

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN DURING THE COVID-19 NATIONAL STATE OF DISASTER: A CASE OF THE POLOKWANE MUNICIPALITY IN THE LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA**

by

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## **DECLARATION**

I, Rendani Sindrellar Maiwashe, declare that the mini dissertation hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo, (Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership) for the degree of Master of Public Administration and Management in the Faculty of Management and Law has not been previously submitted at any other University, that it is my own work and all materials and sources used therein have been duly acknowledged.

.....  
**RENDANI SINDRELLAR MAIWASHE**

.....  
**DATE**

## **DEDICATION**

I **Rendani Maiwashe Sindrellar** dedicate this study to following persons who played a pivotal role in my life:

Firstly, I give praise and thanks to my creator God Almighty for the wisdom and strength throughout all the challenging moments of completing this project. This study is also wholeheartedly dedicated to my daughters Makwa and Vhukhudo Ludere whom young as they are, motivated me and were very supportive during the duration of my studies. I could not have succeeded without their understanding when I was not present at home during weekends and the long nights spent on my studies. My beautiful girls encouraged and inspired me to do my best so that I can be a great example to them. I love you both very much.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The year 2020 has seen the world being plunged into a health crisis due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic (WHO: 2020). Many South African industries were faced with unpleasant impact from the COVID-19 National State of Disaster that was imposed by the President of the Republic of South Africa on 15 March 2020 which resulted in some businesses ceasing trading permanently (Stats SA, 2020). Regardless of this situation, the Polokwane Municipality has an obligation to deliver core or basic services in the face of the COVID-19 national state of disaster. Business continuity took a center stage during the COVID-19 National State of Disaster in terms of business survival, meaning that the Polokwane Municipality had to find different ways to continue to function within the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The study evaluated whether the Business Continuity Plan (BCP) in the Polokwane Municipality is practical and realistic and whether BCP was responsive to COVID-19 National State of Disaster and lockdown regulations that were imposed as there is minimal evidence of evaluating business continuity during pandemics except in the healthcare sector. The study employed quantitative research method to gather data from participants.

The study found out that, there was sufficient implementation of the BCP during the COVID-19 National State of Disaster as confirmed by 67% respondents. The study further revealed that the Polokwane Municipality did not communicate its BCP to all employees regularly. Considering these findings, the study recommends that the Municipality should conduct workshops or training on the BCP to ensure that relevant key officials clearly understand all aspects of the BCP and sharpen their skills. Although the Polokwane Municipality have the BCP, they should ensure that there is sufficient funding and other resources to ensure that implementation of the BCP is effectual and further do research to benchmark and learn from what has worked in other Municipalities for effectiveness of the BCP.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND THEIR FULL MEANING**

**BCM:** Business Continuity Management

**BCP:** Business Continuity Plan

**BCPs:** Business Continuity Plans

**ISO:** International Organisation for Standardisation

**SARS-Cov2:** Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus-CoV2

**TREC:** Turfloop Research Ethics Committee

**WHO:** World Health Organisation

**USA:** United States of America

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

### **1.1. INTRODUCTION**

The year 2020 has seen the world being plunged into a health crisis due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic (World Health Organisation (WHO), 2020). The WHO declared COVID-19 as a worldwide public health emergency of concern on 30 January 2020, subsequently on 11 March 2020 COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic (Cucinotta & Vanelli, 2020: 158). The COVID-19 pandemic meant that countries across the globe needed to introduce measures to prevent the spread of the pandemic, thus on 15 March 2020, Mr. Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa who is the President of the Republic of South Africa, has through Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, declared the State of National Disaster in terms of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act 57 of 2002) to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus and contain the outbreak of the virus. Staunton, Swanepoel & Labuschaigne (2020: 5) explain that the President of the Republic of South Africa also introduced a lockdown of the country from 27 March 2020 to 16 April 2022 meaning that South Africa was on total lockdown and all non-essential businesses were closed. Therefore, many South African industries were faced with unpleasant impact from the COVID-19 National State of Disaster which resulted in some business ceasing trading permanently (Stats SA, 2020).

Business continuity took a center stage during the COVID-19 national state of disaster in terms of business survival, meaning that business had to find different ways to continue to function within the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic. Organisations are expected to have Business Continuity Plan (BCP) that will be able to respond to any disaster regardless of how complex it is (Luc & Mangalani, 2021: 206). An effective BCP is a necessity in ensuring that operational activities or service delivery continue as if there were no disruptions. Developing a BCP for an organisation involve a process of predicting disruption and incidents which could potentially occur and disrupt services delivery and plan to effectively mitigations those disruptions (Luc & Mangalani, 2021: 206).

## **1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The municipality has an obligation sanctioned by Section 229 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) under the bill of right which is to deliver core or basic services such as drinking water that is clean, shelter, electricity, sanitation, waste removal and roads to its residents in a manner that is sustainable (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). Thus, the Polokwane Municipal Council adopted a Business Continuity Policy with a detailed BCP in 2013. The plan enables the municipality to build operational resilience to effectively respond to a disaster, limit the effects of a disaster and provide uninterrupted services during a disaster (Polokwane Municipality BCM Governance, 2013).

Berrich & Azarkan (2021: 602) explain that in March 2020, the COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic resulting in organisations not functioning including the Polokwane Municipality due to the lockdown that was imposed to stop the spread of the virus. BCP should maintain the continuity of the critical functions of an organisation in the event of a disaster such as COVID-19 pandemic. Kumar, Rai, Mishra & Srivastava (2013: 51) explain that disasters never ring a bell before they strike, as such organisations are obliged to protect their operations and pay special attention to having a BCP in place.

Schmid, Raju, Kjaer & Jense (2021: 2) argued that there is minimal evidence of evaluating business continuity during pandemics except in the healthcare sector. Akinbola (2018: 23) concluded that most institutions have not realised the importance of BCP in their daily business operation. Considering the significance of the BCP, the researcher is interested in evaluating whether the BCP was implemented as envisaged to ensure continuity of basic services and established whether the BCP was effective during the COVID-19 National State of Disaster in the Polokwane Municipality.

## **1.3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The researcher's understanding is that other scholars have researched and written scholarly articles on the implementation of the Business Continuity Plan in different sectors. However, the researcher's viewpoint is that more investigation still needs to be done particularly on the effectiveness of the Business Continuity Plan in responding to the COVID-19 National State of Disaster in Local Government and specifically in the Polokwane Municipality. The study evaluated whether the Business Continuity Plan in the Polokwane Municipality is practical and realistic. The study also investigated whether the Business Continuity Plan was responsive to COVID-19 National State of Disaster and lockdown regulations that were imposed. The results of the study will be documented and known and provide reasonable assurance to management of the Polokwane Municipality on whether the Municipality was able to maintain critical functions and continue their daily service delivery operations to the best of their ability during the COVID-19 National State of Disaster and recommend remedial action for improvement if need be. The management of the Polokwane Municipality and other government institutions and all relevant stakeholders will benefit from the results of the study, in that they know if the BCP was implemented as expected or not.

#### **1.4. AIM OF THE STUDY**

The aim of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of the Polokwane Municipality's Business Continuity Plan during the COVID-19 National State of Disaster.

#### **1.5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of the study serves as a guide to the research, and are summarised as follows:

- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Business Continuity Plan in responding to COVID-19 National State of Disaster.
- To evaluate whether the Business Continuity Plan was implemented as envisaged during COVID-19 National State of Disaster.

- To determine the level of employee's awareness and understanding of the existing municipal Business Continuity Plan.

## **1.6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research questions of this study were formulated as follows:

- Was the Business Continuity Plan effective in responding to COVID-19 National State of Disaster?
- Was the municipal Business Continuity Plan implemented as envisaged to ensure continuity of basic services during the COVID-19 National State of Disaster?
- What is the level of employee's awareness and understanding of the existing municipal Business Continuity Plan?

## **1.7. DEFINITIONS OF KEY CONCEPTS**

Key terms used in the study are defined as follows:

### **1.7.1. Business Continuity Plan**

Fani and Subriadi (2019: 276) define Business Continuity Plan as a technique which government uses to anticipate business disruptions and overcome those disruptions to ensure that the risk of loss is reduced, and there is continuity with normal business operations.

### **1.7.2. Business continuity planning**

Tracey, O'Sullivan, Lane, Guy and Courtemanche (2017: 2) point out that Public Safety Canada described business continuity planning as a proactive operational plan to ensure that critical service is delivered during a disruption. They further stressed that one cannot predict the next crisis but business continuity planning assist to prepare for it.

### **1.7.3. Coronavirus disease**

Özdemir (2019: 242) explains that Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), spreading of (COVID-19) happens through large droplets produced during coughing and sneezing by symptomatic patients, as well as asymptomatic individuals before starting of their symptoms.

### **1.7.4. National Disaster**

In terms of Section 6 of the Disaster Management Act (Act No. 57, 2002), a disaster is considered a national disaster if it affects “a) more than one province; b) a single province which is unable to deal with it effectively”. Ronald (2018: 23) defines a disaster as uncontrollable events that negatively impact and disrupt ordinary business operations which have an irreversible loss which takes long to recover from.

### **1.7.5. National State of Disaster**

Van Niekerk (2014: 860) explains that declaring of national state of disaster happens when current rules and crisis management plans do not sufficiently provide for the National Executive to effectively respond to a disaster event. Basically, declaring COVID-19 pandemic as a national state of disaster meant that government determined that the medical emergency caused by COVID-19 could not be managed by what is specified in the existing law.

### **1.7.6. Lockdown**

Ede, Maluku, and Jili (2021: 1) summarised lockdown as preventative measures introduced by the government of South Africa to prevent the aggressive spread of COVID-19, the measures included restriction of movement and closure of non-essential business and government institutions.

### **1.7.7. Municipality**

The Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000) defines municipalities as part of a system of co-operative government in their legal nature. This acts further clarifies the rights and duties of municipal council, local communities, and the municipal administrators.

### **1.7.8. Local Government**

Ndreu (2016: 6) describes local government as government institution that have legislative, administrative and executive authority elected by the people in the municipality under their jurisdiction.

## **1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH**

As alluded to the above, this study evaluated whether the BCP in the Polokwane Municipality is practical and realistic. Further, the study investigated whether the BCP was responsive to COVID-19 National State of Disaster and lockdown regulations that were imposed. In addition, the management and all relevant stakeholders at the Polokwane Municipality will have a dynamic understanding of how to improve future implementation of the BCP. Furthermore, the results from this study are of great importance in the adding of new knowledge to the discipline. Basically, this study serves as a point of reference for other future similar studies especially at a local government level.

## **1.9 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY**

The outline of the study is as follows:

**Chapter 1: Introduction and Background** – This chapter provides an introduction, the problem statement, rationale for the research and clarification of key terms.

**Chapter 2: Literature Review** – This chapter comprises of review of related literature regarding business continuity and the BCP.

**Chapter 3: Research Methodology** – The chapter presents research design, philosophy, population, research tools, data collection and analysis techniques that were used to gather data for this study.

**Chapter 4: Data presentation and interpretation of findings** – The chapter presents and interprets the study findings.

**Chapter 5: Recommendations and Conclusion** - The chapter comprises of the summary of findings, recommendations and concluding remarks.

## **1.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter has introduced the study' problem statement. The chapter illustrated the reasoning behind the research questions. The chapter further elaborated on the objectives of the research and defined key concepts that were used in the study. In chapter two, a critical overview of related literature is provided.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter one outlined the general overview of the Business Continuity Plan of the Polokwane Municipality as per the responsiveness to COVID-19 National State of Disaster and lockdown regulations. This chapter presents a review of relevant literature relating to this study. The literature study includes theoretical aspects of the BCP required for continuity of all critical services and function in case of unforeseen disaster.

#### **2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

##### **2.2.1 Contextualisation of BCP**

Tangen and Austing (2020) found that governments and law makers were increasingly recognising the importance of business continuity in reducing the impact of disruptive events at a workplace and in society. This recognition meant that the business continuity needed deliberate efforts which involved planning for different types of disruption, based on this, the discipline became known as Business Continuity Management (BCM). Previous research by Schmid et al. (2021: 2) explained that professional organisations such as the Business Continuity Institute (BCI) were established in 2006 to ensure that business continuity is governed by rules and professional standards. Global reference guidelines and standards were developed by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

Kumar, et al (2013: 51) emphasised that a need to implement a BCP has in fact increased and continues to increase day-by-day. The tragic event like the September 11 attacks popularly known as 9/11 was a red flag to international business community to always be prepared for any disaster. Similarly, a study conducted by the World Bank (2020: 104) found that Japan's 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster proved that having a diverse and comprehensive Business Continuity strategies are essential for the competitiveness, continuity, and viability of institutions.

In South Africa the concept of business continuity became critical when a fire broke out at the Polokwane Magistrate's Court in October 2012, leaving all office in ashes (News24, 2012). Considering the above, it is confirmed that adequate BCP which enable a change from normal operation to disaster operations should be implemented not only in businesses, but also in all levels of government including local government (Akiyama et al., 2012: 105).

### **2.2.2 Importance of BCP**

Fani & Subriadi, (2019: 276) alluded that the BCP is a significant strategy used by the organisations to anticipate and deal with distractions and mitigate the risk of loss and ensures that business operations are well managed. According to Walsh (2021: 19) BCP is a means of guaranteeing that processes and procedures are in place to reduce the disruption to customers, stakeholders, and employees in the event of business disturbance. Furthermore, Walsh (2021: 19) concluded that the importance of a good BCP should not be underestimated and emphasised that BCP is a collection of things that you simply do when things go wrong.

The study conducted by Muflihah & Subriadi (2012: 17) seemed to agree that BCP is imperative for the survival of any organisation and is a technique used to create and validate plans that will ensure that business operations are maintained before, during, and after a disasters or disruptive event. It is, therefore, crucially important for an organisation to prepare a plan for an unknown event by creating a BCP to enable business to continue to operate when a disaster strike. (Fani & Subriadi, 2019: 276).

A similar study by Bogdan and Zamfir (2020: 969) found that BCP allows institutions to re-establish its essential services after a disaster has occurred, Bogdan and Zamfir (2020: 969) alluded that business continuity management is the key for institutions to guard itself from any type of risks that are inherent to their environment. Their study revealed that interruption to service delivery has a negative effect on customers' loyalty, thus organisations should have a BCP that will identify, assess risks and put mitigations to enable service to be rendered continuously without interruption.

## 2.2.3 INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE REVIEW ON BCP

### 2.2.3.1 BCP- The United State of American (USA) and Portugal

Margherita and Heikkilä (2021:684) clarified that management of business continuity has gradually developed since the 1970s from a crisis management that reacts to different threats. The focus of business continuity to an all-inclusive management process that provides a framework for effective respond to business disruptions and minimise the effects of unanticipated disruptive event on the institution’s ability to meet its service delivery obligations. Similarly, Bakar, Yaacob & Udin (2015: 6) found that BCM was rooted in the Disaster Recovery Planning from the desire of government in the United States to better protect their operations and organisations from disastrous events focusing on protecting the computer systems rather than providing organisational wide business side protection. Bakar et al. (2015: 6) alluded that there was a major paradigm shift in the 1990s and scope was much broader than computer systems DRP to preparing for incidents that might affect critical government services. Since then, the scope of the BCP has been expanded to include enterprise wide and external factors. The below Figure 1 illustrates the evolution of BCM’s period, drivers, practices, and nature of progress according to Bakar *et al.* (2015: 6):

**Figure 2. 1: Evolution of BCP**

Period	Drivers	Practice	Nature of Progress
Mid 1970 – Mid 1990	Emerging Legislation	Disaster Recovery Planning ↓ Business Continuity Planning	Development
Mid 1990s – 2001	Emerging standard	↓ Business Continuity Management	↓ Diffusion
2002 - 2005	Acceleration and focus	↓	
2006 - 2010	Competing standard and breakout	↓	Standardization?

**Source Bakar et all (2015:6)**

Sahebjamnia, Torabi & Mansouri (2015: 261) point out that European institutions are highly subjected to operations disruptions which cannot be easily anticipated when they will occur and their nature and degree of such disruptions. Consequently, institutions must be proactive by having the business continuity framework to protect their operations from any results of the disruptive event. According to Sahebjamnia *et al* (2015: 262) institutions lack direction when confronted by unforeseen disaster due to ignorance of the importance of having a BCP. Sahebjamnia *et al* (2015: 262) further recommends that it is important to hypothetically examine and evaluate the applicability of the BCPs at the operational level.

BCPs classically predict different events that may disrupt business. Hypothetically examine for mitigations that can be activated when the need arises. (Balibek, Storkey & Yavuz, 2021). Business continuity and disaster recovery plans are found to be available in most government institutions in the USA. They give assurance that core business operations are maintained and losses from business disruption are minimised. Balibek *et al.* (2021) clarify that COVID-19 pandemic has re-emphasised the importance of business continuity planning for advanced economies and developing countries. Governments around the world announced policies to respond and mitigate the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic by putting in place measures for continuation of their business operations under the working conditions imposed by the pandemic. Dupré (2020: 38) explained that New York's governor imposed targeted two-week lockdowns for schools and non-essentials government services in Brooklyn, Queens and New York City which were the hardest hit by the pandemic. The Colorado and other seven state governments started revising their BCPs to decide where and how to reopen for services gradually, this was made possible by accepting that different levels of government depended on the each for different aspects of policy and service design and delivery services during the duration of COVID-19.

COVID-19 pandemic set precedents which require organisations to review their BCP to maintain operational resilience. Few countries such as Colombia, Ireland, Japan and Switzerland have included a pandemic as a risk factor in their existing BCPs, while others largely focused on protecting businesses from ICT system failures and data losses. Likewise, (Balibek, Storkey & Yavuz, 2021) stressed the Department of

Treasury reconsidered their BCP risks and mitigations regarding their operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic which has put a spotlight on the shortcomings of existing business continuity planning. Balibek *et al.* (2021) concluded that existing BCPs were developed to address shorter business disruptions and do not cover the challenges of prolonged work from home. Due to the increase in cases of COVID-19, the Department of Treasury in Portugal ordered key staff to work from their homes for two weeks, thereafter arrangements were made with their ICT for non-crucial staff to also work from their home.

Portugal government provided financial support to municipalities that rendered basic services to vulnerable groups such as homeless and families with lower incomes to enable them to continue basic services throughout pandemic crisis. The Lisbon Municipality created a network of volunteers to support and performs various tasks that ensured continued service delivery. The COVID-19 pandemic disaster happened in Portugal during a period when the country was experiencing moderate but sustained growth and a clear improvement in most social indicators. According to Stiftung (2020:3), the restrictions introduced to prevent the spread of COVID-19 led to drop-in business activities and revealed the strong dependence on government by citizen. Thus, national governments as the European Union found itself at a crossroads faced with immediate challenges due to momentous pressure to implement measure to revive the economy as well as continued service delivery. The Government commission a series of reports from different European countries to evaluate their respective business continuity and recovery plans and assess them in view of meeting the complex challenges such as COVID-19 pandemic. The BCP prepared by the Portuguese government to ensure continuity of government services focused on strengthening the resilience of the Portuguese service delivery and economy and accelerating the digital evolution. The areas of health, housing and social responses were found to have occupied a decisive part of the government BCP.

Simões (2022) stressed that Portugal implemented a centralised management approach and decentralised execution to manage the implementation of the BCPs in government. The government further ensured that there is monitoring of BCPs execution and results; and promote information-sharing among different government departments. The committee appointed to monitor the implementation was also tasked

with the responsibility to evaluate situations affecting BCP results, execution, and propose recommendations.

For developing countries such as the USA, (World Bank, 2020) found that preparing a BCP was practically a challenge during the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings of the Debt Management Performance Assessments (DeMPA) suggest that many low-income and developing countries have not yet developed a comprehensive BCP that covers critical processes in service delivery.

Hiererra (2022: 1141) explained that the purpose of developing a BCP is to maintain continuous business operations and minimise confusion when a disaster strikes, this author added that BCP reduces dependency on certain employees, reduce data and financial loss, accelerate recovery time, maintain organisation's reputation and is in compliance with regulatory regulations. Hiererra (2022: 1146) alluded that an organisation in Indonesia cannot be detached from natural and human threats, therefore, a good BCP and Disaster Recovery Plan are needed to maintain the business continuity in the event of an unexpected disaster.

To develop a good BCP it is necessary to identify all threats by brainstorming risk scenario that could have an impact in an organisation. The aim of identifying threats is to anticipate how much threats will impact the business processes if they materialise to allow the process of preparing the BCP can be carried out on target. Hiererra (2022: 1146) argued that if a BCP that is designed is if a disaster or threats has materialised, employees will be transferred to a backup work location that is not affected by the disaster.

### **2.2.3.2 BCP- China**

A study conducted by Harsha (2020) in China found that Government leaders navigated the COVID-19 disaster by re-shaping their operational process and implementation of key reforms contained in their BCPs to recover operation. Chinese government further implemented processes not only to react to severe business shocks but to also re-shape their strategy for business continuity to ensure continuity and recovery of operations. The study also discovered that most institutions faced underperformance and service delivery interruptions for the duration of the COVID-19

disaster, Harsha (2020) recommended that organisations must be able to make quick spot decisions and look for alternative ways of providing services during the time of COVID-19 and quickly come up with temporary alternative ways to render services to their customers.

According to Dupré (2020: 3), COVID-19 crisis had Chinese governments operating in a context of radical uncertainty given the challenges raised by the pandemic, the health and human tragedy of COVID-19 triggered the most serious service delivery challenges which affected all government sectors. The study by Dupré (2020: 3) took an in-depth look at the impact of the COVID-19 crisis in local government and suggested responses by national and local governments to help mitigate the effects of the crisis. Dupré (2020: 3) suggested that policymakers should be futuristic by looking and consider building more resilient governments which will be better prepared for the future by drafting policies which allow for effective coordination between nations, sub-national and local authorities. Sub-national governments had to identify municipalities in high, medium and low risk, and update them continuously on measures they should adopt to ensure continuity of services.

Belford (2021: 2) argue that BCP is a reactive strategy used to lighten issues brought about by a catastrophe by removing hindrances to resume normal business operations as quick as possible. Belford (2021: 2) states that the events implemented by management in March 2020 were an immediate response to the pandemic without understanding its extraordinary threat because there was no BCP in place to implement to respond to the unknown impact of the unique coronavirus. This resulted in an organisation forced to go to unforeseen downtime of operations which resulted in financial losses by failing to be prepared.

Belford (2021: 3) alluded that BCP is commonly referred to as “Plan B”, which is a plan with proactive strategies that will be implemented when an unforeseen event occurs. According to Belford (2021: 3), Plan B will detail, include, identifying and prioritise resources, sharing and revisiting the plan to ensure continuous relevance. It was found that organisations who did not have a BCM argued that managers did not commit the

time and resources towards developing the BCP because they did not see it as a priority given the small probability that the plan would be used.

Houston and Foster (2021: 47) pointed out that BCP developed to prepare the office for an emergency that could interrupt the ability to submit grant applications on time. The plan was to ensure that the organisation was able to adapt to adversity quickly and successfully by minimising the discontinuance of services and ensuring the submission of grants from remote locations. In this instance, the BCP was used proactively to ensure that grant application was made on time to prevent an interruption in services due to shortage of funds during the pandemic. Houston and Foster (2021: 53) found that although the BCP was not total effective in all areas, the office was able to use the plan as a guide to ensure that office activities were not interrupted during the closure. It was emphasised that if the office did not have the BCP in place as a guide, it would have been more challenging to transition to telework quickly currently known as working remotely. The office was able to quickly transition due to the BCP plan that identified telework as one of the strategies to be implemented in case of a disaster.

### **2.2.3.3 BCP- Africa**

According to Balibek *et al.*, (2021: 8) the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (FPED) in Uganda instituted strict institutional adherence to Standard Operating Procedures issued by the Ministry of Health in March 2020. All staff who had not yet undergone a COVID-19 test were advised to stay at home. Meanwhile, the ministry continued the workforce-scale-down policy for critical staff, minimised contact meetings, maintained safety protocols, undertook regular disinfection of office premises and surroundings, and worked closely with partners and the Ministry of Health to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Kavanagh, Erundu, Dzau & Okiro (2020: 1735) alluded that government leaders are ethically obliged to evade loss of life due to the predictable events such as COVID-19 which brings with inadequate access to service delivery. Kavanagh *et al.* (2020: 1735) further suggested that many African health authorities implemented different measures to stop the spread of COVID-19 which include curfews, closure of schools

and businesses however they were unable to obtain the supplies needed to continue to deliver health services in their countries.

Zimbabwe was found by Katsidzira, Gwaunza & Hakim (2020: 2080) to have suffered unintentional consequence due to its already inability to provide for emergency health care services for other diseases under normal circumstances before COVID-19. COVID-19 put more strain in the health department and further reduced capacity to deal with both COVID-19 and non- COVID-19 patients since the pandemic caught them off-guard.

### **2.3 BCP IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Before anyone could have predicted that COVID-19 pandemic will happen, Nel & Marx (2012: 97) investigated the different business continuity risks organisations face and the existence of BCPs to address and manage these risks. The investigations did not find any organisation that had identified a health pandemic as a risk that they need to plan for in their BCP. Similar findings by Nel & Marx (2012: 110) were that South African organisations in general do not have a sound business continuity culture established that supports its BCP although the management of these organisations is committed to and involved in the business continuity process. The study further concluded that although most organisations are aware of the business continuity risks that they are faced with, not all fully understand the impact thereof on their organisation, and accordingly do not have effective and adequate BCPs in place to address and manage these risks. Further, not all organisations place enough emphasis on the establishment of a business continuity culture within their organisations to support their business continuity philosophy and plan.

Pietersen (2020: 50) pointed out that all three spheres of government in South Africa held virtual meetings to discuss COVID-19 and ways of ensuring that service delivery is not disrupted to the public. Cabinet led by the President was the highest decision-making body on policy matters. On the other hand, Municipal Councils provided guidance on how the policy should be effectively implemented to ensure continuous service delivery. Segovia (2017) explained that business continuity of a municipality is very important and unique in several ways because the municipality provide unique

services that cannot be rendered by the private sector, such as traffic and licensing, waste treatment and refuse removal. The municipality of any size in drafting its BCP needs to work together with different stakeholders to ensure that process owners, and those who will be affected share their insights to maintain credibility with the communities they serve.

Narismulu's (2021) study analysed South African government's management and response to COVID-19 in the context of its constitutional commitments. The study revealed that despite the South African Constitution having been promulgated to redress the injustices of the apartheid government by entrenching access to socio-economic rights, the government has failed in its responsibility to fulfil such rights. Narismulu (2021) found that government failures were exposed during COVID-19 pandemic outbreak where large portions of South African population have been unable to receive basic service delivery. This was largely caused by the inadequacies in access to water and sanitation, food and nutrition, healthcare, and adequate forms of education.

Narismulu (2021) stressed that July 2021 was South Africa's darkest hour, the country was still grappling with the impact of COVID-19, looting and destruction and government and business building was witnessed in KwaZulu Natal and Gauteng provinces. Those horrific events highlighted the importance of BCP and emphasised the need to have mitigations in place to prevent loss that will impact an organisation in such unpredictable events.

Lutz (2020) revealed that a limited understanding of business continuity processes existed within the Western Cape Government, and it was not clear whether all business units were included in the business continuity planning. (Lutz :2020) alluded that when drafting BCPs, organisations should develop BCPs that are aligned to core business functions and process, and the lead department must ensure that there is capability of officials to drive business continuity within departments.

Israel, Olarewaju, Wing, Naicker and Jali (2021: 99) explained that Higher Education in South Africa was no exception to the COVID-19 which propelled humanity into adopting different ways of working. The Department of Higher Education was found not to have BCPs in place to ensure that learning continue during the time of the first lockdown. It took the department more than 4 months to start using technology platforms after much debate. Israel *et al* (2021: 114) found that the Department of Higher Education adopted a BCP framework which included blending learning with remote teaching and contact teaching. The approach came with many challenges because not all students had necessary gargets to learn remotely.

#### **2.4 EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BCP IN RESPONDING TO COVID-19 NATIONAL STATE OF DISASTER**

According to Smith (2014: 23), BCP should be implemented without major deviation from business operation to continue in an event of a disruption. Smith (2014: 22) mentions that the key to a successful business continuity implementation is to avoid quick wins and reject the flawed one-size-fits-all Business Continuity Management approach that consider Business Continuity Management for compliance purpose. Findings of Tracey *et al.* (2017: 2) suggest that implementing business continuity processes is critical because it provides a way for navigating a disaster.

A study by Nel (2012: 97) revealed that effective and adequate BCPs have not been put in place by organisations, to address and manage disasters and that BCPs needed to be tested consistently to be effective. Nel (2012: 102) also found that, for BCP to be effective it should not be the responsibility of one department, it should rather be the responsibility of the entire organisation. Walsh (2021: 8) suggests that it is important to measure the effectiveness of BCP when a business disruption has occurred.

Rostek, Wisniewski and Skomra (2022: 1) alluded that sustaining the continuity of business during the COVID-19 pandemic and effortlessly recovering from the crisis was a major challenge to all management and other officials who participated in the study on the impact of the pandemic on the economic factors. Jorrigala (2017) found that having a good BCP provides employees with better understanding and knowledge process to be put place when there is an event that requires activation of BCP. In other

words, a good BCP will detail which assets are of high priority to be prioritised for protection, which business operation are critical to be prioritised for continuity during a crisis. Accordingly, the municipality will have a precise plan to help it come out of any crisis.

Wessels (2007) explained that BCPs' importance has become obvious in recent years after the occurrence of attack, natural disasters, and malicious events. For BCP to be successful, the first step is to identify all resources critical to the continuity of an organisation, this will allow organisation to identify additional resources to improve business continuity. The study by Rostek *et al* (2022: 1) revealed that organisations were caught off guard by the fast pace and destructive nature of the pandemic and they made use defensive mitigations that were within reach which turned out to be insufficient in the face of enduring pandemic threat.

Rostek *et al.* (2022: 1) further found that 60% of the organisations surveyed had BCP in place before the pandemic and increased to 84% of the surveyed population after the COVID-19 pandemic. The surveyed organisations' population had BCP, meaning that the COVID-19 pandemic changed organisations' attitudes toward preventive measures to be implemented to ensure business continuity. Similarly, Krell (2006:23) found that the general state of BCP capabilities is inadequate to respond to epidemic among North American and require review by the auditors.

Berrich & Azarkan (2021: 612) asked "why do organisations fail while facing a major risk, such as a pandemic, when there are others that manage to withstand it and even make exceptional gains thanks to their BCP?". Berrich & Azarkan (2021: 612) studied various COVID-19-related effects and concluded that organisations succeeded in organising their operations and adjusting to health contingencies because of having BCPs in place. Thus, BCP was found to be at the heart of organisations' concerning a future that is characterised by diverse risk and uncertainty whose consequences are at times catastrophic.

Any disaster such as a pandemic has extremely destructive consequences to an organisation, not only in terms of tangible financial losses, but also intangible effects on the reputation of the organisation and customers' confidence. Correspondingly,

Bakar *et al* (2015: 5) suggested that it is critical for an organisation to have an effective BCP to ensure that that critical services will be resumed as effectively and quickly as possible in the event of an unforeseen disruption.

A study by (Lutz: 2020) in the Western Cape government found that departments did not have a policy for business continuity, the departments that had BCPs were found not to have followed the correct process of conducting business impact analysis and risk and threats identification process.

## **2.5 EVALUATION OF WHETHER THE BCP WAS IMPLEMENTED AS ENVISAGED DURING COVID-19 NATIONAL STATE OF DISASTER.**

### **2.5.1 BCP evaluation**

In a study by Poto (2019: 83) it was revealed that the majority (70.1%) of companies with BCPs did not rehearse or test their BCPs. Further, the study reported that half of the companies in Bayhead Harbour did not develop or implement BCPs.

The study conducted by Nilsson and Tegstrom (2020: 81) found that the BCP implementation has contributed to the recovery of business operations from the pandemic, the findings highlighted that critical employees were not consulted in drafting the BCP which made it difficult to conclude on the extent to which the BCP assisted with the recovery from the COVID-19 disaster.

Equally important, Akinbola (2018: 23) found that organisations should evaluate their BCPs and strengthen any defects that might exist. A survey by the Department of Planning Monitoring and Evaluation (2020: 12) explored the impacts of COVID-19 on the ability to perform required functions and found that municipal staff were well positioned to execute their tasks despite challenges pertaining to COVID-19.

Wessels (2017) clarified that the goal of BCP is to develop response plans that should be implemented precisely in the event of a threat or disaster occurring with the aim of guaranteeing that an organisation's purposes and activities are not disrupted by the threat or disaster. Contrary Rosenberg & Alexandre (2022: 2) argued that even if

organisations can predict a pandemic in their BCP, no one could have predicted that the COVID-19 pandemic will come with lockdown, closure of government offices and restriction of movement, as such it is essential that BCP strategies should be flexible enough to effortlessly adapt and function to any specific unforeseen situations. In addition, the implementation of BCP should also allow for flexible roles to allow specified roles and responsibilities that can be altered and adapted depending on the situation or emergency that the organisation is faced with.

Khalifa (2022) clarified that an organisation should make resources available to be able to implement appropriate BCP that will be able to respond to any kind of a disaster. Poor planning was found to be the cause of inefficiency in BCP. The study recommends monitoring, review, and testing of BCPs for critical services to ensure that BCP will be implemented and be responsive as planned in case of a disaster. Likewise, SHEMELES (2020: 29) revealed that management should include the identification of deliverables and budget needed to set up convincing BCP components that will be responsive when implementing BCP. SHEMELES (2020: 29) stressed organisation should create assessment levels of preparedness when implementing BCPs to determine whether they understand BCP concept or not, the results will determine whether they should increase its effort for a better BCP development level.

## **2.6 THE LEVEL OF EMPLOYEES AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE EXISTING MUNICIPAL BCP**

The study by Fani and Subriadi (2019: 280) showed that an understanding of business continuity is very crucial for any organisation especially for implementation of BCP. Fani and Subriadi (2019: 280) argue that where there is lack of knowledge about BCP in an organisation, the occurrence of failure can be increased. These authors emphasised the importance of adequate knowledge about BCP and argue that this will assist by guiding planning which fits organisational needs (Fani & Subriadi, 2019: 280).

It was difficult for employees to prioritise appropriate services to render during the COVID-19 disaster which implied a need review and add more recovery planning

process for future disasters (Nilsson & Tegstrom, 2020: 81). Further, the authors discovered that the BCP has major weakness since the plan only focused on risks such as fire and natural disaster to building. Van Niekerk (2014: 858) found that the weakness in the business continuity framework in South Africa is insufficient awareness and skills for business continuity management in an event of a disaster due to lack of clear guidance for local municipalities.

Nel & Marx (2012: 103) alluded that organisation may have all the procedures and plans in place to address its business continuity risks, but if it does not have a business continuity culture, the success of all the measures that are in place may be placed in jeopardy. It is therefore essential that the management of business continuity within the organisation provides a sound environment and framework in which business continuity measures will be supported to ensure the effective functioning of the organisation's BCP.

The figure below points out steps necessary to build a holistic business continuity culture that supports and provides an effective business continuity awareness. The response should be supported from top management by setting the tone and ensuring the organisational attitude, culture and values are to support business continuity awareness.

**Figure 2. 2: Elements for developing a business continuity awareness and culture.**



**Source Nel & Marx (2012: 97)**

Dominguez & Patricia (2016) further alluded that organisation must create a communication plan which will be used to create awareness and communicate and further assist the organisation to structure how to communicate different messages during and after an incident. Similarly, a study conducted Margherita & Heikkila (2021: 31) found that organisations had develop training plan that is adaptable which includes real-time awareness of the impact of the pandemic for staff members and action plans to respond to COVID-19. Margherita & Heikkila (2021: 31) emphasised that the training plan included continuous development and training for new staff members who continue to join the organisation. Margherita & Heikkila (2021: 31) further found that staff members face anxiety in organisations where there is lack of awareness due to spread of false information intended to mislead employees regarding the COVID-19 pandemic to enhance employee awareness.

Poto (2019) conducted a study in the Bayhead Harbour in Durban and found that it is important to know the enemy before the enemy knows you. Poto (2019) alluded that awareness is a key factor in effective disaster risk reduction as awareness in BCP

serves as the early warning system measure and assists organisation to plan ahead, train and educate employees and other stakeholders.

The findings from a study conducted by Poto (2019) revealed that many companies in Bayhead Harbour did not have an existing BCP. The study in general found that BCP was not regarded as important by many institutions. Nevertheless, the findings revealed that institutions that had an existing BCP did not test or rehearse their BCP. This posed a risk because not testing the BCP can cause serious response problem when disasters occur. This finding is in line with Dominguez and Patricia (2016), who found that many organisations do not reach business resilience due to inadequate knowledge of BCP and staff unaware of the importance of BCP, how their job can impact it, and how to act in the case of a disruption. Similarly, Berrich & Azarkan (2021: 612) concluded that lack of information and communication due to the newness characteristic of the COVID-19 was obstacle that limited BCP to be implemented successful.

Communication is perhaps the most important factor in ensuring that BCP, proper communication contributes to trust in the institutions and people leading the crisis management effort, which in turn can mitigate the crisis' negative impact. Effective crisis communications depend on the relationships across all levels of government. This could be achieved communicating early, clearly, regularly and with a coherent message. Dupré (2020: 77) found evidence that in the face of COVID-19 staff members expected government to lead in all areas relevant to the pandemic.

## **2.7 SUMMARY**

This chapter discussed literature review for the study and commenced by the contextualisation of BCP, and its importance. Again, this chapter discussed international literature review on BCP, and BCP in the South African Context. The next chapter, which is chapter three discusses the research methodology for the study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research methodology is defined by Patel & Patel (2019: 48) as a method of systematically solving a research problem. Williams (2007: 66) attests by describing research methodology as an approach that a researcher take when they carry out the research project. As such, scientific procedures must be applied to discover answers to the research questions. Similarly, Pillai & Kaushal, (2020: 4) clarify that, research methodology is a science of studying the way which research will be conducted. Furthermore, Pillai & Kaushal (2020: 4) explain that research methods are techniques and tools for conducting research.

A quantitative research method was employed in the study for answering the developed research questions, and for achieving the objectives of the study. According to Apuke (2017: 46), quantitative research quantifies and analyses variables to attain the study results. In addition, this type of research involves using numerical data through specific statistical techniques for answering questions such as where, when, who, what, how much, and how many (Apuke, 2017: 46). Quantitative research method enabled the researcher to gather data from a large sample size that is representative of the population.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Asenahabi (2019: 78) state that the kinds of analysis that researchers are to do to get the results that are required, are determined through research design. Research design is described in Asenahabi (2019: 78) as a plan that links the conceptual research problems to be practical and pertinentable and achievable. This is a quantitative study and its design is descriptive in nature. Sutanapong & Louangrath (2015: 5) assert that descriptive research describes the data, and the use of descriptive statistics happens prior to making formal inferences. According to Basias & Pollas (2018: 92), quantitative research encompasses a phenomenon' investigation that is systematic and empirical and done through the processing of numerical data,

statistics and mathematics. According to Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter (2006: 44), the aim of descriptive studies is for describing phenomena. Questions such as who, what, how, where, and when are answered through descriptive research (Akhtar, 2016: 75). Furthermore, Anari, Rahim, Bhoje & Bhosale (2022) explain that this type of research design aims to collect data to systematically describe the situation, an object or population.

### 3.3 POPULATION

#### 3.3.1 Target Population of the study

General population is defined in Asiamah, Mensah & Oteng-Abayie (2017: 1611) as an entire group about which some information will be established. Thus, the target population for this study is all management and staff of the Polokwane Municipality in the Limpopo Province as policy designers and implementers to get feedback whether they continue to render services in a sustainable manner during the National State of Disaster. Table 1 below provides information relating to designation of target population for the study.

**Table 3. 1: Designation of target population**

No	Job Categories	Target Population
1.	Directors	10
2.	Managers	45
3.	Assistant Managers	75
4.	Supervisors	110
	<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>

**Source: Polokwane Municipality. Annual Report 2019-20 Financial Year**

### 3.4 SAMPLING AND SAMPLING METHOD

According to Etikan & Babatope (2019: 50), sampling refers to a way a sample is selected from the population. Moffatt (2015: 53) describe a sample as that smaller group of elements and a population's subset where their selection is based on a definite and rigorous procedure from a particular population, that is, the actual study is on the elements that constitute a sample. The researcher will employ probability sampling in a form of simple random sampling from the two sampling methods which are probability and non-probability sampling.

Adekeye & Apeh (2019: 100) stress that in a probability sampling, the populations' every unit has a fair chance of being included in the sample of the study. Thus, a kind of probability sampling which is a simple random sampling will be used for the purpose of sampling. According to Adekeye & Apeh (2019: 104), in simple random sampling, the populations' every member has an independent and equal chance of being chosen to be in the study sample. Similarly, simple random sampling is defined by Sharma (2017: 750) as a technique where participant's chance to be selected in a study as a subject is equal.

**Table 3. 2: Selection of a Sample for Municipal Employees**

No	Job Categories	Population	25% Sample
1.	Directors	10	3
2.	Managers	45	11
3.	Assistant Managers	75	18
4.	Supervisors	110	28
<b>Totals</b>		<b>240</b>	<b>60</b>

As shown in the Table 2 above, **60** participants were selected for this study. Only two categories, namely; managers and supervisors utilised the principle of 25% selection of sample size.

### **3.5 Data collection**

Patil and Nageswara (2011: 263) explain that a process that is used to prepare and collect data, is referred to as data collection. Furthermore, Patil & Nageswara (2011: 263) argue that the right data is needed for making right and timely decisions. In this study, a structured questionnaire was employed to collect data at the municipal offices of the Polokwane Municipality. A questionnaire is described by Etikan & Bala (2017: 219) as a set of questions which need to be answered when collecting information from respondents. A questionnaire was chosen because Etikan & Bala (2017: 219) explain that the questionnaire helps the scholar to access a swift or easy, inexpensive, and resourceful way of gathering large volume of information from a greater sample of society. In addition, a questionnaire assisted the researcher to focus on the research aim and objectives. Sigh (2015: 18) stresses that the use of a sample has benefits such as saving of money and time, selection of appropriate sample size, a sample will lead to valid and reliable information.

The quantitative questionnaire that was used for this study was amenable to Likert Scale. Ankur, Saket, Satish & Dinesh (2015: 397) found that Likert Scale was formulated to scientifically measure participants' behaviour in a recognised and authenticate method. Ankur *et al.* (2015: 397) further explained that Likert Scale is a set of statements offered for a real situation being studied, respondents are asked to rate their level of agreement with a given statement on a metrical scale from 'strongly agree (5)' to 'strongly disagree (1).

### **3.6 Data analysis**

Analysis of data was carried out using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26.0 using descriptive analysis. SPSS is described by Gogoi (2020: 2424) as a program that is useful and used by the social science researchers when they explore the critical data by some simple method. Collected data was cleaned, coded, and manually captured into SPSS software by the researcher. According to Gogoi (2020: 2424) this software is broadly used for quantitative research method particularly for developing the explanation of social science research in an analytical way.

## **3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

Akaranga and Makau (2016: 2) emphasise that research ethics has established guidelines and rules that define the conduct of researchers as professionals. The researcher ensured that ethical principles discussed below, were observed:

### **3.7.1 Permission to conduct the study**

Firstly, a clearance certificate was obtained from Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) and thereafter, the Polokwane Municipality was requested to grant permission to conduct the proposed study. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Polokwane Municipality prior to the actual study being conducted. The study only commenced after the municipality had granted a written permission to do so.

### **3.7.2 Informed Consent**

Jelsma & Clow (2005: 4) emphasise the importance of obtaining informed consent before involving any participant in a research project. Likewise, Akaranga & Makau (2016: 7) express that it becomes fair for a respondent to decide to participate in a study if the benefits and risks of the study are communicated and understood since the study leads to new knowledge. Jelsma & Clow (2005: 4) emphasise the importance of obtaining informed consent before involving any participant in a research project.

### **3.7.3 Confidentiality**

Bos (2020: 153) explains that confidentiality is a central principle in research ethics which compel the researcher to ensure that participants remain anonymous by default and treat data collected from participants with dignity. Confidentiality has always been maintained; and the researcher informed the participants how their information will be used, and that the information will be stored securely and only the researcher and supervisor will have access to the data.

### **3.7.4 Anonymity**

Akaranga & Makau (2016: 6) say that Mugenda (2003) describe anonymity as keeping secret by not referring to respondents by their names, ensuring that their ethnic or cultural background are not identified and by not revealing any participant's information which is sensitive.

### **3.7.5 Avoidance of Harm**

Jelsma & Clow (2005: 5) explains that the emotional integrity of the participants needs to be promoted because issues which are sensitive may be revealed or known in the process of research. Jelsma & Clow (2005: 5) explain that the emotional integrity of the participants needs to be promoted because issues which are sensitive may be uncovered, recognised, or confronted for the first time in the process of research.

### **3.7.7 Voluntary participation**

Kılınç & Fırat (2017: 1462) emphasise that voluntary participation is when participants choose or act without being influenced by others or being forced to participate. Participants were informed that they are not coerced to participate in the study and their participation is entirely voluntary. Again, they were informed that there will be no rewards of any kind that will be offered to them because of their participation.

## **3.8 RELIABILITY, VALIDITY AND OBJECTIVITY**

Sürücü & Maslaçı (2020: 2696) emphasises that the validity and reliability of the data collection instrument that the researcher plans to use for the collection of data, must both be tested. Thus, this section defines the concept of reliability, validity, and objectivity.

### **3.8.1 Reliability**

According to Wamunyu (2016: 32), reliability of the instrument developed for the purpose of research means that the method used for testing will ensure that the results are consistent. In the same manner, Danner (2016: 1) explains that when one examines the relationship between different variables or when the focus of interest is on a single individual's value, the reliability of a measurement is relevant. Equally important, Bahariniya, Ezatiasar & Madadzadeh (2021: 100) express that reliability means there is stability in the study results when a measurement of a scale is repeated. To ensure reliability of the instrument that was used, a pilot study was conducted at the Polokwane Municipality. Simple random sampling was employed for the selection of 10 participants at the Polokwane Municipality for pilot study.

### **3.8.2 Validity**

Arinanye (2015: 18) argues that this concept means an instrument utilised is appropriate for measuring whatever it is planned to be measured. According to Lakshmi and Mohideen (2013: 2755) for a measure to be valid, it must measure what it is supposed to measure, and this must happen in a clear manner without accidental inclusion of other factors. Likewise, Bahariniya *et al.* (2021: 102) explain that validity means that the study results that are produced, are consistent with reality. That is, a scale correctly measures what is developed to measure. Thus, data collection instrument to be used in this study was piloted to ensure that it is valid and reliable and produces reliable results.

### **3.8.3 Objectivity**

Khatwari & Panhwar (2019: 130) explain that objectivity is a systematic set of techniques, a procedure, a mode which dissociate objective judgement from anything that can be called oneself, or essential connection with the persons' opinion and experiences.

## **3.9 ELIMINATION OF BIAS**

Yale & Kumar (2016: 1644) point out that bias refers to any process and factor that tends to diverge the study results or conclusions of trial scientifically away from the truth. In this study, bias was eliminated by selecting a sampling that gives everyone in the target population equal chance to be included in the study.

## **3.10 SUMMARY**

This chapter briefly discussed the research methodology used in the study. An extensive usage of the quantitative methodology prevailed in the chapter. In addition, the chapter advanced discussions on the research designs, with a particular reference to descriptive approach. The ensuing chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the results of the study.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter three has articulated the research methodology undertaken in the study. This study was conducted within the quantitative paradigm. It further acknowledged the usage of descriptive approach. The aim of this chapter is to present the study findings based on the research questions, namely; was the Business Continuity Plan effective in responding to COVID-19 National State of Disaster?, was the municipal Business Continuity Plan implemented as envisaged to ensure continuity of basic services during the COVID-19 National State of Disaster?, and what is the level of the employee's awareness and understanding of the existing municipal Business Continuity Plan? The researcher accumulated information from the Polokwane Municipal employees based on their knowledge and experiences.

#### **4.2 DATA ANALYSIS**

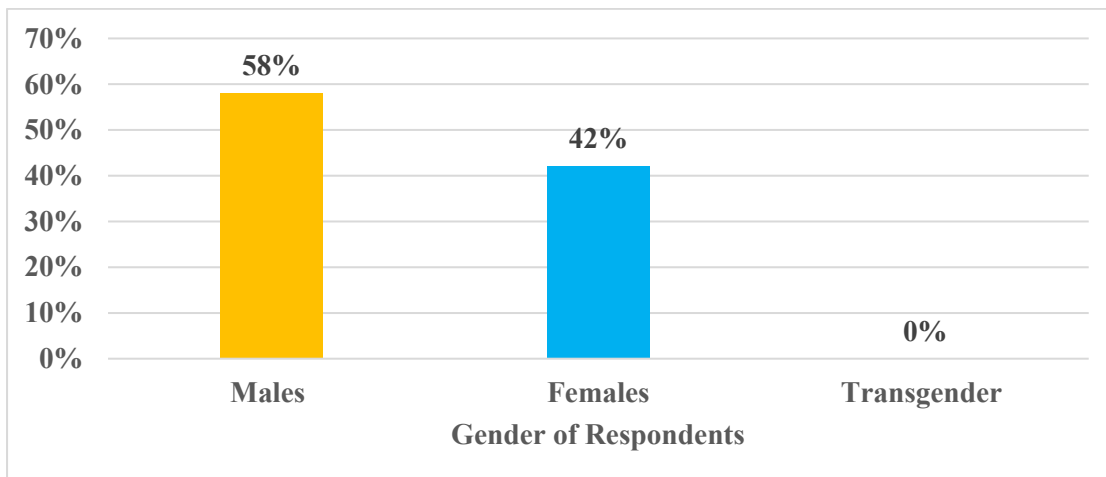
Inn & Lee (2017:267) describe data as practical reality provided by set of facts that have been collected and generated with the purpose of validating research findings. These authors stipulate that data collection should be done with a purpose and researchers should consider the information which is conveyed by the data and how it will be utilised.

#### **4.3 RESPONSE RATE**

Holtom, Baruch, Aguni & Ballinger (2022:1562) argue that a researcher should start by providing feedback on the rate of response received from participants. Thus, for this study the targeted sample was 60 officials of the Polokwane Municipality, and 100% response rate was achieved.

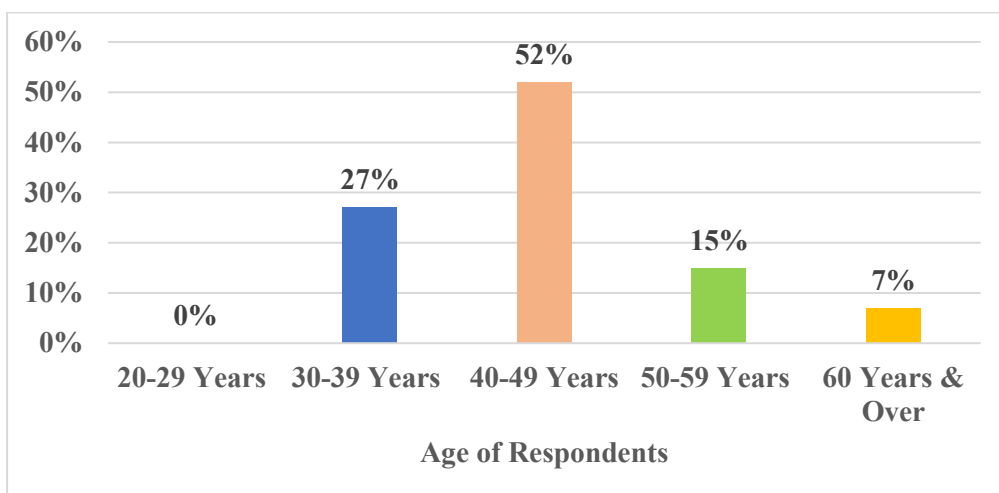
## 4.4 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

### 4.4.1 Analysis of demographics



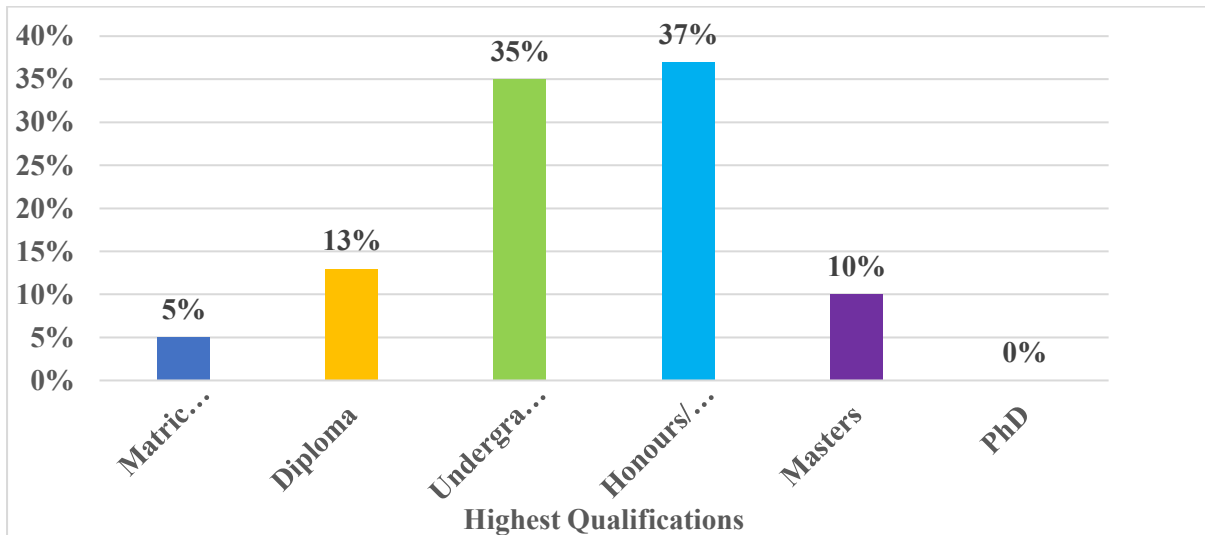
**Figure 4. 1 Analysis of demographics**

The above figure shows gender classification of respondents. The figure indicates that **58%** of respondents were males and **42%** were females, respectively. In total, **60** municipal employees participated in the study.



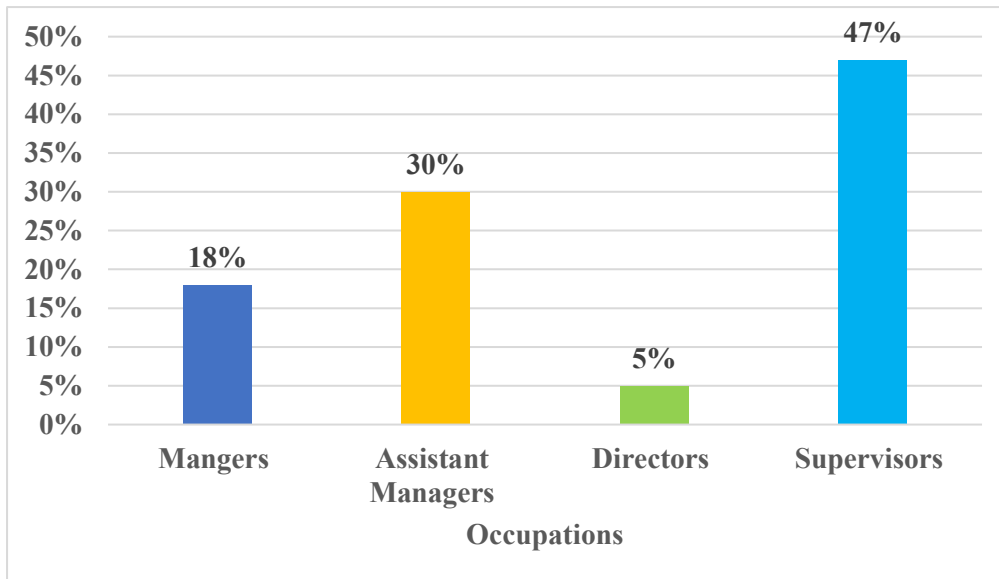
**Figure 4. 2: Age of Respondents**

**Figure 4.2** above shows the total percent of respondents per age distribution. The table provides that **27%** of the respondents were between the ages of **30-39**, **52%** of respondents were between the ages of **40-49**, while **15%** of the respondents are between the ages of **30-39** and there is a small percentage of respondents (**7%**) over the age of 60 years. The Figure above indicates that there were no respondents who were between the age of **20-29** years.



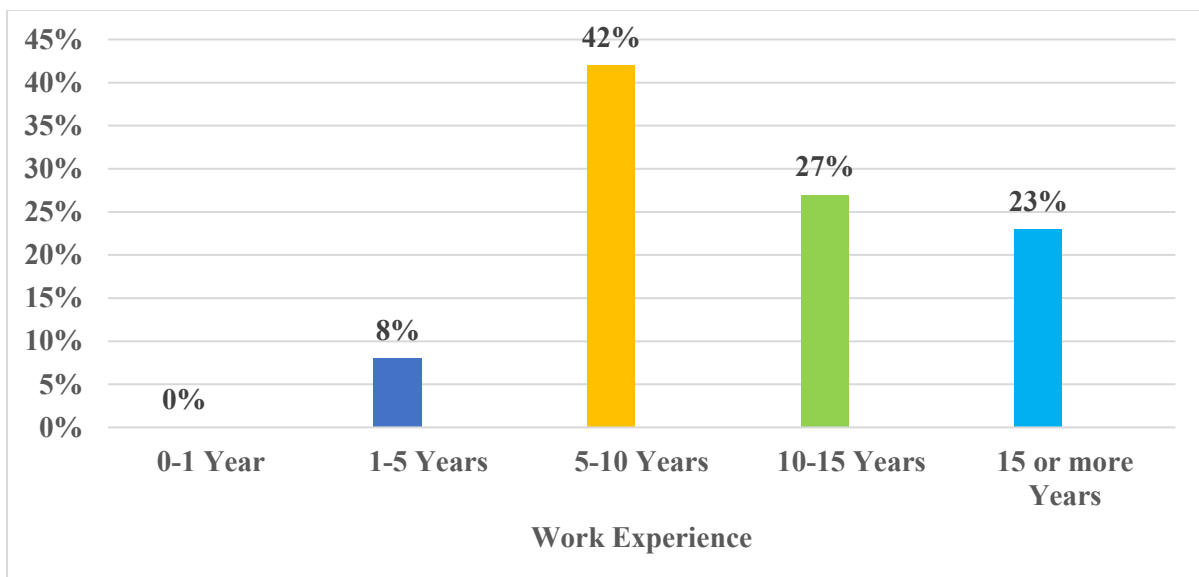
**Figure 4. 3: Respondents Highest Qualifications**

**Figure 4.3** demonstrates that from the total number of municipal employees who participated in the study, **(37%)** hold Honours or BTech, **(35%)** an undergraduate degree, **(13%)** a Diploma, **(10%)** a Masters degree, and **(5%)** Matric and below. None of the participants hold a Doctoral qualification.



**Figure 4. 4: Respondents' Occupational Classification**

**Figure 4.4** Shows the total number of municipal employees who participated in the study. Although 100% of sampled categories responded, the figure highlighted that the highest percentage of respondents is for Supervisors (**47%**), followed by Assistant Managers (**30%**), Managers with (**17%**) and Directors with (**5%**). This figure is accordance with the purpose sampling used by the researcher.



**Figure 4. 5: Respondents Working Experience in the Polokwane Municipality**

**Figure 4.5.** above gives a picture of respondents' number of years working at the Polokwane Municipality. The table shows that 25 participants which is 42% worked for the municipality for a period between 5-10 years, 16 respondents 27% worked for years between 11-20. A total of 15 employees which constitute 23% of the respondents worked for more than 15 years. A small percentage of 8% (5 employees) of respondents worked between the years of 15 years.

#### **4.5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF BCP IN RESPONDING TO COVID-19 NATIONAL STATE OF DISASTER**

##### **4.5.1 Municipal Approved Business Continued Plan**

**Table 4. 1. Municipal Approved Business Continued Plan**

<b>Items</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentages (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	23	38%
Agree	25	42%
Don't know	10	17%
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	2	3%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

Respondents were asked if according to their knowledge the Municipality has approved Business Continued Plan, **Table 4.1** above depicts respondents' views, which show that **38%** of respondents strongly agreed and **42%** of the respondents agreed. **17%** of the officials did not know whether the municipality has an approved BCP and **3%** strongly disagreed. The fact that **80%** of the respondents were in accord that the municipality has an approved BCP is acceptable. This finding is similar with the results of the study by Van Haren (2020: 26) of a survey from 2729 participants, who found that 60% of the participants claimed to have an approved BCP for all their critical functions and offices to respond to global epidemics while 20% of the participants claimed that the BCM was under development. WHO (2018) also found

that the accounting officer must ensure that the BCPs are approved and signed off with an implementation plan for execution.

#### 4.5.2 BCP is a shared responsibility of all employees.

**Table 4. 2: BCP is a shared responsibility.**

Items	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Strongly Agree	25	42%
Agree	24	40%
Don't know	3	5%
Disagree	8	13%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

Respondents were asked if the BCP was the responsibility of all employees. **Table 4.2** above shows respondents views on BCP being all employees shared responsibility. The table reveals that **42%** of the respondents strongly agreed and **40%** of the respondents agreed. In addition, the table indicates that **13%** of the respondents disagreed and only **5%** of respondents did not know. The fact that the majority (**82%**) of respondents agreed that BCP is a shared responsibility implies that indeed the BCP is a shared responsibility in the Polokwane Municipality. The above findings are supported by a study by Nel (2012: 102) who found that, for Business Continuity Plan to be effective it should be the responsibility of the entire organisation instead of few individuals or one department.

#### 4.5.3 BCP is necessary for the Municipality.

**Table 4. 3: The Necessity of BCP**

Items	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Strongly Agree	38	63%
Agree	21	35%
Don't know	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%

Strongly Disagree	1	2%
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Respondents were asked if BCP was necessary for the municipality. **Table 4.3** depicts respondents' views on the necessity of BCP in the municipality. Of the **60** respondents, **63%** strongly agreed and **35%** agreed with the statement. Only **2%** of the respondents strongly disagreed. Contrary to the above, Akinbola (2018: 23) concluded that most institutions have not realised the importance of business continuity plan in their daily business operation while Tangen and Austing (2020) found that governments and law makers were increasingly recognising the importance of business continuity in reducing the impact of disruptive events at a workplace and in society. Again, Van Haren (2020: 26) found that participants from his study indicated that BCP is a necessity as it provides direction during the time of crisis by paving a clear path on how to react at the time of a service delivery disruption. Contrary, 5% of the participants in the survey by Van Haren (2020: 26) indicated that there is no BCP in place at all and they are also not considering developing one as they do not see its necessity which is immaterial.

#### 4.5.4 Effectiveness of BCP in responding to COVID-19 National State of Disaster.

**Table 4. 4: Effectiveness of BCP in responding to COVID-19 National State of Disaster**

Items	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Strongly Agree	17	28%
Agree	28	46%
Don't know	10	17%
Disagree	4	7%
Strongly Disagree	1	2%

Respondents were asked if BCP was effective in responding to COVID-19 during the National State of Disaster to ensure that the municipality continued to render services. **Table 4.4** above provides data relating to respondents' views on the effectiveness of BCP in responding to the National State of Disaster, the table provides that **46%** of the respondents agreed and **28%** strongly agreed. What is more concerning, **17%** of

respondents did not know while **7%** disagreed and **2%** strongly disagreed. This finding is consistent with a study by Margherita and Heikkila (2021: 31), who found that adopting of effective business methods that are specific to events such as a pandemic guarantees a successful response. Contrary to this view, survey conducted by Rostek *et al* (2022: 1) found that business continuity measures implemented during the pandemic were not effective as organisations suspended their operations because they were shocked by the rapidity and aggressive nature of the pandemic.

#### **4. 4.6 DETERMINING THE LEVEL OF EMPLOYEE’S AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE EXISTING MUNICIPAL BCP.**

##### **4.6.1 The municipality regularly communicates its BCP.**

**Table 4. 5: The municipality regularly communicates its BCP**

<b>Items</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentages (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	6	10%
Agree	23	38%
Don't know	9	15%
Disagree	17	28%
Strongly Disagree	5	9%

Respondents were asked if the municipality communicates the BCP regularly, Table **4.5** above shows respondents' views on communication of BCP. The table reveals that **38%** of the respondents agreed and **10%** of the respondents strongly agreed. Furthermore, the table indicates that **28%** of the respondents disagreed **while 9%** of respondents strongly disagreed and **15%** did not know. From these results, it is evident that the Polokwane Municipality did not communicate its BCP to all employees as **37%** of respondents disagreed that the BCP is regularly communicated and **15%** did not know whether the BCP was communicated. Contrary to this finding, Lazarte-Hoyle (2009: 29) found that staff members and stakeholders should be informed about the existence of a BCP and educate them on the response strategies to be implemented

in a case of a disaster and the benefits of implementing such strategies, the strategies should further address internal and external stakeholders' specific needs.

#### 4.6.2 Understanding of the Content of BCP by municipal employees

**Table 4. 6. Understanding of the Content of BCP**

Items	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Strongly Agree	9	15%
Agree	38	63%
Don't know	8	13%
Disagree	4	7%
Strongly Disagree	1	2%

Respondents were asked if they understand the contents of the BCP, **Table 4.6** above depicts respondents' views on their understanding of BCP. The results show that **78%** of the respondents agreed and **9%** disagreed while 13% did not know. The fact that **78%** of the respondents agreed to understanding the contents of the BCP is positive news for the municipality. This finding was evident in a study by Fani and Subriadi (2019: 280), who found that understanding of BCP is very crucial for any organisation especially for implementation of BCP. Similarly, (Lutz: 2020) demonstrated that departments had a fair understanding of what business continuity is and its importance.

#### 4.6.3 Sufficient Awareness of BCP on how to respond to any event of a Disaster.

**Table 4. 7: Sufficient Awareness of BCP on how to respond to any event of a Disaster.**

Items	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Strongly Agree	6	10%
Agree	17	28%
Don't know	13	22%

Disagree	18	30%
Strongly Disagree	6	10%

Respondents were asked if they have been made aware of the implementation of BCP in order to respond to any event of a disaster. **Table 4.7** provides data relating to respondents' views on whether there is sufficient awareness of BCP on how to respond to any event of a disaster. The table shows that **28%** of the respondents agreed and **10%** strongly agreed with the statement. In addition, **22%** of the respondents cited they did not know, while **30%** of the respondents disagreed and **10%** strongly disagreed. The fact that **40%** of the respondents disagreed while **22%** did not know, implies that participants did not have sufficient knowledge on how to respond to any event of a Disaster using BCP and this is a worrying factor. Similar findings were reported by Segovia (2017), who found that the majority of participants were unaware of BCP in place at the municipality. Only 5% of participants in the study were aware of available BCP. BCP awareness is a challenge in organisations as similar findings were reported by Jorrigala (2017), who found that employees did not understand the importance of the BCP and the devastating results of the non-existence of BCP in an organisation.

#### 4.6.4 There is adequate knowledge about Municipal BCP.

**Table 4. 8: Adequate Knowledge about Municipal BCP**

Items	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Strongly Agree	2	3%
Agree	19	32%
Don't know	15	25%
Disagree	18	30%
Strongly Disagree	6	10%

Respondents were asked if there is adequate knowledge about Municipal BCP by employees, Table **4.8** above represents views of respondents on whether there is adequate knowledge about Municipal BCP in the municipality. As shown by the table,

**40%** of the respondents disagreed and **25%** of the respondents did not know while **35%** agreed, this implies that there is inadequate knowledge about Municipal BCP by employees in the municipality. Irkey & Tüfekci (2021:74) similarly found that knowledge should properly be shared and managed to assist in managing a crisis such as a pandemic. Knowledge sharing will ensure that the organisation remains in operation if it gets affected by a crisis because employees will know how to implement its BCP effectively. Irkey & Tüfekci (2021:74) emphasised that the main objectives of adequate knowledge sharing are to improve organisational performance and service delivery.

#### **4.7 EVALUATION OF WHETHER OR NOT THE BCP WAS IMPLEMENTED AS ENVISAGED DURING COVID-19 NATIONAL STATE OF DISASTER.**

##### **4.7.1 Implementation of BCP during COVID-19**

**Table 4. 9: BCM implementation during COVID-19**

<b>Items</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentages (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	10	17%
Agree	33	58%
Don't know	9	15%
Disagree	5	8%
Strongly Disagree	3	5%

Respondents were asked whether the municipal BCP was implemented during COVID-19 National State of Disaster, Table **4.9** above represents views of respondents on whether the municipal BCP was implemented during COVID-19 National State of Disaster. **58%** of the respondents agreed and **17%** of the respondents strongly agreed that BCP was implemented during COVID-19 National State of Disaster. In contrast **15%** of respondents did not know, while **8%** disagreed and **5%** strongly disagreed. Irkey & Tüfekci (2021:1) found that the pandemic came with restrictions which adversely affected service delivery due to prohibitions that were implemented to contain the swift spread of COVID-19. During the time organisations

that did not have BCPs have suffered financial losses which also showed the importance of implementing during COVID-19 National State of Disaster.

#### 4.7.2 Satisfactory Implementation of BCP during National State of Disaster

**Table 4. 10: Satisfactory Implementation of BCP during National State of Disaster**

Items	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Strongly Agree	29	15%
Agree	9	45%
Don't know	11	18%
Disagree	8	13%
Strongly Disagree	5	9%

Respondents were asked if implementation of BCP during COVID-19 National State of Disaster was satisfactory, **Table 4.10** above provides data relating to respondents' views on whether BCP was implemented satisfactorily during National State of Disaster. The table provides that **45%** of the respondents agreed and **15%** strongly agreed. In addition, **18%** of respondents indicated that they did not know while, 13% and 9% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. Equally, as indicated in Chapter two, a survey by the Department of Planning Monitoring and Evaluation (2020: 12) explored the impacts of COVID-19 on the ability to perform required functions and found that municipal staff were well positioned to execute their tasks despite challenges pertaining to COVID-19.

#### 4.7.3 Implementation of BCP during COVID-19 National State of Disaster ensuring that operations continued without disruptions.

**Table 4. 11: Implementation of BCP during COVID-19 National State of Disaster ensuring that operations continued without disruptions.**

Items	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Strongly Agree	12	20%
Agree	31	52%
Don't know	5	8%
Disagree	11	18%
Strongly Disagree	1	2%

Respondents were asked if implementation of BCP during National State of Disaster ensured that operations continued without disruptions, **Table 4.11** above provides data relating to respondents' insights on whether implementation of BCP during National State of Disaster ensured that operations continued without disruptions. The table provides that **52%** of the respondents agreed and **20%** strongly agreed. In addition, **18%** of the respondents disagreed while **2%** strong disagreed; 8% indicated that they did not know whether implementation of the BCP during the National State of Disaster ensured that operations continued without disruptions. In general, the majority of the respondents (**72%**) agreed that implementation of the BCP during COVID-19 National State of Disaster ensured that operations continued without disruptions. Same findings were discovered by Chipangura, Naidoo, Coertz & Mohr (2021: 17) and concluded that mitigating measures put in place by the two laboratory animal facilities were successfully operating and ensuring that the welfare of animals was provided during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown restrictions. On the other hand, study by Segovia (2017) found that majority of the participants were not confident that the municipality was prepared to deliver continued services in case of a disaster.

#### 4.7.4 General implementation of BCP during COVID-19 National State of Disaster

**Table 4. 12: General implementation of BCP during COVID-19 National State of Disaster**

Items	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Strongly Agree	9	15%
Agree	31	52%
Don't know	8	13%
Disagree	10	17%
Strongly Disagree	2	3%

Respondents were asked if BCP was overall implemented during COVID-19 National State of Disaster, **Table 4.12** above reveals that respondents' observations on overall implementation of BCP during COVID-19 National State of Disaster. The table shows that **52%** of the respondents agreed and **15%** of the respondents strongly agreed. In addition, **Table 4.12** provides that **17%** and **3%** of respondents disagreed and strongly agreed respectively. Only **13%** of respondents did not know. As mentioned in the literature review chapter, the study carried out by Lutz (2020) revealed that business continuity was actioned owing to a disruptive event and BCP allowed business operations and service delivery to continue.

#### 4.7 SUMMARY

This chapter presented the analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the officials of the Polokwane Municipality as per the sample in Chapter 3. The researcher discussed the analysis and interpretation as per the research objectives and questions. Content analysis was used to present the results of the study. The results were presented in diagrams, figures and tables. The next chapter presents a summary, recommendations and conclusion.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter has presented an analysis and interpretation of data, further presented findings in as far as the study entails. The aim of this chapter is to provide the summary, recommendations, and the conclusion. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of the Polokwane Municipality's Business Continuity Plan during the COVID-19 National State of Disaster.

#### **5.2 SUMMARY FINDINGS**

This chapter presents the summary of the findings regarding the specific objectives of the study as set out in Chapter one. The primary research question was: evaluating whether the BCP was implemented as envisaged to ensure continuity of basic services and establishing whether the BCP was effective during the COVID-19 national state of disaster in the Polokwane Municipality. The study intends to provide answers to these questions by considering and interpreting respondents' views.

##### **5.2.1 Findings on the effectiveness of BCP in responding to COVID- 19 National State of Disaster**

This study reveals that employees of the Polokwane Municipality have knowledge of the existence of the BCP in the municipality as 82% of the respondents agreed that the BCP is a shared responsibility of all employees in the municipality while the majority of the respondents (**98%**) agreed that the BCP is necessary for the municipality. The study also found that (**76%**) of the respondents believed that the municipal's BCP was effective in responding to COVID-19 during the National State of Disaster in ensuring that the municipality continued to render services.

### **5.2.2 Findings on the level of employee's awareness and understanding of the existing municipal BCP.**

The study reveals that the Polokwane Municipality did not communicate its BCP to all employees as evident by 37% of the respondents who disagreed that the BCP was regularly communicated and while 15% did not know of any communication of the BCP. As a results 62% of the respondents was not aware of how to implement BCP in order to respond to any event of a disaster.

These are supported by **40%** of the respondents who disagreed on the adequacy of BCP knowledge by employees and **25%** of the respondents was neutral. Contrary to the above findings **35%** agreed that there is adequate knowledge about Municipal BCP. Although the study found that there is lack of BCP communication, **78%** of respondents agreed that they understood the contents of the BCP while **13%** had no knowledge of the BCP contents.

### **5.2.3 Findings on evaluating whether BCP was implemented as envisaged during COVID- 19 National State of Disaster**

The study (**75%**) revealed that the municipality BCP was implemented as envisaged during the COVID-19 National State of Disaster. On the question of whether BCP was implemented satisfactorily during COVID-19 National State of Disaster, **60%** of the respondents agreed, **18%** of respondents indicated that they did not know while, the remaining **22%** disagreed. The results further revealed that the majority of the respondents (**72%**) agreed to the implementation of the BCP during COVID-19 National State of Disaster because operations continued without disruptions. Overall, the sufficiency of BCP implementation during COVID-19 National State of Disaster was confirmed by 67% respondents.

## **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

As a result of the findings above, below recommendations are made to improve the Polokwane Municipality's BCP:

### **5.3.1 Recommendation relating to the effectiveness of BCP in responding to COVID- 19 National State of Disaster.**

- Polokwane Municipality should perform a full diagnostics and self-assessment in terms of the effectiveness, sufficiency, and adequacy of the BCP already in place.
- The results of the above should guide management of the Polokwane Municipality to review its BCP regularly to ensure that it continues to be relevant, and it will be able to respond to all kinds of disruptive events.
- Polokwane Municipality needs to conduct BCM scenario tests to ensure that all role players understand their responsibilities during future disruptive events.

### **5.3.2 Recommendation relating to the level of employee's awareness and understanding of the existing municipal BCP.**

- Regular workshops or training on BCP should be conducted to ensure that relevant key officials clearly understand all aspects of the BCP and sharpen their skills.
- A communication strategy for the BCP should be formulated, implemented, and constantly monitored to ensure that BCP is communicated to all staff members to be fully aware of the BCP and activities to be implemented in case of any disaster.
- Furthermore, the Municipality should create awareness to all staff members to ensure that everyone know their roles in assisting the municipality to recover from any disaster and reducing its vulnerability to operational interruption while protecting themselves.

### **5.3.3 Recommendation relating to the evaluation of whether BCP was implemented as envisaged during COVID- 19 National State of Disaster.**

- Management should facilitate brainstorming to come up with practical guidelines the municipality to better prepare for future disruptive events to ensure that the BCP plans are implemented to the latter to achieve maximum benefits of the BCP.
- Furthermore, the municipality must also put early warning systems and be vigilant for future crises or disruptions to successfully reduce the consequences and failures resulting from those crises or disruptions.
- Although the Polokwane Municipality have the BCP, they should ensure that there is sufficient funding and other resources to ensure that implementation of the BCP is effectual.
- The Municipality should consider collaboration with private sector and other stakeholders to ensure proper achievement of good results when BCP is implemented.
- Municipalities should consider hiring officials who specialise in business continuity planning as drafting and implementing the BCP is beyond the scope of ordinary managers.
- The Municipality should research and benchmark and learn from what has worked in other municipalities for the effectiveness of the BCP.
- Business continuity should become a performance measure for all the managers in the municipality for their annual performance plans to ensure accountability.

### **5.3.4 Recommendations for future studies**

- This study was only conducted in the Polokwane Municipality and only focused on the BCP during the COVID-19 National State of Disaster. Thus, it is necessary to continue research in areas of municipal BCP development and implementation during other disruptive events as the weight of service delivery falls within local government which continuously require urgent and innovative responses due to essential basic services that it provides to communities. Further research is required to analyse the preparedness of government to respond to disruptive effects in its other business operations.

### **5.3 CONCLUSION**

The COVID-19 pandemic has proved to be relatively unpredictable and disastrous. The outbreak was unmatched and has disrupted daily operations of many municipalities and BCP received more significance than ever. Business Continuity Planning is important and is a must to be undertaken as evident in previous chapters. BCP will prepare an organisation for disasters or threats whether external or internal, and protect employees, assets, information and guarantee continuity of business processes and service delivery. Leadership commitment is key to the success of business continuity and leaders should encourage business continuity planning to be done during relatively peaceful periods.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of access to sufficient basic services such as water and sanitation which are critical for protection of human rights even during times of COVID-19 National State of Disaster. Municipalities were at a centre of ensuring basic service delivery is maintained during COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, Polokwane Municipality was prepared to counter any unplanned crisis and ensure that the interruptions to business operations were kept at minimal as possible. The Municipality understood that any critical operational failure will cause a delay in service delivery, yet a BCP was approved and in place. Having a BCP has ensured that the Polokwane Municipality continued to take appropriate measures to overcome the impact of service delivery disruption during the time of a pandemic such as COVID-19.

In present day, municipalities are facing various types of disruptions with each disruption having its own characteristics and consequences on the municipal operations. Developing a BCP will assist any organisation to strive for resuming key business operations to an acceptable pre-defined level following a major disruption within acceptable tolerable period of disruption.

Having an effective BCP is not a simple task, however it can be achieved by investing time, effort, and a strong collaboration with all staff in the municipality. An investment

in the BCP is certainly a rewarding one, therefore, all organisations, not only the Polokwane Municipality, should develop BCPs, and business continuity planning should become compulsory for all institutions that have constitutional mandate to render services to the communities.

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## ANNEXURE 1

### QUESTIONNAIRE

**RESEARCH TOPIC: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE NATIONAL STATE OF DISASTER: A CASE OF POLOKWANE MUNICIPALITY, LIMPOPO PROVINCE.**

#### SECTION A: Demographic Information

Please select your appropriate answer with an **X** in each box. Select on answer for each question. What is your age?

1. What is your Gender?

No	Qualifications	Put an (X) for your answer
1.	Male	
2.	Female	
3.	Transgender	

2. What is your age?

No	Age	Put an (X) for your answer
1.	20-29 Years	
2.	30-39 Years	
3.	40-49 Years	
4.	50-59 Years	
5.	60 years and over	

3. What is your highest qualification?

No	Qualifications	Put an (X) for your answer
1.	Matric and below	
3.	Diploma	
4.	Undergraduate Degree	
5.	Honours/BTech	
6.	Masters	
7.	PhD	

4. How long have you been working for the Polokwane Municipality?

No	Number of Years	Put an (X) for your answer
1.	0-1 Year	
2.	1-5 Years	
3.	5-10 Years	
4.	10-15 Years	
5.	15 or more Years	

**SECTION B: EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN IN RESPONDING TO COVID-19 NATIONAL STATE OF DISASTER.**

No	Items	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Don't Know (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
1.	The Municipality has an approved Business Continuity Plan.					
2.	Business Continuity Plan at the Municipality is the responsibility of all employees.					
3.	Business Continuity Plan is necessary for the Municipality.					
4.	Business Continuity Plan was effective in responding to COVID-19 National State of Disaster.					

**SECTION C: DETERMINING THE LEVEL OF EMPLOYEE'S AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE EXISTING MUNICIPAL BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN.**

No	Items	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Don't Know (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
1.	The municipality regularly communicates its Business Continuity Plan.					
2.	I understand the content of Municipal Business Continuity Plan.					
3.	There is a sufficient awareness of Business Continuity plan on how to respond to any event of a disaster.					
4.	There is adequate knowledge about Municipal Business Continuity Plan.					

**SECTION D: EVALUATING WHETHER OR NOT THE BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN WAS IMPLEMENTED AS ENVISAGED DURING COVID-19 NATIONAL STATE OF DISASTER.**

No	Items	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Don't Know (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
1.	According to your own point of view, Municipal Business Continuity Plan has been implemented during COVID-19 National State of Disaster.					
2.	Implementation of Municipal Business Continuity Plan during COVID-19 National State of Disaster was satisfactory.					
3.	Implementation of Municipal Business Continuity Plan during COVID-19 National State of Disaster ensured that business operations continued without any disruptions.					
4.	Generally, municipal Business Continuity Plan was implemented during COVID-19 National State of Disaster as envisaged.					

**Are there any recommended strategies for improving the implementation of Municipal Business Continuity Plan? If yes; kindly provide the strategies in the Box below:**


## ANNEXURE 2: TREC ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



**University of Limpopo**  
Department of Research Administration and Development  
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa  
Tel: (015) 268 3935, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email: anastasia.ngobe@ul.ac.za

**TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**  
**ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

**MEETING:** 29 November 2022

**PROJECT NUMBER:** TREC/570/2022: PG

**PROJECT:**

**Title:** The effectiveness of Business Continuity Plan during the COVID-19 National State of Disaster: A Case of Polokwane Municipality in the Limpopo Province, South Africa.

**Researcher:** RS Maiwashe

**Supervisor:** Prof SK Mokoena

**Co-Supervisor/s:** N/A

**School:** Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership

**Degree:** Master of Public Administration and Management

**PROF D MAPOSA**  
**CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: **REC-0310111-031**

**Note:**

- i) This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.
- ii) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.
- iii) PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

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## **ANNEXURE 3: APPROVAL TO CONDUCT THE STUDY**

MS. R.E RAMELA (EXT 2344)

DIRECTORATE: CORPORATE AND SHARED SERVICES

ITEM:

FILE REF: # 515557

### **REQUEST TO GRANT MS. RENDANI SINDRELLAR MAIWASHE PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITHIN POLOKWANE MUNICIPALITY**

**Report of the Director: Corporate and Shared Services**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

To request the Municipal Manager to grant Ms. Rendani Sindrellar Maiwashe to conduct research at Polokwane Municipality.

#### **Background and Discussion**

Ms. Rendani Sindrellar Maiwashe sent a letter requesting permission to conduct research at Polokwane Municipality. Research topic is title: "The effectiveness of Business Continuity Plan during the COVID-19 National State of Disaster: A case in the Limpopo Province South Africa.

"A copy of the letter from University of Limpopo"

#### **Financial Implication**

There is no financial implication.


**REQUEST TO GRANT MS. RENDANI SINDRELLAR MAIWASHE PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

**Recommend**

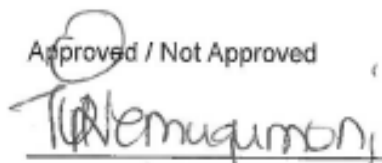
1. That approval be granted to Ms. Rendani Sindrellar Maiwashe to conduct research within Polokwane Municipality.
2. That the findings emanating from the research study be shared with the Municipality before they are published.

  
MR. J.L. MANYAMA  
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGER

Recommended / Not Recommended

  
MRS. M.M. MATSHIVHA  
Director CORPORATE AND SHARED SERVICES

Approved / Not Approved

  
MS. THUSO NEMUGUMONI  
MUNICIPAL MANAGER

**REQUEST TO GRANT MS. RENDANI SINDRELLAR MAIWASHE PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

**ANNEXURE 4: LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE**

# Balote Projects (Pty) Ltd

Cell no: 084 255 2164 Email: [matlou.moloto@gmail.com](mailto:matlou.moloto@gmail.com)

P O Box 1106, Faunapark, 0787

Reg No: 2017/113184/07

Tax Ref: 9299915224

## EDITING LETTER- DISSERTATION

16 August 2023

### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This serves as confirmation that I Matlou Moloto have edited the Mini-Dissertation of Rendani Sindrellar Maiwashe entitled **“THE EFFECTIVENESS OF BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN DURING THE COVID-19 NATIONAL STATE OF DISASTER: A CASE OF THE POLOKWANE MUNICIPALITY IN THE LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA”** to be submitted for the qualification Master of Public Administration at the University of Limpopo.

I therefore, declare that the document is to my knowledge devoid of language errors that may deprive the said persons' work from being accepted for the qualification.

I am contactable at the above contact details should you have queries.

Matlou Moloto (Miss)

0842552164