many experience a coherent culture, some may feel less connected or uncertain about cultural norms.

In inspiring leadership, agreement levels ranged from 65.2% to 67.6% across statements related to motivation, vision clarity, and ethical behaviour. For example, 67.6% agreed that leaders motivate staff to perform well, and 66.9% confirmed that leadership communicates a clear vision. These figures align with findings from previous research, which emphasise the impact of ethical, people-centred leadership in shaping positive workplace climates. However, 11–14% of responses were neutral, indicating that leadership visibility and influence may vary across teams or departments.

Transparent communication was another positively rated construct. Between 64.7% and 66.7% of respondents agreed that communication is open, accessible, and inclusive. For instance, 66.4% agreed that information flows smoothly, and 66.2% agreed that organisational goals are clearly communicated. However, around 13% of participants remained neutral, pointing to possible inconsistencies in how communication is practised across the organisations.

The construct of a challenging work environment also scored positively, with agreement rates ranging between 63.0% and 64.4%. Specifically, 64.0% felt that their work environment supports productivity and growth, while 64.4% agreed that high performance is recognised and rewarded.

Employee engagement showed strong endorsement. Between 67.4% and 69.6% of respondents agreed they feel motivated, resilient, and proud of their work. For example, 69.6% agreed their work has meaning and purpose, and 68.1% reported pride in their accomplishments. This aligns with Schaufeli (2021), who defines engagement as a blend of energy, involvement, and absorption in work roles. Yet, 11–13% of participants were neutral, suggesting room for strengthening deeper emotional and cognitive ties to work.

Organisational commitment also received substantial support. A total of 70.6% of respondents agreed that they believe in and align with their organisation's values, and 66.5% indicated a commitment to the organisation's long-term success. However, around 14% of participants expressed neutrality, potentially due to limited upward mobility or organisational change fatigue.

Job involvement responses were similarly positive, with agreement ranging from 66.7% to 70.1%. Most notably, 70.1% reported being highly interested in their job, and 68.4% said they frequently think about the implications of their work.

Employee satisfaction, encompassing role clarity, compensation, and workplace relationships, received slightly lower but still positive ratings. Between 63.7% and 66.9% agreed with positive satisfaction statements, such as feeling a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction with team dynamics. As some researchers argue, satisfaction in public institutions is closely tied to perceptions of fairness and inclusivity elements that seem moderately strong but not universal across the sample.

Employee motivation scored high, with 67.1% to 69.9% of participants agreeing they are driven to meet goals, complete tasks, and exceed expectations. These results are consistent with other

researchers who found that intrinsic motivation in government work is linked to service impact and personal growth. Nonetheless, a consistent 14–15% neutrality rate across these items suggests that motivation strategies may need to be diversified to address different employee drivers.

Employee retention showed more variation. While 68.4% were happy with their decision to work in their current organisation, only 63.0% reported rarely considering external job opportunities. These numbers suggest moderate retention levels and resonate with concerns raised by the Public Service Commission (2023), which found that career stagnation and limited mobility often drive attrition in government institutions.

Most respondents viewed organisational performance favourably, with agreement levels between 58.1% and 59.3% for items related to customer satisfaction, internal processes, and performance improvement. This suggests that frontline employees generally perceive their institutions as functioning well.

This descriptive exploratory analysis highlights a broadly positive climate within the sampled public organisations. Employees generally report high engagement, strong cultural alignment, and moderate-to-high satisfaction with leadership, communication, and performance outcomes. However, the consistent presence of 10–15% neutral or undecided responses across constructs signals a need for more inclusive and differentiated organisational strategies, particularly in communication, recognition, and career development. These insights are critical for public sector reform efforts that aim to improve service delivery and the lived experiences of those delivering the services.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This descriptive exploratory study examined how public sector employees in South Africa perceive the dynamics between organisational culture, employee engagement, and organisational performance. Drawing on survey responses from 408 employees across three state institutions, the study revealed broadly positive perceptions in key areas such as leadership, communication, engagement, and motivation. However, it also uncovered inconsistencies and potential concerns that warrant further organisational reflection and action.

The results indicate that most employees perceive their organisational culture as values-driven and collaborative, with 70–72% agreement on goal alignment, adaptability, and teamwork. Similarly, perceptions of leadership were strong, with approximately 67% of respondents agreeing that their leaders are inspiring, ethical, and vision-oriented. Transparent communication also received favourable ratings, although around 13% of participants remained neutral, signalling inconsistent experiences across different departments or teams.

Employee engagement emerged as a central strength, with nearly 70% of respondents expressing enthusiasm, resilience, and pride in their work. Nonetheless, approximately 12–14% selected neutral responses across engagement items, indicating that deeper connections to work are not uniformly experienced across the workforce. Motivation levels were high, with close to 69% agreement that employees are driven to perform well and meet expectations. In contrast, employee retention showed slightly weaker trends, with 63–66% indicating satisfaction with their long-term career prospects. However, a notable proportion of

respondents remained neutral or undecided, suggesting a degree of uncertainty or disengagement that could influence future turnover.

Perceptions of organisational performance, particularly in customer satisfaction, process effectiveness, and improvement, were similarly positive but not overwhelming, averaging between 58% and 59% agreement. These findings imply that while institutions function adequately, substantial room remains for enhancing performance outcomes through improved engagement and leadership practices.

The findings support the conclusion that although South African public institutions are generally seen as stable and value-driven, there are critical areas, particularly around communication consistency, leadership impact, career development, and employee retention, where further attention is needed. The descriptive insights point to underlying disparities in employee experience across different organisational contexts. Based on the descriptive findings, the following targeted recommendations are proposed:

- *Strengthen Communication Consistency Across Teams*

Although overall communication was viewed positively, about 13–15% of employees responded neutral. Institutions should enhance communication clarity, feedback frequency, and inclusivity by implementing regular updates, structured team dialogues, and anonymous input channels to ensure department alignment.

- *Enhance Leadership Visibility and Support*

With approximately 32% of employees indicating only neutral or limited engagement with leadership, there is an opportunity to invest in training programs that equip leaders with tools for relational leadership, motivation, and transparent decision-making.

- *Design Engagement Interventions Tailored to Diverse Needs*

While 68–70% of employees reported high engagement, a notable portion remains less connected. Differentiated engagement strategies such as job enrichment, employee wellness programmes, and flexible career development pathways—should be explored to accommodate employees' diverse motivational drivers and experiential needs within the public sector.

- *Address Career Development and Retention Gaps*

With around 63% expressing intent to stay long-term but a consistent neutral response rate near 15%, public institutions should create visible pathways for advancement, mentorship, and recognition programs to retain high-potential talent.

- *Foster a More Stimulating Work Environment*

63–64% of participants rated the work environment positively, suggesting that while many feel challenged, others do not. Strategies like stretch assignments, innovation labs, and cross-functional projects may help create more intellectually engaging roles.

- *Use Employee Insights as a Performance Lens*

Since 58–59% of employees view their organisation as effective, public institutions should consider institutionalising employee perception data as a formal component of organisational performance measurement. Regular climate assessments can help identify trends early and promote a culture of continuous improvement.

In conclusion, the descriptive patterns observed in this study offer actionable insights for policymakers, HR professionals, and managers seeking to strengthen public sector institutions. Although not generalisable to all public entities, the findings provide a foundation for developing employee-centred strategies that align culture, engagement, and performance more effectively within the South African public service context.

DECLARATION OF THE AUTHORS

Approval of ethical committee: All procedures performed in studies comply with the ethical standards of comparable institutional and/or national research committees.

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