TEXT BOUND CLOSE TO THE SPINE IN THE ORIGINAL THESIS
Abstract

Feedback seeking is an ill-understood consideration both from a managerial and a psychological point of view. Several studies have investigated situational and individual difference variables underlying feedback seeking behaviour but these have yielded little insight into the processes involved in feedback seeking in real managerial and organisational settings. Also, it appears in the context of managerial self regulation, the concept of self-awareness could be used to explain the feedback seeking process, but this has not been fully investigated nor is there any coherent theoretical approach to explain feedback seeking. This, in turn, has limited explanations and understanding of the feedback seeking process. This research addresses these gaps in understanding and comprises three studies. Using Multi-System-Multi-Rater (MSMR/360-degree) and upward feedback analytic survey techniques, two studies investigate managers’ feedback seeking propensities. The first study examines the relationships between feedback, self-awareness and performance, and in particular the potential role played by self awareness in the feedback seeking process. The second study investigates managerial feedback seeking tendencies, regarding the type of information sought and the feedback sources employed. The specific performance criteria of interest in a managerial context are intra-personal, interpersonal, leadership and career skills adapted from the domain model of managerial competencies (Hogan & Warrenfeltz, 2003). Both studies are based on a sample of 568 participants, comprising 142 managers and 426 manager-matched subordinate staff. Study 3 seeks to examine in detail the feedback seeking process and in particular those managerial instances where feedback seeking is more or less likely. Using a repertory grid in-depth interview approach (Kelly, 1955) with managers (n=10), the investigation afforded a richer account of feedback seeking than is typically delivered by survey or laboratory based studies. Analysis was undertaken using a manual method to identify lower-order case specific constructs but within a grounded theory framework which facilitated the identification of higher-order cross-case constructs. Preliminary findings suggest that managers tend to seek feedback about their performance when they perceive uncertainties and difficulties in their managerial functions and are minded of their need to develop their skills in order to achieve organisational goals. It is proposed that the theoretical construct underwriting these findings is ‘self-efficacy’: if managers feel ill-equipped (low self-efficacy) to deal with a particular management situation, they will be more likely to seek performance feedback. However, in an organisational context serious questions can be raised about whether managers feel able to seek performance feedback within the organisation without feeling threatened in their capability as managers. It is argued that the concept of self efficacy can be used to offer a better explanation of the feedback seeking process relative to other posited explanations. Future work should not only explore the concept of efficacy as a moderator of feedback seeking tendencies but also how feedback is sought and from whom.
CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

The thesis objectives and outline

1.1 Thesis outline ................................................................................... 1
1.2 Introduction/Thesis background ...................................................... 1
1.3 Aims and objectives of thesis ........................................................... 3
1.4 The study ........................................................................................ 3
1.5 The significance of the study ........................................................... 4
1.6 Thesis outline/Summary of chapters ................................................ 5

CHAPTER 2

The importance of feedback in the context of managerial performance and effectiveness

2.1 Chapter overview ............................................................................. 9
2.2 Management and leadership: are they the same or different?......... 9
2.2.1 Reasons for knowing differences and similarities between
management and leadership ............................................................... 10
2.2.2 Two views on conceptualizing management and leadership ...... 11
2.2.2.1 Management and leadership as the same role .................. 12
2.2.2.2 Management and leadership as different roles ................. 13
2.2.3 Conceptualising management and leadership: any consensus?.. 13
2.2.4 Leadership as a managerial function ...................................... 15
2.2.5 Conceptualising 'manager ' in the thesis .............................. 16
2.2.6 Managerial effectiveness ......................................................... 16
2.2.7 Conceptualising managerial effectiveness in the thesis ...... 17
2.3 Are managers who actively seek feedback more effective
in their jobs? ................................................................................. 18
2.3.1 Theoretical foundations of the research/ feedback ................. 18
2.3.1.1 What is feedback? .............................................................. 18
2.3.1.2 Feedback about performance ........................................... 19
2.3.1.3 Functions of performance feedback ................................ 20
2.3.2 How do people get feedback about their performance
in organisations? ........................................................................... 21
2.3.3 Active feedback seeking and managerial effectiveness ........... 21
2.3.3.1 Is active feedback seeking more likely to increase
managerial effectiveness? .............................................................. 22
2.3.3.2 Are managers more likely to seek feedback to enhance
their effectiveness? ....................................................................... 23
2.3.4 What motives or factors influence feedback seeking? ............ 24
2.3.4.1 Feedback motives .............................................................. 25
2.3.5 Do source characteristics influence feedback seeking? .......... 29
CHAPTER 3

Theoretical Framework: A Self Regulation Perspective

3.1 Introduction and Chapter Overview .................................................. 34
3.2 Theories of feedback: The Control Theory, Self Regulation Theory, and the Feedback Intervention Theory ............................ 34
3.2.1 The Self Regulation perspective/ framework .................................. 36
3.2.2 Core propositions of the self regulation or control theory .............. 37
3.2.3 Evolution and application of the Self Control theory ...................... 38
3.3 Elements of the self—regulatory process ......................................... 40
3.3.1 Performance standards setting ..................................................... 40
3.3.2 Discrepancy detection ................................................................ 40
3.3.3 Performance improvement following feedback ............................. 41
3.3.3.1 Performance improvement through discrepancy reduction: Control theory .......................................................... 42
3.3.3.1.1 Effectiveness oriented strategies: performance improvement ........ 42
3.3.3.1.2 Non-effectiveness oriented strategies: non-behavioural change.... 43
3.3.3.2 Performance improvement and Goal setting Theory .................. 45
3.3.3.2.1 How do goals and feedback improve performance? .............. 46
3.3.3.2.2 Goal setting and self-regulation ........................................... 47
3.4 How does self efficacy facilitate the self regulation process? ............ 48
3.4.1 Self-efficacy for development ..................................................... 48
3.4.2 Self-efficacy and performance improvement ................................. 49
3.5 Summary of the self regulation process .......................................... 49
3.6 Self-awareness and feedback seeking in self regulation ................... 50
3.6.1 Concept of self-awareness .......................................................... 51
3.6.2 Managerial self-awareness: a trait or a skill? ............................... 52
3.6.3 Self-awareness as an individual difference variable ...................... 54
3.6.4 Self-awareness theory: grounds for feedback seeking ..................... 55
3.6.4.1 Behavioural standards, self evaluation and self improvement ...... 56
3.6.4.2 Self evaluation motives in relation to self-awareness .................. 56
3.6.4.3 Self-awareness, self evaluation, meta perception and feedback seeking .......................................................... 58
3.6.4.4 Conclusion from self-awareness theory and feedback seeking .... 59
3.6.5 Self awareness and performance ................................................. 59
3.6.6 Feedback seeking, self-awareness and performance- Summary ....... 61
3.7 Chapter summary ........................................................................... 61
### Managerial competencies: The Performance criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Introduction and Chapter overview</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Defining competence</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Managerial competency models: Introduction and overview</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Definition and importance of a competency model</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Generic and core competency models</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Behavioural models</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>The Functional model</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>The Job Competency model</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>Holistic model</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>Multi-dimensional Holistic model</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>The Domain model of managerial competencies</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.1</td>
<td>The inner-outer perspective of performance assessment</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.2</td>
<td>Key components of the Domain model</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.3</td>
<td>Intra personal skills and core self evaluations</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.4</td>
<td>Inter personal skills</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.4.1</td>
<td>Managerial communication</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.4.2</td>
<td>Managerial Trust</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.4.3</td>
<td>Relationship between interpersonal skills, feedback seeking and</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>managerial effectiveness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.5</td>
<td>Leadership skills</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.5.1</td>
<td>Importance of leadership as a managerial skill</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.5.2</td>
<td>Leadership effectiveness: conceptual, theoretical and</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>measurement issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.5.3</td>
<td>Factors determining leadership effectiveness</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.5.4</td>
<td>Personality and Leadership</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.5.5</td>
<td>Transformational leadership</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.5.6</td>
<td>Implications of transformational leadership for understanding</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the relationship between feedback and performance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.6</td>
<td>Career skills</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.6.1</td>
<td>Career concept</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.6.2</td>
<td>Conceptualisation of career success</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.6.3</td>
<td>Managerial/executive career success</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.6.4</td>
<td>Antecedents of managerial career success study</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.6.5</td>
<td>Conceptualising managerial career skills</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11.6.6</td>
<td>Justification of career skills in the Domain model</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>Evaluation of the competency models</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>Suitability of the Domain model in the study</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>Chapter Summary</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 5

Methodology

5.1 Introduction and chapter overview ................................................................. 103
5.2 Aims of the research and research question ................................................. 103
5.3 Thesis epistemology ..................................................................................... 103
5.4 Research methodology .................................................................................. 104
5.4.1 How different are qualitative and quantitative approaches? ................. 104
5.4.2 Rationale for adopting quantitative and qualitative approaches .. 104
5.4.3 Why quantitative methodology in studies 1&2 ...................................... 105
5.4.4 Why qualitative methodology in study 3 .............................................. 105
5.5 Studies 1&2: Quantitative methodology: Analytic survey using
MSMR/upward feedback technique ................................................................. 106
5.5.1 MSMR/upward feedback: conceptual issues ........................................ 107
5.5.1.1 The concept of MSMR/upward rating ........................................... 107
5.5.1.2 History, usage and applicability .................................................... 108
5.5.2 Practical considerations: methodology of the MSMR/upward
feedback technique ....................................................................................... 109
5.5.2.1 Confidentiality and anonymity .................................................... 109
5.5.2.2 Choice of raters ........................................................................... 110
5.5.2.3 Administration of questionnaires ................................................ 110
5.5.2.4 Averaging of responses from multiple raters ............................... 111
5.5.2.5 The nature of feedback provided .................................................. 111
5.5.3 Upward feedback: justification for subordinate ratings ....................... 111
5.5.3.1 Psychometric properties of upward ratings .................................. 112
5.5.3.2 Empirical evidence on the usage of upward ratings ....................... 113
5.5.4 Application of the MSMR/Upward feedback in the study ................... 113
5.6 Study 3: Qualitative methodology: Repertory grid interviews
and Grounded Theory analytic approach ...................................................... 114
5.7 Chapter summary ....................................................................................... 114

CHAPTER 6

Empirical Studies 1&2

6.1 Overview of chapter...................................................................................... 116
6.2 Introduction .................................................................................................. 116
6.3 Research questions ...................................................................................... 119
6.4 Variables of study ....................................................................................... 121
6.5 Research Design ......................................................................................... 123
6.6 Social/Organisational Research/ MSMR Survey
in a developing country ................................................................................... 124
6.7 Pilot Study .................................................................................................... 126
CHAPTER 7

Empirical Study 3

7.1 Introduction ........................................................................ 175
7.1.1 Research question ............................................................. 175
7.1.2 Appropriate methodology: Qualitative or Quantitative? ...... 176
7.1.3 Why qualitative methodology? .......................................... 176
7.1.4 Rationale for employing Repertory Grid Interview Methodology .................................................. 177
7.1.5 Philosophical assumptions underlying Repertory Grid Methodology ............................................. 178
7.1.6 Analytical Technique .................................................................................................................. 183
7.1.7 The Grounded Theory Approach ............................................................................................ 185
7.1.8 Suitability of Repertory Grid Methodology and Grounded Theory analytical approach in the study ................................................................. 188
7.2 Study 3 Report ............................................................................................................................ 189
7.2.1 Introduction ............................................................................................................................ 189
7.2.2 Procedure ............................................................................................................................. 189
7.2.2.1 Data Analysis .................................................................................................................. 192
7.2.3 Findings .................................................................................................................................. 196
7.2.3.1 Introduction ..................................................................................................................... 196
7.2.3.2 Number of categories/constructs and the core variable ...................................................... 196
7.2.3.3 Description of categories/higher order constructs .............................................................. 196
7.2.3.3.1 Perceived Uncertainties ............................................................................................... 197
7.2.3.3.2 Perceived Difficulties .................................................................................................. 203
7.2.3.3.3 Self/Skill Development ................................................................................................. 208
7.2.3.4 Feedback sources .............................................................................................................. 212
7.2.3.5 Summary of main findings/argument .................................................................................. 212
7.2.4 Theoretical construct underlying feedback seeking: A Model of managerial feedback seeking propensities ............................................................... 214
7.2.5 Are managers likely to seek feedback? ....................................................................................... 219
7.3 Chapter Summary ......................................................................................................................... 220

CHAPTER 8

Discussion

8.1 Introduction ................................................................................................................................. 221
8.2 Brief overview: The thesis ........................................................................................................ 221
8.3 Summary of findings .................................................................................................................. 222
8.3.1 Relationship between feedback and performance/
Managerial competence .............................................................................................................. 223
8.3.2 Explaining feedback seeking: role of self-awareness ............................................................. 223
8.3.3 Adequacy of self-awareness in explaining feedback seeking.................................................. 224
8.3.4 A model of manager’s feedback seeking propensities ............................................................. 225
8.4 Contribution of thesis to manager’s feedback research ............................................................. 230
8.4.1 Theoretical significance of the study ...................................................................................... 230
8.4.2 Methodological significance of the study ............................................................................. 232
8.5 Organisational implications of the findings .............................................................................. 232
8.6 Limitations of the research ........................................................................................................ 233
8.7 Reflections on the research ....................................................................................................... 234
8.8 Directions for future research .................................................................................................. 235
8.9 Conclusion ................................................................................................................................. 235
References...................................................................................................... 237

Appendices
Appendix 1 Piloting studies 1&2: Letter to participants................................. 272
Appendix 2 Studies 1&2: Letter to organisations........................................... 273
Appendix 3 Manager’s Feedback seeking Questionnaire.................................. 274
Appendix 4 Principal Component Analysis for variables
in studies 1 &2.................................................................................................. 287
Appendix 5 Briefing of Repertory Grid Interview session............................... 294
Appendix 6 Repertory grid elements: Managerial functions............................ 295
Appendix 7 Manual computation of repertory grid interview scores............... 296
Appendix 8 Managers feedback case specific constructs................................. 297

List of Tables
Table 6.1 Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Indices for
studies 1&2, variables .................................................................................... 145
Table 6.2 Pearson’s correlations for studies 1&2 variables............................... 146
Table 6.3 Regression Analysis: Prediction of competencies from
feedback perception and feedback seeking...................................................... 148
Table 6.4 Mediated Regression analysis: Self-awareness as a mediator
between feedback perception and feedback seeking...................................... 154
Table 6.5 Average feedback ratings on managerial feedback
information sought, obtained from managers ............................................... 158
Table 6.6 Post-hoc comparisons of repeated measures ANOVA
on managers feedback information sought .................................................. 159
Table 6.7 Managerial feedback sources ............................................................ 159
Table 6.8 Post-hoc comparisons of repeated measures ANOVA
on managers feedback sources ..................................................................... 160
List of Figures

Figure 6.1 A model of self-awareness mediational hypothesis ....................... 120

Figure 6.2 A model of the relationships between feedback seeking, self-awareness and performance ................................................................. 149

Figure 6.3 Path diagram of the mediational model ........................................... 152

Figure 6.4 A model of feedback seeking, feedback perception and performance .................................................................................................................. 169

Figure 7.1 A model of managerial feedback seeking propensities ............... 214
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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my father Mr B. K. Amoah.
CHAPTER ONE
THE THESIS OBJECTIVES AND OUTLINE

This chapter provides an overview of the thesis, and most importantly, outlines the theoretical basis of the research. Aims and objectives are articulated followed by an overview of how the research unfolds. Finally, the theoretical, methodological and practical implications of the research are highlighted.

1.1 Thesis outline
The thesis aims to develop an explanation for feedback seeking among managers in an organisational setting. Integral to this is an examination of the feedback-performance association, and in particular how the concept of self awareness might be used to explain the feedback seeking process. The central proposition is that managers will seek feedback if they feel ill-equipped to deal with a particular situation. Specifically if they have low self efficacy (conceptualised in terms of perceived uncertainty or difficulty) in relation to a particular management situation, they will be more minded to seek feedback as part of a self-development imperative.

1.2 Introduction / Thesis background
During the last three decades or so, the role of active feedback seeking in managerial self regulation in the organisational context has been acknowledged and investigated. The importance of active feedback seeking in relation to managerial performance is based on the idea that an effective manager is good at self regulation (Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Tsui & Ashford, 1994). That is, a manager who actively seeks feedback about his or her performance is assumed to be more effective in his or her job than the one who does not. That is, active feedback seeking about performance is linked with enhanced managerial performance and effectiveness. However, there are two main criticisms of this assumption. Firstly, the findings on the impact of feedback on performance are inconsistent. Second, the impact of feedback on performance in terms of the mechanisms involved is not well understood.

The main body of research in the area of feedback in relation to performance has taken two directions. The first direction focuses on the feedback -performance association. And the second direction focuses on the feedback seeking process per se in an organisational context.
On the feedback-performance link, many studies suggest that feedback has a positive impact on subsequent performance (e.g. Atwater, et al., 2000; Brutus et al., 1999; Hergarty, 1974; Heslin & Lathan, 2004; Maurer et al., 2002; Morrison, 1993; Smither, et al., 2003) whereas other studies show no impact, or even negative impact (Kluger & De Nisi, 1996).

In an attempt to explain the feedback seeking process, many research findings suggest a positive correlation between feedback seeking behaviour and improved performance. But why feedback has a positive impact on performance has neither been clearly determined nor explained (Atwater et al., 2002; Avolio et al., 2003). In an attempt to address this gap in understanding, several studies have investigated motives (Fedor et al., 1992; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990; Trope & Neter, 1994; Tsui & Ashford, 1994), situational factors, including feedback source characteristics, and individual differences variables (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Atwater et al., 2000; Bailey & Austin, 2006; Fedor et al., 1992; Fletcher & Baldry, 2000; Levy et al., 1995; Morrison & Bies, 1991; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990; Tsui & Ashford, 1994; Tuckey et al., 2002; Vancouver & Morrison, 1995; Vande Walle & Cummings, 1997) as potential predictors of feedback seeking behaviour.

But these findings have yielded little insight into the processes involved in feedback seeking particularly, in the managerial domain in real organisational settings. Why, can be understood with two reasons. The first reason is about research settings. Most of the studies are conducted in laboratory settings, but such findings might not be applicable to organisational settings. The second concerns methodological limitations. Most of the studies in this area are predominantly correlational appear not to provide any leverage to explain the managerial feedback seeking process.

There is nonetheless some work on managerial self regulation which postulates the centrality of self awareness as a means of explaining our understanding of the feedback seeking process. Both active feedback seeking and self awareness are integral to the somewhat tautologous assumption that the effective manager is good at self regulation (Ashford & Tsui, 1991). But how the concept of self awareness might
explain the feedback seeking process itself has not been directly investigated (Atwater et al., 2000; Fletcher, 1997; Fletcher & Baldry, 2000).

Further, it appears there is no theoretical approach that adequately and coherently explains feedback seeking and its impact on behaviour and performance in organisations. (Bailey & Austin, 2006; De Nisi & Kluger, 2000; Kluger & De Nisi, 1996; Maurer, et al., 2002).

In short, the inconsistencies in the findings of studies on the assumed feedback-performance association, and the lack of a coherent theoretical approach on offer to explain the feedback process leaves gaps in our understanding of managerial feedback seeking in real organisational settings. This thesis was aimed at addressing these gaps in understanding.

1.3 Aims and objectives of thesis
The broad aim of this research was therefore to investigate managers' feedback seeking in an organisational context with a view to furthering our theoretical understanding of the processes involved. The primary objectives were two fold; first, to investigate whether there is a) an association between feedback seeking and managerial performance and b) whether variations in self-awareness either moderate or mediate this association, and second, to explore potential explanations for the feedback seeking process by investigating managers' lived experiences of feedback seeking.

1.4 The study
Firstly, previous studies were reviewed to explore the extent to which they can offer any explanation of the feedback seeking process. Next, two studies were designed to test the validity of the self-awareness construct as a potential explanation of the feedback seeking process. Self-awareness however did not appear to offer any adequate or coherent explanation for the feedback seeking process. In fact, these studies raised more questions than answers. This led to the decision to design a more qualitative study to learn from managers' actual lived experiences of feedback seeking.
1.5 The significance of the study

The contribution of the thesis is threefold. Firstly, on a theoretical level, the study sheds light on the extent to which the concept of self awareness can explain managerial feedback seeking in the way it has been proposed. It appears the concept of self awareness does not adequately offer an explanation of the feedback seeking process. More importantly, the study proposes a theoretical model which offers a better and more coherent explanation of managers’ feedback seeking propensities in real organisational settings.

Secondly, on a methodological level the present thesis demonstrated the importance of the use of qualitative as well as quantitative approaches to the investigation of feedback seeking. Qualitative work is notably absent in the explanation of feedback research (Alveson, 2002; Hamlin, 2004). Specifically, the use of the repertory grid interview technique for data gathering, and grounded theory analytical framework for the analysis, offers a novel methodology for use in feedback seeking studies. Using this approach, the investigation arguably afforded a richer account of feedback seeking than typically delivered by survey or laboratory based studies (Barker, 2000; Den Hartog et al., 1997).

Finally, the study has significant practical/organisational implications. It shows the importance self efficacy perceptions in the development of skills and performance improvement within a managerial self regulation framework in an organisational context. The study suggests that if managers feel ill-equipped to deal with a particular management situation, they will be more likely to seek feedback about their performance. However, in an organisational context serious ethical and political questions can be raised about whether managers actually feel able to seek performance feedback within the organisation without feeling it a threat to their perceived capability as managers.
1.6 Thesis outline/Summary of chapters

Chapters 2 to 4 provide a theoretical background of the study. The chapters review a range of literature that is intended to provide a deeper understanding of the background to the study and the research question. Chapters 5-8 defend the methodology and present the findings of the three component studies.

Chapter two introduces the concept of feedback and managerial effectiveness, and discusses the importance of active feedback seeking in managerial self regulation. The main purpose of this chapter is to examine the feedback seeking process in a managerial domain. First, it distinguishes between the concept of management and leadership, and provides a conceptual definition of managerial effectiveness. It decouples the concept of 'manager' and of 'managerial effectiveness', with particular attention to how to assess the criterion domain (i.e., performance). The concept of competence is deemed the most appropriate criterion concept to use in this instance (whilst acknowledging the limitations of this performance conceptualisation) and the choice of appropriate competency model is then defended as a means of assessing managerial effectiveness in the current context. The performance criteria defended on theoretical grounds cover intra - personal skills, interpersonal skills, leadership skills, (Hogan & Warrenfeltz, 2003) and career skills. The key proposition tested here is that feedback enhances performance and that managers who actively seek feedback tend to be more effective in their jobs (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Ashford & Tsui, 1991). The motives behind feedback seeking, including situational factors, individual differences, feedback source characteristics and self awareness, are also examined.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the broader theoretical framework under which this research was conducted, i.e. the self regulation approach. It reviews the theories and models that could explain the feedback process and its impact on performance in organisational settings, with particular attention to control theory (Carver & Scheier, 1981; 1982), feedback intervention theory (DeNisi & Kluger, 2000; Kluger & DeNisi, 1996), and self regulation theory (Ashford & Tsui, 1991). The thesis then defends the adoption of a self regulation perspective within which control theory is grounded. The origin, evolution, and philosophical assumptions and applications of control and self regulation theories are reviewed with the purpose to understand their basic ideas and posits. This is also linked with a review of self awareness theory (Duval & Wicklund,
1972; Gibbons, 1990; Hull & Levy, 1979; Wicklnd, 1975), and goal setting theory (Latham & Locke, 1991; Locke & Latham, 1984, 1990), (highlighting self- efficacy) which provides potential sources of understanding and explanation for feedback seeking as a self regulation process.

Chapter 4 presents various competency models, and then defends the use of particular competencies as the managerial performance criteria in this instance. Given the assumption that there is a performance implication to feedback seeking, it was considered crucial to examine closely the criterion domain. The models examined include the behavioural model; functional model; job competency model; holistic model; multi-dimensional model and; the domain model of managerial competency. In particular the implications of these models for feedback seeking are examined. From a critical review of these models it is argued that the domain model is the most pertinent for current purposes because it is based on an informed consideration of both theoretical and methodological factors (Hogan & Warrenfeltz, 2003).

Chapter 5 defends the methodology of the thesis. The thesis employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The chapter provides the epistemology of the thesis and gives the rationale for employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches in the research studies 1 & 2 and, study 3 respectively. Quantitative methodology was employed in studies 1 & 2 because the main objective was concerned with testing hypotheses based on theories aimed at explaining feedback seeking process. The purpose was to investigate the extent to which the theories adequately explain the feedback seeking process. Qualitative methodology was employed in study 3 because the purpose was to generate a theoretical explanation of feedback seeking by starting from the actual experiences of managers.

Chapter 6 presents empirical studies 1 & 2 of the thesis. These studies were designed to investigate managers' feedback seeking by testing hypotheses based on theories of feedback seeking and self awareness. The purpose was to explore how these theories could be used to explain the feedback seeking process. These studies employed a quantitative analytic survey approach, and Multi-System- Multi – Rater (MSMR/ 360 degrees feedback) and upward feedback technique to investigate managerial feedback seeking propensities in organisational setting. The first study investigated the
relationships between feedback, self awareness and performance. The purpose of this study is a twofold. The first purpose was to examine the proposed relationship between feedback and performance. The second purpose was to explore how the self awareness concept might be used to explain the feedback seeking process. The second study investigated managers’ feedback seeking tendencies, the type of performance feedback information sought, and their preferred feedback sources. The purpose of this study was to further find explanations for managers’ feedback seeking. Both studies are based on a sample of 568 comprising managers (n = 142) and their subordinate staff (n = 426). The findings of the studies indicated no robust relationship between feedback seeking and performance. Also, using the concept of self awareness, the feedback seeking process could not be adequately explained. This necessitated a third study (study 3) for further explanation of the feedback seeking process.

Chapter 7 presents the third and final empirical study. The objective was to explore further explanations for managers’ feedback seeking. This study employed a qualitative methodology, specifically, the repertory grid interview technique for data collection, and a grounded theory analytic approach to analyse the data. The study involved individual in depth interviews with ten managers drawn from personal contacts in the general working population to elicit and rate (on a 7 point scale) bipolar constructs against 9 functions (elements). The individual elicited bipolar constructs were analysed using the grounded theory framework which facilitated the identification of three main constructs which were considered to underlie managers’ feedback seeking propensities. These constructs are; perceived uncertainties; perceived difficulties and; skill development. It was proposed that the theoretical construct which underwrites these findings at a higher order level of theoretical interpretation is self efficacy. A coherent theoretical model that better explains managers’ feedback seeking propensities is proposed. The study proposes that the concept of self efficacy can be used to explain managers’ feedback seeking. Also, it highlights the importance of taking a qualitative approach to feedback seeking research as a compliment to the conventional quantitative approach.
Finally, chapter 8 discusses the findings and evaluates the findings against the thesis aims. A summary of the thesis is provided. An overall summary of the main findings is provided, and discussed in order to draw conclusions. The theoretical, methodological, and practical/organisational implications of the findings/contributions of the research are discussed. The research process is reflected upon, and the limitations of the present work, as well as directions for future research are also provided.
CHAPTER TWO:
THE IMPORTANCE OF FEEDBACK IN THE CONTEXT OF
MANAGERIAL PERFORMANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS

2.1 Chapter overview
Chapter two introduces the concept of feedback and managerial effectiveness, and
discusses the importance of active feedback seeking in managerial self regulation.
This discussion is prefaced by an attempt to clarify the distinction between
management and leadership, and ends with a statement about how managerial
effectiveness might be conceptualised. Use of the terms management and leadership
are interchangeable in the literature but the fuzziness of conceptual boundaries here
makes it difficult to compare findings across studies. Here an effort is also made to
establish the criterion domain to be used in this thesis as a benchmark for assessing
managerial effectiveness.

With regard to examination of the feedback seeking process in a managerial domain,
the core question examined here is: Are managers who actively seek feedback more
effective in their jobs? In relation to the examination of this question, a key
proposition is investigated that feedback enhances performance and that managers
who actively seek feedback tend to be more effective in their jobs (Ashford &
Cummings, 1983; Ashford & Tsui, 1991). Potential motives behind feedback seeking,
including situational factors, individual differences, feedback source characteristics
and self awareness, are also examined.

2.2 Management and Leadership: are they the same or different?
There are good reasons for clarifying the concepts of 'management' and 'leadership'
before they are employed in any research or analysis because they denote functions
with important implications for performance. They are concepts which are also
interchangeably used. Basic questions about management and leadership include:
what do managers do? what do leaders do?; are managers necessarily leaders, and
vice versa?
The terms 'manager' and 'leader' and sometimes supervisor are commonly conceived as one and the same thing particularly in the workplace (Gardner 1990; Millward, 2005). On the other hand, sometimes the two terms are considered as different, particularly in the academia (Gordon & Yukl 2004; Kotter, 1999). These conflicting views about 'management' and 'leadership' are illustrated by this observation:

Although most 'leadership' theorists believe there are distinct differences [between them] the two terms are so often used interchangeably in the workplace that the differences become blurred. (Kotterman 2006: 14)

Such usage of the two terms 'makes the task of conceptual and empirical synthesis difficult' (Millward, 2005:233). It is therefore important to clarify the terms 'management' and 'leadership' at this early stage of the discussion, because of the inconsistencies in their definitions and usage in the literature. Drawing on the works of Bass (1990); Kotter (1990, 1999); Terry (1993); Zaleznick (1988); Kotterman (2006: 13) comments:

Many leadership theorists have noted that there are as nearly as many definitions for leadership [and management] as attempts to characterise it [them].

It is therefore crucial that wherever or in whatever context they are used the meaning intended should be made clear.

2.2.1 Reasons for knowing differences and similarities between management and leadership

In organisational settings, management and leadership are ordinarily conceptualised and understood at the level of roles or functions. However, according to Kotterman (2006), there is little understanding of the differences between managerial and leadership roles. Kotterman (2006) explains why it is important to differentiate between leadership and management. He says:

Fundamentally, if you can’t define ‘leadership’ or ‘management’ you can’t measure, test, make assessment or consistently hire or promote for them [or have a common understanding of them in academia and the workplace]. (Kotterman 2006: 13)

With regards to the workplace, Kotterman (2006) pointed out that organisations must have a mix of leaders and managers to succeed, but there is little understanding of the optimal ratio. He argued that:
since management and leadership are so misunderstood, most companies believe they need leaders when in fact what they really need is a few great leaders and first class managers that is, managers with leadership abilities. (Kotterman 2006: 14)

He reasoned that there is the tendency for most organisations to be typically over-managed and under-led. Kotterman (2006) noted that in reality, managers in most organisations are rarely in a position to lead, as such companies often hire expensive leadership consultants to teach leadership development classes and develop leadership assessment. He observed that although managers do demonstrate leadership qualities by leading by example, or leading a project team, they still end up performing the functions of management.

In the extant literature Gordon and Yukl (2004) argued that differences in conceptualisation create confusion and reduce the accuracy and precision of leadership and management research. This assertion is supported by Kotterman (2006) who noted the importance to distinguish between the two as research on management and leadership performance is potentially fraught with measurement problems. He suggested that in order to make useful comparison, a reliable measurement system is necessary. Drawing on the empirical research of Bass, (1990) Eden & Leviatan (1975), Gordon & Yukl (2004), Yukl (1989), Zaccaro & Horn (2003), Kotterman suggested that measurement ‘in terms of effectiveness’ as rated by subordinates is a reasonable measurement approach.

2.2.2 Two main views on conceptualisation of management and leadership
Conceptualisation and defining leadership and management have always been difficult. As Gordon and Yukl (2004) have pointed out, the debate as to whether or not a clear distinction exists between leadership and management is ongoing and generally remains unresolved; whether workplace management and leadership are mutually exclusive or complementary. Kotterman (2006) describes how difficult it is to conceptualise and define the functions of leaders and managers:

There is a general acceptance that the functions of leadership and manager are conceptually different, but no universal acceptance of what those functional differences are is apparent. (Kotterman 2006: 16)
Managers are people who work often in hierarchical organisations and are in positions that have legitimate sources of power with authority to delegate (Marquis & Haustin, 1992, cited in Sofarelli & Brown, 1998). The emphasis of their work lies in control, decision making, decision analysis and results. They are usually more concerned with the short-term view and the bottom line (Bennis & Nanus, 1985); i.e., managers manage change (Marquis et al., 1992, cited in Sofarelli & Brown, 1998). In contrast, leaders are people who often receive their power through other means and are occasionally not part of the formal organisational structure. Their main focus is on group process, influencing, inspiring trust, challenging the status quo and the empowering of others (Marquis et al., 1992, cited in Sofarelli & Brown, 1998). According to Sofarelli and Brown (1998) the main differences between management and leadership are that management is concerned with the use of legitimate power and control in the organisation, whereas leadership is concerned with empowerment and change in organisations.

There are two main perspectives to the conceptualisation and understanding of management and leadership. Some researchers (e.g., Kotter, 1990, 1995a, 1999; Kotterman, 2006; Zaleznik, 1988, 2004) argue that managers and leaders differ basically in how they think, work and influence others, whereas others (e.g., Yukl, 1989; Bass, 1990; Gardner, 1990;) reason that although the two concepts are distinct, in practice they are not mutually exclusive, and that leaders may also be managers and vice versa. The latter perspective is supported by other contemporary organisational and occupational psychology writers (Furnham, 2002; Millward, 2005).

2.2.2.1 Management and leadership as the same role
Yukl (1989) suggested that there are no distinct differences between management and leadership and accordingly used the term managerial leadership in his research. This conceptualisation is supported by Gardner (1990) who does not find distinct differences between a workplace leader and a workplace manager. He used the term first class managers or leader-manager to describe managers with leadership abilities. Gardner (1990) contrasts between what he calls the leader-manager and the routine manager. The leader-manager is concerned with thinking longer term, developing an
organisational vision reaching longer term goals and values and motivating others. The routine manager, on the other hand is more strongly associated with the organisational structure; he/she thinks and acts in the shorter term, accepting and maintaining the status quo.

2.2.2.2 Management and leadership as different roles

There are researchers who see the functions of leaders and managers as occasionally a blend of each other and, as such, complementary because of the similarities they share. However, these researchers definitely see management and leadership as serving two distinct functions (Kotter 1990, 1995a, 1999; Kotterman, 2006; Zaleznick, 1988, 2004). They note that, managers plan and budget while leaders establish direction and seek to develop new goals. Managers control and solve problems while leaders motivate and inspire. Managers produce standards, consistency, and predictability and order whereas leaders produce potential for change. For Zaleznik the differences between the two functions are so distinct to the extent that he asserts that ‘business leaders have much more in common with artists than they do with managers’ (Zaleznik, 2004:74). Zaleznik reasoned that:

Managerial development that focuses exclusively on building competence, control and the appropriate balance of power omits the essential leadership elements of inspiration, vision and human passion which drive corporate success. (Zaleznik 2004: 74)

In distinguishing between a leader and a manager, Kotter (1995a), argues that management is concerned with dealing with procedures, practices and complexity, whereas leadership is about dealing with change. ‘Management is tactical and all about coping with the here and now, while leadership is strategic and primarily coping with the future’ (Kotterman, 2006: 16).

2.2.3 Conceptualising leadership and management: any consensus?

Despite the distinctions noted above, the two terms are often used interchangeably in the work place and also by some researchers. Barker (2000) observes that many managers use the terms management and leadership interchangeably, and many modern theorists refer to management as leadership. This observation supports the work of Alimo-Metcalfe and Lawler (2001) who used the two terms management and
leadership interchangeably in their study on leadership development in UK companies.

Bennis (1989) suggested that a manager does things right in that they are concerned with efficiency and conservation of resources, whilst a leader does the right thing by focusing on effectiveness regardless of the resources. That is, whereas a manager needs to manage or handle resources well to maximize efficiency, a leader’s responsibility is to be effective regardless of the resources required. In other words, whereas good management is important, good leadership is essential. Thus a manager needs to be necessarily a leader as well in order to be effective. On the other hand, a leader need not be, and will not necessarily need to be a manager in order to be effective. However, a leader may perform managerial functions and can therefore be a manager.

Furnham (2002) outlines what managers and leaders have to do. Managers have to do two main things: first to carry on traditional management functions, comprising planning, budgeting and staffing; and second, assuming prescribed roles including figurehead, information disseminator and negotiator. Leaders on the other hand, he notes, challenge the status quo, communicate a new vision, direction and strategy, and motivate and inspire others. Nebeker and Tatum (2002) suggest that management is continually planning, organizing, supervising, and controlling resources to achieve organisational goals. Managers manage these organisational processes, take responsibility for them and constantly seek to improve them. Leaders, on the other hand, focus on leading, look into the future in anticipation of the organisation’s global needs and long term future. Therefore on the basis of what managers do, managers are not necessarily leaders: that is if they perform exclusively their managerial functions, without assuming leadership roles. However, a manager would be a leader as well if he or she performs leadership functions in addition to their managerial roles. Equally, a leader is not necessarily a manager because he or she can exclusively perform leadership roles without straying into managerial functions. However, from a functional perspective, managers are supposed to be leaders because in addition to their managerial responsibilities, they need to perform the leadership role of influencing the behaviour of individuals or groups toward the achievement of
organisational goals. Thus, to be effective, managers need leadership skills in order to fulfil leadership functions. As Kotterman notes:

Fortunately however, some commonality about the aggregate functions of leadership and management are beginning to emerge. (Kotterman 2006: 14)

A vast amount of research into leadership versus management show that sometimes leaders manage and sometimes managers lead (Bass, 1990). As House and Aditya (1997: 31) argued ‘it is possible for managers to be leaders and leaders to be managers.’ This is supported by Bergmann, Hurson, and Russ-Eft (1999), who argued that leadership is part of everyday ‘grassroots’ behaviour of managers at all levels within organisational hierarchies. Also, after examining the review of the literature so far, it can be fairly/reasonably concluded that leadership is an essential managerial function.

2.2.4 Leadership as a managerial function
What leadership skills abilities and qualities do managers require? In a summary of the ‘leadership and management’ literature Millward (2000) identified three important dimensions against which managers may vary: leadership behaviours, organisational factors and personal characteristics. Leaders behaviours are differentiated in terms of people- and task -oriented. The former style is generally associated with subordinate affective reactions, and job satisfaction, whereas the latter has a stronger influence on performance.

In relation to the organisation of work, task oriented styles are favoured in non-routine and/ or emergency situations, or when subordinates have little experience/knowledge; people oriented styles are favoured in familiar and comfortable situations, and when subordinates are autonomous; no leadership behaviours are required if subordinates are both experienced and autonomous.

Personal characteristics can be important in terms of subordinates’ perceptions of how a leader should act. In this respect, charismatic leadership (e.g., House, 1977) and transformational leadership (e.g., Bass, 1985) have become increasingly important and popular.
2.2.5 Conceptualising ‘manager’ in this thesis: implication for measuring managerial effectiveness, competence and the choice of competence model

The above discussion supports the proposition that leadership is an essential managerial function (Borman & Brush, 1993; Gardner, 1990; Tharanou, 1997) hence managers need to demonstrate leadership abilities and qualities. On this basis, leadership is conceptualised as a managerial skill, and this conceptualisation is adopted in this thesis.

2.2.6 Managerial Effectiveness

There is little agreement about the definition and constituent of ‘managerial effectiveness’. This is because what is meant by effectiveness depends on the source making the assessment (for example, subordinates, and superiors), the situation, and organisational context. It may also be culture-specific which questions whether there can ever viably be a universal definition of managerial effectiveness, which can be applied across all situations, organisations and cultures (Hamlin, 2004).

Drawing on Agut and Grau (2002), Bass (1997), and Russ-Eft and Brenan (2001), Hamlin (2004) argued on the other hand that we should strive for a definition of the universally effective manager, or at least universal criteria of managerial effectiveness, and of generic managerial competencies. Hamlin (2004) pointed out that behaviours that enable managers to be effective are arguably universal for all organisations and accordingly proposed a generic model of managerial effectiveness. Hamlin’s generic model comprises eleven criteria; six positive criteria indicative of effective management, and five negative criteria, indicative of ineffective management. The indicators of effective management are: effective organisation and planning, that is, proactive management; participative and supportive team leadership, empowerment and delegation; genuine concern for the interests and development needs of staff; participative/inclusive decision making approach; communicating and consulting widely/keeping people informed. On the other hand, the contra indicators, that are the negative criteria for ineffectiveness, are: lack of consideration or concern for staff; uncaring, self-serving management / undermining, depriving, and intimidating behaviour; tolerance of poor performance and low standards; abdicating roles and responsibilities; and resistant to new ideas and responsibilities.
2.2.7 Conceptualizing managerial effectiveness in this thesis

Drawing on Hamlin's conceptualisation of universal managerial effectiveness, this thesis assumes that effective management depends on the following skills. In organisational terms, managers need to communicate effectively and interact with their superiors, colleagues and subordinates, thus initiate, build and maintain relationships with members of the organisation through the effective use of interpersonal skills. Also, they need skills considered fundamental to effective managerial performance such as emotional stability and intrapersonal skills. Thus managerial effectiveness can be defined in terms of leadership, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. This performance criterion of 'effectiveness' can broadly be described as the human side of enterprise in the domain model of managerial competencies proposed by Hogan and Warrenfetz (2003).

For current purposes then, managerial effectiveness is defined in terms of leadership, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. Also, effectiveness is better assessed by those who managers lead, (subordinates) and interact with (peers, subordinates and other stakeholders), than by external sources. This notion of effectiveness has important implication for feedback. When managers get feedback about their performance on their intrapersonal, interpersonal and leadership skills, they will know whether or not their performance is up to the required standard.

Business skills and technical skills are the non human side of managerial enterprise. This thesis however focuses specifically on this fundamentally human side of enterprise and managerial competency for two reasons. First, it has been a neglected area. Secondly organisations select and evaluate managers on the basis of cognitive ability and business skill, the non human side of enterprise, believing these considerations to be more important for managerial performance (Hogan & Warrenfeltz, 2003). Arguably however they are not.

This focus has crucial implications for the criteria used to determine effectiveness. The next question is; are managers who actively seek feedback more effective in their jobs?
2.3 Are managers who actively seek feedback more effective in their jobs?

Having defined and conceptualised managerial effectiveness, the core question here is: Are managers who actively seek feedback more effective in their jobs? It is argued that feedback enhances performance and that managers who actively seek feedback are more effective in their jobs (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Ashford & Tsui, 1991).

The section first provides the theoretical foundation of the feedback process. It begins with the examination of the concept of feedback in relation to communication where the classical model of feedback (Iglen, Fisher & Taylor, 1979) is examined, and discusses feedback about performance. It proceeds to examine feedback about performance in organisations, and the usefulness of feedback in behaviour regulation through motivational and directional functions.

The section moves on to discuss how feedback can be obtained in organisations through passively receiving it and actively seeking it. It is shown that there is an important difference between getting feedback as a consequence of actively seeking it and getting feedback because its source decides a person should have it.

2.3.1 Theoretical foundations of the research/feedback

This section discusses the theoretical foundations of feedback. It begins by discussing the feedback concept more broadly, specifically, in relation to communication where it derives its significance. In the generic communication model, the feedback concept is described as the key element in the communication process because it enables a person to evaluate the effectiveness of a message (Bovee & Thill, 2000).

2.3.1.1 What is feedback?

More generally, the feedback concept derives its significance from communications theory. Communication is the exchange and flow of information and ideas from one person to another. It is a process which involves someone 'a sender' transmitting an idea or piece of information, 'a message' to someone else, 'a recipient'. Potentially, communication involves a message that is noticed by its intended recipient, understood by its recipient (and understood as intended by the source), evaluated by its recipient (who must decide, for example, whether to believe it) (Emler, 2001).

A message can only be said to have been effectively communicated to the extent that it is understood by the receiver as intended by the source (Emler, 2001). Emler (2001)
described awareness; comprehension and belief as the key components or the 'ABC' of effective communication. For communication to be effective, the intended recipient must be aware or give attention to the message, comprehend or understand it as intended by the source, and evaluate it and decide whether to believe it. Two-way communication or feedback is the means through which the sender can know whether or not the message has been properly received and understood as intended.

In communication, feedback enhances, facilitates, and provides understanding of messages, as it enables the sender to know whether or not the receiver understood the message. Bovee and Thill (2000) described feedback as 'the key element in the communication process because it enables one to evaluate the effectiveness of a message' (p.16). In the interpersonal realm, feedback involves information about how a person’s behaviour is perceived and evaluated by others (Ashford & Cummings 1986). Feedback can also be provided by tasks or generated by individuals on the basis of their own thoughts (Greller & Herold, 1975).

2.3.1.2 Feedback about performance

In the context of work, the feedback message is usually information about someone’s work behaviour or performance. It provides some information about the correctness, accuracy or adequacy of behaviour or performance (Iglen, et al., 1979). Essentially, it is information about the appropriateness of past performance.

Descriptive information about past behaviour clarifies the individual's perception of his or her own performance... In the absence of explicit information about performance, the individual is left to infer what is desirable behaviour from the outcomes (positive or negative) that are administered. That is, the outcomes become feedback for behaviour. (Iglen et al., 1979: 362)

In organisations, the importance of feedback about performance in enhancing effectiveness can not be overemphasised. Feedback about performance is concerned with communication of individual’s performance as evaluated by others, to that person with the view of enabling them to know and understand how well they are performing in relation to expected and productive job behaviour in the organisation. Specifically, it is a communication to a person or a team of people regarding the effect their work behaviour is having on another person, the team, or the organisational
effectiveness in general. Feedback about performance thus enables people to know the results of their work behaviour in organisations. It has information value to the extent that it increases one's knowledge about performance.

Feedback is most efficient when it increases knowledge through a reduction in uncertainty by eliminating half of the alternative or competing explanation for behaviour. (Iglen, et al., 1979: 351)

In performance-oriented organisations, feedback about the effectiveness of an individual's behaviour is essential for learning and for motivation (Iglen, et al, 1979). Positive feedback involves telling someone about good performance, whereas negative feedback is concerned with unsatisfactory performance, and usually tells people about work behaviours they need to improve upon. Positive feedback, that is, a recognition for effective performance is a powerful motivator because recognition fosters more of the appreciated behaviours as many people want to obtain more recognition. Negative feedback is intended to be constructive and diagnostic, and alert a person to an area in which their performance could improve to the required standard. Thus feedback could enhance a person's self development and task improvement. Therefore, feedback which is sometimes referred to as knowledge of results [KR], an essential element of personal motivation has been considered as an important moderator that enhances achievement performance and achievement (Locke 1968).

2.3.1.3 Functions of performance feedback

The usefulness of feedback is thus described in terms of the functions it performs for the recipient. A given piece of feedback serves two main functions, broadly described as either motivational or directional. First, feedback serves a motivational function when it provides information about outcomes associated with rewards. This function can motivate performance. The directional functions inform the recipient of the behaviours that should be accomplished. In particular, it serves to clarify a person's roles by specifying those behaviours that should be performed on one hand, and behaviours that should not be performed on the other. Also, feedback can serve as a cue useful in regulating behaviour (Locke, 1968). Thus, feedback has the tendency to regulate managerial work behaviour, and increase performance and effectiveness. Useful questions that flow from the ongoing analysis include: How does feedback
impact behaviour and enhance effectiveness? How do individuals get feedback about their performance in organisations?

2.3.2 How do people get feedback about their performance in organisations?
Concerning feedback about performance in organisational settings, a distinction is made between 'intrinsic or internal feedback,' and 'mediated or external feedback'. Intrinsic feedback is concerned with a feedback that a person entertains in himself or herself, arising out of the completing a specific task. On the other hand, external feedback is obtained from other persons for example colleagues or supervisors or managers. External feedback can be obtained as a consequence of actively seeking it, and/or because its sources decide a person should have it. The formal appraisal interview, albeit an important one for professional managers, is a means through which external feedback occurs because its sources decide one should have it. The main purposes of performance appraisal include sustaining and enhancing employee motivation, establishing developmental procedures, and fostering communication and feedback (Latham, Skarlick & Siegel, 1993).

On the other hand, in active feedback seeking in organisations, a person makes a conscious effort to find out how appropriate his or work behaviour or performance is (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). In organisations, there are two main strategies that people use in active feedback seeking. First, people may monitor the organisational environment for feedback. In this strategy, they observe various situational cues, other persons, how others respond to their behaviour, in order to infer how well they are doing. Alternatively, a person may directly inquire or ask a potential source, such as peers, supervisors, managers, bosses and subordinates as to how these sources perceive and evaluate his or her behaviour. Thus, enquiry involves directly asking a potential source (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). The focus of this thesis is on managers' active feedback seeking by direct enquiry that is, by asking a potential source, such as peers, superiors and subordinates.

2.3.3 Active feedback seeking and managerial effectiveness
Feedback about performance in organisations serves useful functions regarding individual employee development and task performance for organisational effectiveness. However, a person may not get enough feedback when he or she waits
for the source to decide when that person should have it, and also through monitoring direct and indirect organisational environmental cues for the following reasons. First, people are sometimes reluctant to deliver feedback especially when it is negative. Second, feedback recipients do not have enough control over the amount and timing of feedback received. Also, there is the tendency for people to reject feedback when they have not requested it. Further, seeking feedback by monitoring the situation and behaviour of others and inferring meanings from organisational environmental cues might not be accurate.

2.3.3.1 Is active feedback seeking more likely to increase managerial effectiveness?
In organisations, traditionally, feedback is given in an annual formal performance review. It may also be received through a peer review, or informal conversations with others. However, the amount of feedback received in this manner is insufficient for on-going self-regulation (Ashford & Tsui, 1994). A management association survey conducted in 1984 reported that seventy-five percent of organisations in the UK offer formal performance review only annually (Ashford & Tsui, 1994). Also, superiors and others are often reluctant to give negative feedback and even the flow of positive feedback can be constricted (Felson, 1980). Informal feedback from superiors and peers is also typically constrained because supervisor, managers and superiors and other sources of feedback are often reluctant to give negative feedback. (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). These suggest that managers hardly receive enough and regular feedback to regulate their behaviour.

However, managers may generate feedback about their behaviour in question by actively seeking it directly from sources such as peers, superiors/bosses and subordinates. Ashford and Cummings (1983) argued that individuals who actively seek feedback about their performance frequently are more likely to perform better in their jobs. It has been found that active feedback seeking is related to accurate discrepancy detection and favourable evaluation of managers’ effectiveness by superiors, subordinates, and peers. (Ashford & Tsui, 1991).

Active feedback seeking information influence managerial effectiveness for two main reasons. First, feedback information has instrumental value for improved
Managers who seek information and feedback actively have a greater chance of knowing their constituents' expectations and opinions with some degree of accuracy, and if appropriate actions are taken to meet or manage those opinions, will be more effective. Second, active feedback seeking may affect managers' effectiveness through impression-management. Irrespective of the actions taken by managers in response to constituents' opinions, the act of seeking information and feedback may give managers an impression management advantage. This is because they will be seen as interested in constituents' opinions (Ashford & Tsui, 1994).

Managers who actively seek feedback about their performance are more likely to be effective in their jobs. By actively seeking feedback, they obtain valuable information that can be used to improve their performance and reduce their uncertainties, and thereby, take active role in regulating or managing their performance and enhance their effectiveness (Ashford & Tsui, 1991). Active feedback seeking offers managers some control over the amount and timing of feedback received and increases the likelihood of it being received (Levy et al., 1995). Also, by asking for feedback, managers obtain information that they can use to assess their capabilities, adjust their goal-directed behaviour, and enhance their performance (Ashford, 1986). For these reasons, active feedback seeking is important for managerial effectiveness.

2.3.3.2 Are managers likely to seek feedback to enhance their effectiveness?

Given the theoretical reasons for active feedback seeking and managerial effectiveness, it is reasonable to argue that managers will actively engage in seeking feedback about their performance. However, this might not be a simple prediction or conjecture. This is because the relationship between feedback seeking and effectiveness is not straightforward as the provision of useful feedback information and the mere detection of deficiencies through feedback does not simply and necessarily lead to performance effectiveness (Ashford & Tsui, 1994).

Since feedback is evaluative information, it directly references the self, and thus feedback is inherently affective in nature (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). It has been argued that people hold conflicting views about feedback. People want feedback because it enables them to detect their deficiencies, and provides them with the
information which they can use to correct themselves, if they so choose, and achieve their goals.

On the other hand, people are also motivated to maintain favourable views of themselves and thus avoid feedback that might potentially undermine their self concept Ashford (1986). According to Miller (1976), managers are more likely to avoid negative feedback to maintain their self esteem. But negative feedback is most important because of its potential to correct performance as it has a diagnostic value (Ashford & Cummings, 1985). Laboratory studies have shown that people will seek more difficult tasks, risking more negative feedback, for their diagnostic value (Trope, 1975; Zukerman, et al., 1979). Other evidence suggests that people will avoid such feedback to preserve their self esteem (Ashford & Cummings 1983; Miller, 1976). Thus in organisational settings, managers may realize that there are costs to both holding an inaccurate view of themselves about their performance for not seeking feedback, on one hand, and the risk of exposing weaknesses by seeking feedback on the other. Also, some managers might fail to use the feedback information, but others may use it to decide on a course of action.

2.3.4 What motives/factors influence feedback seeking?

It has been argued that managers who actively seek feedback about their performance are more likely to be effective. However, the extent to which managers will actively seek feedback, and use feedback information to improve their performance and effectiveness depends on several factors. In the feedback seeking literature, potential factors which can influence managers' feedback seeking behaviour have been identified. These factors are feedback seeking motives; including the desire for useful information to reduce uncertainty about work performance (Ashford, 1986; Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Levy et al., 1995; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990; Trope & Neter, 1994; Tsui, & Ashford, 1994), the desire for a person to protect his or her ego and self esteem from the threat of negative feedback (Ashford & Cummings, 1983), impression management (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Morrison & Bies, 1991; Tsui & Ashford, 1994), and goal orientation (Vande Walle & Cummings, 1997; Tuckey et al., 2002). Also, feedback source characteristics are likely to influence feedback seeking (Vancouver & Morrison, 1995).
Additionally, some individual differences variables such as self esteem and self efficacy have been investigated to explore how they could explain the feedback seeking process. Further, the concept of self awareness is being explored as a potential variable; as a motive or individual difference variable which can explain the feedback seeking process (Fletcher, 1997; Fletcher & Baldry, 2000).

2.3.4.1 Feedback Motives

Important considerations in the managerial feedback seeking process are motives. Motives are the incentives and disincentives, that is, perceived benefits and perceived costs that people consider in order to decide whether or not to seek feedback. There is the tendency for a person to seek feedback if the perceived benefits outweigh the costs. If the perceived benefits cannot compensate for the costs, he or she is less likely to seek it. Four main motives in the feedback seeking process which have been investigated are desire for useful information for uncertainty reduction, ego defence, impression management, and goal orientation (e.g. Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Larson, 1989; Levy et al., 1995; Morrison & Bies, 1991; Tuckey et al., 2002; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997).

*Useful information and uncertainty reduction*

The degree of uncertainty about the behaviours appropriate or most useful for attaining a goal, and how those behaviours might be evaluated by others determine the value of feedback. People seek feedback for useful information in order to reduce uncertainty about role ambiguity, goal relevant and performance behaviour (Ashford, 1986; Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Iglen et al., 1979). Uncertainty is defined as ‘a state in which individuals have no, little, or inconsistent information about the stimuli of interest’ (Ashford, 1986, p.668). Ashford (1986) found that feedback seeking increased with new and uncertain situations. Increased feelings of uncertainties concerning goal related issues increases the perceived value of feedback, since such information allows people to structure situations and make choices as to how to proceed.

Berlyne (1960) proposed that uncertainty and information-seeking are linked because the experience of uncertainty renders information more valuable and thus people are motivated to seek it. Those who perceive the feedback information as valuable for
uncertainty reduction will tend to seek feedback more frequently than those for whom feedback might be less valuable (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Ashford, 1986). Laboratory studies conducted to test Berlyne's (1960) theory of uncertainty and choice have found empirical evidence for the relationship between feelings of uncertainty and information search (Crawford, 1974; Conolley, Gerard & Kline, 1978; Trope, 1975).

**Ego defence/ self esteem**

People seeking feedback are not only concerned with acquiring accurate and useful information, but they are also interested in how to minimize the cost of the process of asking, and the outcome. The costs to them include the social risk of asking for feedback from people with whom one has not established a good relationship and the possibility of losing self esteem (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Vancouver and Morrison, 1995). Ashford (1986) argued that people who actively seek feedback do weigh those conditions that make feedback beneficial to them against factors that make seeking it costly. Individuals are more likely to seek it if the benefits outweigh the costs. Self evaluation process for performance feedback seeking decisions and behaviour depend on the costs and benefits, specifically, whether feedback is positive or negative and the informational value.

Positive feedback which indicates successful performances enhances one's self esteem. If the feedback is diagnostic in nature, it can guide a person on how to improve their performance and thus motivate them to persist to achieve their goals. On the other hand, negative feedback may be undesirable for self enhancement motives. It has immediate emotional esteem-related costs such as shame, disappointment, dejection and general discomfort. However, if diagnostic, it can – in the long term, be more valuable than positive feedback as it has informational value of realistic self assessment that can guide task and indicate to individuals what skills they need to improve in future (Trope & Neter, 1994).

**Impression management motives**

Managers may tend to seek less feedback from their peers and subordinates because of the potentially higher impression management costs and the lower perceived informational value of feedback from these sources. Impression management is
concerned with the desire to manage or control one's impression or make positive self presentation. That is to control the impressions others form of us, which involve both defensive impression management – to avoid creating negative image; and assertive impression management – to enhance our public image. Individuals tend to seek or not to seek feedback because of the impression they perceive it will make on others. Specifically, there is the tendency for individuals to seek feedback if it would enhance their public image, otherwise they would avoid it (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Morrison & Bies, 1991). Managers may tend to seek less feedback from their subordinates and peers because of the potentially higher impression management costs and the perceived lower informational value from these sources (Ashford & Tsui, 1991). Also, there is a potential negative perception that managers who seek feedback from their subordinates lack self confidence and self assurance. This is because from a subordinates' perspective, managers are supposed to know their roles and perform well in an organisation (Ashford & Tsui, 1991).

Therefore, by seeking feedback from others (subordinates), managers risk being seen that their act of feedback seeking is a sign of managerial weakness. Ashford (1986) pointed out that although people are indeed instrumental beings and thus value feedback because it allows them the opportunity to correct errors and attain goals, they would also want to sustain favourable views of themselves in order to maintain their self esteem. Thus, although there is evidence for a positive impact of upward feedback on leadership skills development, (Smither et al., 2002) there is a low information value problem, and the perceived cost and, self esteem problem associated with that. Based on these, managers may feel reluctant to actively seek performance feedback from their subordinates.

Individual goal orientation; performance and learning motives
A fourth motive influencing feedback seeking behaviour is individual goal orientation (Tuckey et al., 2002; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997). Goal orientation refers to an individual's orientation towards different types of goals in achievement situations. It has two main dimensions; learning goal orientation and performance goal orientation (Dweck, 1986; Dweck & Legget, 1988). Learning goal orientation is concerned with ability, that is acquisition of new skills, mastering new situations, whereas performance goal orientation involves proving ability, that is demonstration of
competency by seeking favourable, and avoiding unfavourable judgements about ability (Duda, 1993; Dweck, 1986). Arguably, there is a relationship between the type of goal orientation, whether leaning or performance, and feedback seeking behaviour. People with learning orientation have the tendency to seek feedback even under more challenging task conditions, because such people perceive greater value in feedback seeking, regarding the nature and content of information, than do people with performance goal orientation (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997).

How do feedback motives; desires for useful information, protection of one’s ego, and impression management and goal orientation operate in the feedback seeking?

Levy et al., (1995) proposed a model which suggests that desire for useful information, self esteem protection, and impression management motives operate at different stages in the seeking process. According to Levy et al., one’s desire for feedback determines the initial intent to seek feedback. On the other hand, ego enhancement and impression management desires operate later in the process when individuals make the decision whether to proactively seek feedback.

Tuckey et al. (2002) extended Levy et al.’s (1995) model and found that these motives, (desire for useful information; ego defence; impression management; and goal orientation) assumed to underlie feedback seeking, were related to measures of self-reported frequency of feedback seeking. In a study, based on the model, Tuckey et al., found that the motives had both a direct and mediating influence on feedback seeking. Increased feedback seeking was associated with the desire for useful information motive, and reduced feedback seeking with the ego defence and defensive impression management motives. These findings provide evidence in support of the proposition that feedback seeking increases with perceived information value (Ashford, 1986; Ashford & Cummings, 1983). However there is also evidence that the perceived value reduces when there is a perceived risk of losing self esteem (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Vancouver & Morrison, 1995). Also, the study reported that self-assessed performance was a major predictor of feedback seeking, which provided evidence for the feedback – performance association. Further, the desire for useful information motive mediated the influence of performance-proven goal orientation. Based on the findings, Tuckey et al. (2002) emphasized that the desire for
useful information as a mediator shows how important it is to gain feedback information in order to improve performance at work.

In Tuckey et al.'s study, although actual performance level was not manipulated, self assessed performance level emerged as an important predictor of feedback seeking. They found a strong main effect for performance, with feedback seeking greater for below average than for above average performance, which was consistent with Ashford (1986), who found that feedback seeking increased after poor performance. Based on this, Tuckey et al., (2002) concluded that feedback is a source of valuable information which is useful enough to compensate for any self esteem costs.

The findings in Tuckey et al.'s study provide further evidence for the feedback - performance link, and explain how some motives influence feedback seeking process. Nonetheless there are two main weaknesses in the study. Although the study found a large impact of performance on feedback seeking, but performances in their study were hypothetical scenarios and also was self-rated which tend to be inflated (Bass & Avolio, 1995). Thus a way of assessing performance, specifically, by 'others' preferably subordinate rating is required to determine a more reliable and valid impact (e.g. Alimo-Metcalfe,1998; Hogan, Curvy & Hogan, 1994; Hogan & Warrenfetz,2003), and in a real organisational setting.

2.3.5 Do source characteristics influence feedback seeking?

The source characteristics that have been found to influence active feedback seeking behaviour are source expertise, reward power, relationship and accessibility. Vancouver and Morrison (1995) found that different source attributes underlie feedback seekers' preferences for certain sources and that the impact of these source variables depend on performance and individual differences. They found that feedback seeking behaviour has the tendency to increase if the source had expertise, reward power, high quality relationship and was accessible. High performers on a task were more likely to consider a source's reward power than low performers. Also, those with high need for achievement were more likely to consider source expertise and less likely to consider relationship quality. According to Vancouver and Morrison (1995), these results are consistent with the premise that people face conflicting concerns such as information value, social, and contextual when deciding whether to
seek feedback. Some managers might seek feedback from more distal constituencies (beyond the three most obvious constituencies, i.e., superiors, peers and subordinates) including managers in other organisations (Ashford and Tsui, 1994).

2.3.6 Self efficacy and feedback
Studies suggest that self efficacy is associated with performance, and it is likely to impact performance following feedback (Bailey & Austin, 2006; London & Smither, 1995; Maurer et al., 2002; Robertson & Sadri, 1993; Yammarino & Atwater, 1997). People with high self efficacy are said to be more likely to make use of feedback information to improve their performance (Maurer et al., 2002). (See chapter 3 section 3.4 for the role of self-efficacy in feedback-performance association).

2.3.7 How adequately and coherently is feedback seeking explained by feedback motives and factors?
Examination of the motives, situational factors and other factors which have been investigated show that they do provide some explanations which help understand the feedback seeking process. However, the limitation of these findings is that they are not coherently linked. Also, they do not offer any explanatory power that has relevance to the managerial domain in a real organisational context. Further, research findings on the feedback-performance association are inconsistent. However, many studies suggest a positive impact, yet why feedback may have positive impact on performance has not been adequately determined and explained. Therefore, there is the need to further investigate the feedback seeking process, specifically, the feedback performance link, and explore a coherent explanation for the feedback seeking process in a managerial domain in a real organisational setting.

2.3.8 Does feedback have any impact on performance?
In this review research findings on the proposed feedback-performance link, and the explanation for this association are evaluated. A hypothesis is formulated on the feedback-performance association, and a potential theoretical perspective for the explanation of the feedback seeking is proposed.

Research findings on the potential impact of feedback on performance are inconsistent (De Nisi & Kluger, 2000; Kluger & De Nisi, 1996). However, most
studies suggest a positive impact (Atwater, et al., 2000; Hegarty, 1974; Heslin & Lathan, 2001; Morrison, 1993; Smither, et al., 2003). In a meta-analysis of feedback intervention research, predominant in laboratory settings, Kluger and DeNisi (1996), found that while the majority of feedback interventions do lead to improved performance, more than one third of cases providing feedback interventions actually resulted in decreased performance after feedback.

Similar findings are reported from feedback studies within an organisational context. In a review of 13 longitudinal studies that examined the impact of multi source or upward feedback on performance, in which performance was measured by subsequent feedback scores, Smither, et al. (2003) found that 11 of the studies showed evidence of improved performance for people receiving feedback. A conclusion reached was that managers would tend to improve their performance following multi source or upward feedback, and that improvement was usually positive among managers who had received the most negative feedback. This finding corroborates the view that diagnostic, negative feedback can be more valuable as it has informational value for realistic self assessment that can inform people what skills they need to improve in future (Trope & Neter, 1994).

In other studies, upward feedback interventions resulted in subsequent performance improvement for 50% only of the supervisors who received it (Atwater et al., 2000). A longitudinal study of newcomers organisational socialisation found that the more performance feedback information the newcomers sought, the more they were satisfied with and committed to their jobs, and these were associated with increased work performance (Morrison, 1993). This corroborates Ashford and Cummings' (1985) findings and could further explain why newcomers in organisations in Ashford and Cummings' (1985) study reported more feedback seeking behaviour.

Morrison found that generally, newcomers in organisations used monitoring more frequently than enquiry in seeking information. However, for technical information, they used enquiry from their supervisors; otherwise, they preferred peers as feedback sources.
Thus, there are inconsistencies in the research findings on the feedback-performance link, but most of the findings suggest a positive correlation between feedback seeking behaviour and improved performance. However, why feedback has a positive impact on performance has not been determined and explained. (Avolio et al., 2003). Atwater et al. (2000) argue that performance improvement resulting from feedback could be attributed to self awareness of any discrepancy between ideal and actual performance, and the motivation to reduce such differences. This suggests a link between self awareness and feedback seeking behaviour and that they both could positively impact managerial performance (See chapter 3 section 3.6 for the concept of self awareness in the feedback seeking process).

2.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter introduces the concept of managerial effectiveness and discusses the importance of active feedback seeking in managerial self regulation. It began by distinguishing between the concept of management and leadership conceptualising them as different roles but with overlapping functions. The chapter defines the concept of 'manager' and of 'managerial effectiveness', and defends the performance criteria that will be used in this thesis as the benchmark for assessing effectiveness.

The chapter proceeded by examining the core question: Are managers who actively seek feedback more effective in their jobs? In relation to the examination of this question, a key argument advanced was that feedback enhances performance and that managers who actively seek feedback tend to be more effective in their jobs (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Ashford & Tsui, 1991). The concept of feedback seeking is deconstructed and the motives behind feedback seeking, including situational factors, individual differences and feedback source characteristics and self awareness, were also examined. Empirical evidence on the feedback – performance association was examined. In the review, attention was drawn in particular to the inconsistencies of research findings on the feedback-performance link, and the inadequacy of explanations for this proposed association. A hypothesis was formulated on the feedback performance association, and a potential perspective for the explanation of the feedback seeking process offered, in accordance with the objectives of the thesis.
The next chapter provides a theoretical framework that locates the main argument made in this thesis.
CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: A SELF REGULATION PERSPECTIVE

3.1 Introduction and chapter overview
Chapter 3 provides an overview of the broader theoretical framework under which this research was conducted, i.e. the self regulation approach. It starts with a review of theories and models that could explain the feedback process and its impact on performance in organisational settings. It then defends the adoption of a self regulation perspective, which is grounded in Control Theory. The origin, evolution, and philosophical assumptions and applications of control/ self regulation theory are reviewed with a view to understanding its basic ideas and posit. It is linked with a review of self awareness theory and goal setting theory, highlighting also the central role of self-efficacy. The elements of the self-regulatory process for performance improvement are then reviewed. The chapter examines and shows how within the self regulation framework, Self Awareness Theory can be used to explain and elaborate the feedback seeking process.

3.2 Theories of feedback:
Self Control Theory, Self Regulation Theory and the Feedback Intervention Theory
Arguably, Control Theory (Carver & Scheier,1981; 1982) is the most generic and useful feedback theory, as other theories and models draw on it to explain the feedback-performance process (De Nisi & Kluger, 2000; Kluger & De Nisi,1996). Self control theory is based on the theoretical assumptions that if a person detects a negative discrepancy between his or her performance and a designated standard of performance that is expected from them (i.e., there is a public accountability), he or she could be motivated to reduce the discrepancy. The person could reduce the discrepancy by improving his or performance to match the required standard (Maurer et al., 2002). (See section 3.3.3.1 for a detailed review of this perspective).

Empirical evidence supports the view that receiving negative feedback, which is indicating discrepancies, can motivate a person to reduce the discrepancy (Bailey & Austin, 2006; Brutus et al., 1999; Maurer et al., 2002). This suggests that feedback
can be used for performance improvement. Two main perspectives in the feedback literature explain the feedback seeking process and performance effectiveness; Self-Regulation Theory (Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Tsui & Ashford, 1994), and Feedback Intervention Theory (DeNisi & Kluger, 1996; Kluger & DeNisi, 2000). These perspectives are both grounded in the assumptions of Self Control Theory (Carver & Scheier, 1981; 1986). However, essentially, whilst feedback intervention theory is concerned with using organisational procedures, that is external regulation such as development programmes based on feedback mechanisms to improve performance, self regulation theories deal with how managers can help themselves by using feedback mechanisms to improve their performance.

Despite these theoretical perspectives, apparently, there is no comprehensive or unified theory or model that fully explains the feedback seeking process, including its impact on behaviour and performance in an organisational setting (Bailey & Austin, 2006; DeNisi & Kluger, 2000; Maurer, et al., 2002). Consequently, explanations for the feedback seeking process and its impact on performance outcomes are ‘currently quite limited’ (Bailey & Austin, 2006: 51). Most feedback studies therefore draw on the self control theory as the most useful framework for explaining the impact of feedback on performance.

Following their groundbreaking meta-analysis of the feedback literature which earned them awards from the Organisational Behaviour Division of The Academy of Management and the Society for Industrial and Organisational Psychology, De Nisi and Kluger (2000) have commented on the inadequacy, and lack of coherent and comprehensive theory on the feedback process.

The striking results of our meta-analysis led us to search theories or models that described [and/or explained] how feedback affect behaviour and performance. We could find no unified theory, but there were pieces of theories that were useful, especially the control theory. We took these pieces and proposed a model of our own, which we called feedback intervention theory. (De Nisi and Kluger, 2000: 131)

Feedback intervention theory (De Nisi & Kluger, 1996; Kluger & DeNisi, 2000) is concerned with the use of feedback mechanisms in management interventions. Essentially, it is an organisation-based external mechanism of using feedback information to regulate performance for effectiveness. Such interventions are aimed at
bridging the gap between actual performance and the organisation's expected or standard performance using feedback information, through organisational procedures. Thus it uses external means to regulate behaviour, and performance for effectiveness. The model is inappropriate for this study in that although the thesis is concerned with managerial effectiveness, a distinctively self regulation framework is adopted which assumes no external regulation as proposed in the feedback intervention framework.

Therefore, this thesis draws on the self regulation perspective on feedback seeking and performance, for three reasons. First, there is no unified theory for understanding feedback seeking and performance. Second, evidence does direct us to control theory as the most useful framework for feedback studies. Third, the current thesis is concerned with self regulation for performance effectiveness. Further, it draws on other related theoretical perspectives which provide sources for understanding feedback seeking and performance in the self regulation process. The resultant theoretical framework was considered unified and comprehensive and appropriate for the study (studies 1& 2) and the thesis. The next chapter discusses in detail the theoretical framework of the study.

3.2.1 Self Regulation perspective / framework

This thesis takes self regulation perspective on performance effectiveness (Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Tsui & Ashford, 1994) which is integral to a broader theory of control (Carver & Scheier, 1981, 1982). This theoretical framework takes into account the role of active feedback seeking in managerial effectiveness. In particular it draws upon self awareness theory (Church, 1994, 1997; Davis & Franzoi, 1999; Duval & Wicklund, 1972; Fenigstein et al., 1975; Gibbons, 1990; Hull & Levy, 1979) to explain the feedback seeking process. Active feedback seeking and self awareness are both considered integral to the idea that the effective manager is good at self regulation. Arguably, feedback is effective to the extent that it enhances self-awareness of, for example, any discrepancy between ideal and actual performance. Further, control theory combined with goal setting theory (Latham & Locke, 1991; Locke & Latham, 1990) is drawn upon to explain performance improvement following feedback in the self regulation process.
In keeping with a self regulation perspective, managerial effectiveness is attained when managers set their working standards and through active feedback seeking, detect any discrepancies between these standards and their actual work behaviour. The internal imperative is then to reduce such discrepancies through increased performance, hence to increase effectiveness. Two theories are drawn to explain the self regulation process. First, self-awareness theory (Church, 1994, 1997; Davis & Franzoi, 1999; Duval & Wicklund, 1972; Fenignstein et al., 1975; Gibbons, 1990; Hull & Levy, 1979) is used to elaborate, explain and provide grounds for the feedback seeking behaviour in the discrepancy detection process. The processes involved are said to be self evaluation; comprising self verification, self-enhancement and self-assessment, which underpin the self awareness dynamics. Second, goal setting theory (Latham & Locke, 1991; Locke & Latham, 1990) which proposes that increases in performance following feedback is the result of motivation to set goals, that is inducing discrepancy, and then reducing the discrepancy through improved performance. Goal setting theory also highlights the role of self efficacy, as an important factor in the self regulation process. This thesis considers active feedback seeking, self awareness, and self-efficacy as integral to the self regulation process for managerial effectiveness and performance.

This section begins by discussing the core proposition of self regulation/control theory. It moves on to present the origin, evolution and application of the theory, first, in clinical psychological therapy, then in organisational settings. Using the main elements and dynamics of the self-regulatory process, it proceeds to examine, and show how managers can regulate their work behaviour to improve their performance in organisations. Also under examination is how within the self regulation framework, the concept of self awareness can be used to explain the feedback seeking process.

3.2.2 Core proposition of the self-regulation or control theory
Self-regulation or control theory is a cybernetic model of self attention (Carver & Scheier, 1981, 1982). It proposes that human behaviour is regulated in a system of feedback control that compares one's current state of behaviour with a behavioural standard, and then strives to minimize the differences between these two states. The difference between current state or actual behaviour and the ideal or standard has been
described as discrepancy, and it is the redress of this that has led to the term ‘discrepancy reduction’. The self regulation/control theory suggests that a discrepancy between current actual behaviour and the ideal behavioural standard, is detected through feedback. Therefore, discrepancy reduction is mainly achieved through the use of regular feedback information. There are several options or strategies of achieving discrepancy reduction, which could either result in performance improvement to the required standard on one hand, or no change in performance on the other. (See section 3.3.3.1). It is the former, that is discrepancy reduction through performance improvement which is the essence or thrust of active feedback seeking for managerial effectiveness within the self regulation framework. Feedback seeking and discrepancy reduction through increased performance are core elements in the self regulation process for improved performance.

To summarise, Control Theory suggests that when people receive feedback ratings which indicate a shortfall in performance, relative to some standard, they will be motivated to reduce the discrepancy, and make efforts to improve their performance.

3.2.3 Evolution and application of the Self Control theory

Self control theory was originally applied in the field of clinical psychological therapy. In this sense, it was concerned with helping people to help themselves (Kanfer & Karoly, 1972). Specifically, the therapeutic self control question was how to get people, in light of a more attractive alternative, to choose a less attractive option. Kanfer and Karoly (1972) proposed that people could exert self control by complying with the following close looped self-regulation process: goal setting, self-monitoring of the behaviour in light of that goal (that is, observing instances when one complies with, or deviates from the goal), self-evaluation (that is the extent to which the goal has been achieved), and self-reward or punishment, depending on goal achievement.

Organisational researchers have applied this model to organisations and referred to it simultaneously as behavioural self-management (Manz, 1989), behavioural self-regulation (Ashford & Tsui, 1991), or adaptive self-regulation (Tsui & Ashford, 1994).
In Manz's words:

self management consists of a set of strategies that facilitate behaviours that serve to reduce deviations from higher level reference values. It involves using self-goal setting, self-observation, self-evaluation, self-reward and self punishment to control behaviours. (Manz 1989: 588)

There are two main shortfalls in the behavioural self management model as it applies to organisations (Tsui & Ashford 1994). Tsui and Ashford (1994) argued that self-management research focuses narrowly on how individuals might control discrete, specific, objectively measurable behaviours such as answering telephones or completing expense reports correctly aimed at achieving specific goals. They reasoned that in organisations, however, the foci of self-regulation are much more complex and ambiguous. This is because in addition to specific tasks, managerial functions such as leadership styles and interpersonal relationships are essentially complex and ambiguous which can not be measured by the manager in order to apply self-reward or punishments. Tsui and Ashford (1994) pointed out that the only measure of any importance for these attributes lies in the subjective judgements of the manager's constituencies (such as bosses, colleagues, and subordinates). Secondly, that the self management concept regards individuals as isolated systems who exclusively observe their own behaviours and reinforce and punish themselves. While this perspective might be consistent with the therapeutic contexts from which self management ideas were derived, the situation is clearly more complicated in organisations.

In organisations, managers operate within a social structure and in a context with both formal and informal control and reward structures, as such; they must incorporate the views of others in their self-regulation efforts. Managers failing to integrate the views of others run the risk of being selected out that is being fired, transferred or not given promotions by the organization's larger control system. (Tsui and Ashford, 1994: 96)

Essentially, while typical self-management portrays self control as intra personal process, especially for managers, the concept of self regulation extends the process to interpersonal level. For these reasons, Tsui and Ashford (1994) extended the self management process further in two ways. First, they applied self-regulation notions to a broader range of behaviours. Second, they took into account the realities of organisational settings by tracking the implications of those realities for the managerial self regulation process. Thus Tsui and Ashford (1994) argued that a
manager’s self-regulation, by necessity, needs to incorporate the views of others. They suggested that for managers to be effective, they must bring about a fit between their own control system and that of the organisation, and that the fit is accomplished through the self-regulatory process.

3.3 Elements of the self-regulatory process

In the context of managerial effectiveness, the self-regulation or control theory suggests that when managers receive feedback ratings which indicate a shortfall in performance, relative to some standard, they could be motivated to reduce the discrepancy, and make efforts to improve their performance. The self-regulation process involves three main elements, and active feedback seeking is an important component of one of the processes. The elements are: 1) performance behavioural standard setting; 2) detection of any discrepancy between actual performance and the standard, through active feedback seeking and 3) discrepancy reduction - through increased/improved performance and effectiveness. These processes through which managers attain effectiveness are examined in turns in the next sections.

3.3.1 Performance Standard setting

Managers set standards for their own behaviour which include both specific roles and strategies to perform in these roles. In the organisation, within the context of social structure, the self-regulation perspective suggests that managers’ self-goals must be reconciled with others’ demands (Ashford & Tsui, 1994).

3.3.2 Discrepancy detection

From a self-regulation perspective, there are two types of discrepancies that managers need to control. First, discrepancies between what the manager and the various constituents think are the appropriate roles or performance standards for the manager. Second, discrepancies between how the various constituencies evaluate the manager’s actual performance on the job. To detect discrepancies between their own standards and standards held by their constituents (subordinates, colleagues and superiors), managers need information regarding constituents’ expectations. The more managers know regarding constituents’ expectations, the greater their potential to engage in those ideal behaviours consistent with those demands and/or to take steps to change constituents’ expectations.
One method of gaining this information is by explicitly and actively soliciting it from constituents. According to Tsui and Ashford (1994), this action is consistent with the idea of discrepancy production in social cognition theory of motivation and self regulation (Wood & Bandura, 1989). To detect such discrepancies, between managers' behaviour and the standards they have adopted, managers need feedback (Carver & Scheier, 1981). Managers can provide self-feedback by observing their own behaviour and the results of their actions and assess whether or not it is congruent with the standard or ideal. However, given the social context of effectiveness, defined in part from the perspectives of multiple constituencies, it is more important for managers to know how their behaviour is perceived and evaluated by others. Thus managers need to be self aware of their performance through others.

Indeed, there is strong evidence to suggest that managers who get the evaluation of others or external feedback are more likely to be self aware, that is see their strengths and weaknesses in relation to their performance, and are more likely to perform better than those who lack this insight (Bass & Yammarino, 1991; Yammarino & Atwater, 1993). This suggests that the theory of self awareness is important in feedback seeking and the discrepancy detection process. (See detailed review and examination of this in Section 3.6.1) Thus, external feedback can be valuable for discrepancy detection in managers self regulation process for effectiveness.

In the self regulation process, the extent to which accurate detection of discrepancies will increase effectiveness depends on the discrepancy reduction strategies adopted. The next section discusses the various discrepancy reduction options available to managers and how discrepancy reduction could lead to performance improvement.
3.3.3 How can managers improve their performance and effectiveness following feedback?

Two theories for explaining managers’ motivation to increase performance effectiveness following feedback in the context of self regulation process are 1) self control theory (Carver & Scheier, 1981, 1982) and, 2) goal setting theory (Locke, 1975; Locke & Latham, 1984, 1990). Control Theory suggests that performance is improved as a result of the motivation to reduce discrepancy between that actual and standard performance, whereas goal setting theory advocates that performance improvement results from the motivation to set and achieve goals. Goal setting theory further emphasizes the importance of self efficacy perceptions in the setting and achievement of goals following feedback. Both perspectives are important because of their implications for feedback seeking. This section starts with the examination of performance improvement through discrepancy reduction. It will then conclude with a review of the goal setting perspective.

3.3.3.1 Performance improvement through discrepancy reduction: Control theory

The thrust of control theory is that feedback provides motivation for performance improvement through discrepancy reduction. While knowledge of discrepancies may cause a person to take actions to reduce such discrepancies to attain effectiveness, that person has to go through a discrepancy reduction process in order to attain effectiveness. However, in a managerial context, discrepancy reduction is likely to be much more complex, involving a number of possible responses and options. Drawing on related literature (Bies 1987; Fisher & Gitelson, 1983; Kahn et al., 1964; Staw & Ross, 1980), Ashford and Tsui (1994) identified two main classes of responses. On the one hand managers may engage in discrepancy reduction strategies that might increase their performance hence their effectiveness. On the other hand, managers may engage in other discrepancy reduction strategies, including maintenance and defence of their ego and self-esteem, and might not lead to the ideal or standard, thus performance maintenance or even reduction.

3.3.3.1.1 Effectiveness oriented; performance improvement

Managers might be motivated to alter their behaviour to the required standard through performance improvement, which is the essence of the self regulation process for
effectiveness. However, Staw and Ross (1980) have argued that managers who appear to modify their behaviour frequently are likely to be viewed as weak, and may not be seen as effective. This can create an incentive for managers not to modify their behaviour especially if a manager considers that his or her action may be perceived as a sign of weakness.

3.3.3.1.2 Non effectiveness oriented strategies; non- behavioural change

There are seven main ways through which managers might reduce discrepancies without necessarily changing their behaviour for performance improvement and increased effectiveness (Ashford & Tsui, 1991, 1994).

First managers may attempt to influence constituents to change their expectations, without managers changing their behaviour. Second, the manager might get constituents to alter their opinions of the manager's performance or behaviours. If the manager can influence the constituent to see that the manager's behaviour is actually consistent with the standard, then there will be no discrepancy to reduce the manager's behaviour. In such a situation, the manager's behaviour is congruent with the standard and remains the same and not altered but the evaluation of the behaviour is altered.

Third, managers may follow their pre-specified courses of action and explain the reasons for their actions to their constituents. The use of this strategy enhances the manager's effectiveness only when he or she knows which constituents’ expectations are not being met and attempts to influence these constituencies by explaining the reasons for their actions. In this strategy, neither the behaviour nor the expectations are altered. The discrepancy still may exist but an effort is made to increase the constituents’ understanding, if not acceptance of the manager’s actions.

Fourth, managers may bring about a more favourable situation that is consistent with the manager’s behaviour, by adding new and powerful constituents to their constituent set or by eliminating those constituents with the onerous expectations. This strategy does not change the manager’s behaviour, and it does not involve reducing the discrepancy.
Managers might also engage in discrepancy reduction strategies aimed at maintaining their self-esteem, but not improving effectiveness. These strategies reduce discrepancies in the manager's mind only and thereby maintain their self-esteem. As Ashford and Tsui (1994) pointed out, the actual discrepancy, however, is not altered and does not lead to effectiveness.

There are two main self-esteem related discrepancy reduction strategies. One of these is the application of what Kahn et al. (1964) described as a defensive mechanism strategy. In this strategy, managers may distort the available feedback so that it confirms the manager's goal-related efforts (Taylor et al., 1984). While this strategy reduces the discrepancy as perceived by the manager, constituents' evaluation of the manager is not altered. Thus this strategy will not increase effectiveness in the long run. Managers may also lower their standards, as a discrepancy reduction strategy. If managers hold particular standards and receive feedback that they are not meeting those standards, lowering their standard is one way to reduce the discrepancy. By using this strategy, they can view themselves as meeting their now reduced standards. Campion and Lord (1982) found that repeated negative feedback led students to lower their standards. While this strategy would again reduce discrepancy in the manager's mind, it does not involve changing actual behaviour.

Managers can also either behaviourally avoid the source of discrepant feedback or cognitively avoid thinking about discrepant feedback (Hyland, 1987). While this strategy may function as a self-esteem protective device, clearly, it has no effect on the actual discrepancy, or the behavioural change.

The examination of the various discrepancy reduction strategies clearly suggests that managers are not totally dependent on others, searching for their opinions in order to change their behaviour accordingly. However, they might search for others' opinions to obtain valuable information. They could then choose to use this information in a variety of ways, including influencing constituents to alter their opinions, dropping a constituent from a constituent set, or changing their behaviour. They might also engage in a discrepancy reduction strategy to maintain their self-esteem without improving their effectiveness. However, in the framework of self-regulation and effectiveness, effective managers are expected to reduce discrepancy by changing
their behaviour through performance improvement (Ashford & Tsui, 1994). There is empirical evidence confirming a relationship between feedback and motivation to reduce discrepancy (Brutus et al., 1999; Hazucha et al., 1993; Maurer et al., 2002).

3.3.3.2 Performance improvement and Goal setting theory

According to goal setting theory, feedback has positive effect on performance because people often set difficult goals when they are given information about their past performance. The theory posits that feedback provides motivation to set difficult goals, thereby producing discrepancy, and then reducing the discrepancy through performance improvement. Self efficacy facilitates the self regulation process. Within the framework of self-regulation for effectiveness, goal setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1984, 1990) holds that performance is improved following feedback because the feedback tends to motivate individuals by directing them to set goals. The theory asserts that some people perform better than others because of differences in motivation to have different performance goals. It proposes that goals do affect performance and feedback plays an essential role in the goal setting process. Feedback acts as a motivator in the setting of goals for performance improvement. In fact, Locke (1982) argued that goals without feedback have little or no effect on performance. Self efficacy plays important role in the goal setting process because of it’s promoting (high self-efficacy) or inhibiting (low self-efficacy) effect on performance (Bandura, 1986).

In relation to performance improvement, goal setting theory recognizes the importance of feedback in the self regulation process. However, the theory holds that feedback is only information, and as such has no impact on behaviour at all. Latham and Locke, (1991) found empirical evidence which showed that feedback alone did not affect performance. However, its effects on behaviour depend on how it is appraised and what decisions are subsequently made with respect to it (Latham & Locke, 1991). This suggests that how the feedback is perceived, whether or not it is accepted, the desire to respond to it and the intended responses (Ilgen et al., 1979) are what really matter. Latham and Locke (1991) used information received through feedback to argue that the positive effects of feedback found in studies, is because people often set improvement goals when given information about their past performance. Thus, feedback has a motivational effect on performance through the
setting of goals. With respect to feedback as a motivator, goal setting is a mediator (cause) of its effects on performance. On the other hand, goal setting is not very effective without feedback. Thus feedback moderates the effect of goals on performance. That is, the extent to which goals impact performance depends on the level of feedback. Integrating these two findings, Latham and Locke (1991) concluded that goals and feedback together are more effective in motivating high performance or performance improvement than each on its own one separately. They cited other studies which supported their conclusion.

3.3.3.2.1. How do goals and feedback improve performance?

Within the framework of goal setting theory, goals, feedback and self efficacy underlie and explain the process by which performance improvement occurs (Latham and Locke (1991). The goal is the object or outcome a person is aiming for as well as the standard by which a person evaluates his or her performance. Goals regulate performance through three attributes of motivated action; direction (specificity), intensity (difficulty) and duration (persistence). First, a goal directs activity toward actions which are relevant to it rather than actions that are not relevant to it. Also, specific goal enhances performance more than general one. Further, a specific goal regulates effort or energy expenditure in that people adjust their effort to the difficulty level of the task or goal. This provides an explanation for the goal difficulty effect. Difficult goals lead to higher levels of performance than easy ones. A goal effects persistence that is duration in situations where there are no time limits imposed on people. When time limits are imposed, difficult goals induce people to work faster or harder. An aspect of persistence is tenacity, that is, the refusal to quit, despite obstacles until the goal is reached (Latham & Locke, 1991).

Feedback provides information to the individual as to the degree to which the goal or the standard by which a person evaluates his or her performance is being met. If performance meets or exceeds the standard, performance is usually maintained. If performance falls below the standard, subsequent improvement would occur, and would depend on three main factors. These are the extent to which the person is: a) dissatisfied with that level of performance and, more importantly, expects to be dissatisfied with it in the future; b) has high self efficacy, that is confidence in his or
her ability to improve; and c) sets a goal to improve over his or her past performance (Bandura & Cervone 1986).

Thus, the key to performance improvement is that the individual is dissatisfied with their present performance and / or will be so in future, yet confident in their capability that performance can be improved, thus leading to the setting of goals above the level of previous performance (Latham & Locke, 1991).

3.3.3.2.2 Goal setting and self-regulation
Self-regulation is implicit in goal setting theory because the setting of goals and their translation into action is a volitional process. However, when a person sets his or her own goals for performance improvement, they are not as effective as goals that are assigned, or are set participatively (Latham & Locke, 1991). This is consistent with the notion that the organisation is a social system and that one’s goal should be consistent with that of the organisation as determined and viewed by its constituents (Ashford & Tsui, 1991), hence its implications for active feedback seeking as discussed earlier on (See section 2.3) Self-regulation occurs through goal setting because the setting of goal is a discrepancy-inducing process.

Bandura (1988) summarises the self-regulation process:

Human self-motivation relies on discrepancy production as well as discrepancy reduction. It requires feed forward as well as feedback control. People initially motivate themselves through feed forward control by adopting performance standards that create a state of disequilibrium and then mobilizing their effort on the basis of anticipatory estimation. Feedback control comes into play in subsequent adjustments of effort expenditure to achieve desired results. After people attain the standard they have been pursuing, they generally set a higher standard for themselves. The adoption of further challenges creates a new motivating discrepancies to be mastered. Similarly, surpassing a standard is more likely to raise aspiration than to lower subsequent performance to conform to the surpassed standard. Self-motivation thus involves a dual cyclic process of disequilibrating discrepancy production followed by discrepancy reduction (Bandura, 1988, cited in Latham and Locke, 1991: 233)

Accordingly, goal setting facilitates self-regulation in that the goal (according to the theory) defines for a person what is an acceptable level of performance. Performance that does not achieve the desired goal results in a negative performance evaluation.
Such negative appraisal can lead to problem solving and subsequent action plans for eliminating the source of dissatisfaction such as improving subsequent performance. Performance that attains or exceeds the desired or acceptable level can lead to a positive performance evaluation. If a positive appraisal is followed by anticipation that subsequent attainment of the same goal will lead to a negative appraisal, the person is likely to set a higher goal. Thus the self-regulatory behaviour sequence is the one that aligns the person to current and future behaviours with some criterion that permits that person to evaluate progress toward a specific goal (Kanfer & Karoly, 1982).

3.4 How does self efficacy facilitate the self regulation process?
Self efficacy is defined as a person's belief in his or her capability to perform and to achieve goals (Bandura, 1986). It is an important factor which is believed to facilitate the self-regulation process. Theories concerning performance outcomes (e.g., social learning theory (Bandura, 1997), goal setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1984, 1990) have identified self efficacy as a fundamental predictor in the self regulation process. Self efficacy can be considered as a global construct on one hand, and as a task specific construct on the other. As a global construct, it is concerned with a person's perception of their general capability to perform any activity (Schwarzer, 1992). As a task-specific construct, it is related to a person's perceptions of mastery for specific activities (Maurer et al., 2002). It is a source of motivation which facilitates the self regulation process (Bandura, 1988) through skill development (Maurer, et al., 2002) and performance improvement (Robertson & Sadri, 1993).

3.4.1 Self efficacy for development
Self efficacy facilitates the self regulation process through the development of skills. Self efficacy for development is the degree to which individuals believe they are capable of improving their skills (Maurer et al., 2002). Maurer et al. (2002) argued that self efficacy for development is conceptually related to implicit theory of ability. According to Maurer et al., implicit theory of ability is people's belief about whether it is possible for a person to improve his or her abilities or skills.

Studies show that self efficacy is a good predictor of intentions and choice to perform behaviour or pursue a task, as well as persistence, thoughts, and feelings (Bandura,
1997; Gist & Mitchell, 1992; Robertson & Sadri, 1993). People who believe that they can improve their skills and abilities are more likely to be motivated to reduce discrepancies by seeking feedback for information for development of their skills (Maurer et al., 2002) and hence for performance improvement.

3.4.2 Self efficacy and performance improvement (following feedback)
There is empirical evidence to suggest that ‘managerial self efficacy’ is associated with managerial performance (Robertson & Sadri, 1993). Further, other empirical evidence (Bailey & Austin, 2006; London & Smither, 1995; Maurer et al., 2002; Yammarino & Atwater, 1997) shows that self efficacy impacts performance following feedback (i.e., 360 degree feedback). Managers with high self efficacy are more likely to exert more effort and persist longer to master the challenge than those with low self efficacy. Self - efficacy also influences aspiration. The stronger the perceived self efficacy, the higher the goals people set for themselves, the greater their willingness to seek feedback on their performance, and the higher the likelihood of improving their performance and effectiveness through discrepancy reduction.

Carver and Scheier (1981) discuss the role of self efficacy expectations in the self regulation process. They argued that a person’s efficacy expectations regarding the ability to improve their performance to the required standard is the most important determinant of an individual’s response to a perceived discrepancy; that is whether or not they will reduce the discrepancy by improving their performance. Carver and Scheier suggest that those with perceived low self- efficacy are less likely to reduce the discrepancy by other means such as esteem oriented strategies, distorting feedback, reducing their goals, and not improving performance. On the other hand, those with perceived high efficacy are more likely to reduce the discrepancy through performance improvement.

3.5 Summary of the self regulation process
In summary, all the relevant key theories and concepts in the literature are linked to explain the feedback seeking process and its impact on performance in the self regulation perspective on performance effectiveness. This is against the background that the explanation of the feedback process and performance is quite limited as there is no comprehensive theory or model for that. Active feedback seeking and self
awareness are both considered integral in the self regulation process. Active feedback seeking and the related theories and concepts have been discussed. In the self regulation process, managers set standard behaviours that guide their performance. In order to know that their performance is up to the required standard, it is reasoned that a manager will actively seek feedback to detect any discrepancies. Self awareness theory is useful in explaining the discrepancy detection process. To reduce such discrepancies managers could improve their performance and effectiveness following feedback. The next section examines how self awareness theory explains and elaborates the discrepancy detection in the feedback seeking process, and how it fits in the self regulation framework.

3.6 Self –Awareness and feedback seeking within the Self Regulation Framework

This section shows how within the self regulation framework, the concept of self awareness can be used to explain or elaborate ideal-actual performance discrepancy detection in the feedback seeking process, discussed in sections 3.3.2 & 3.3.3. It shows how self awareness is a motive in the feedback process and linked to performance, and how it serves as a potential mediating variable in the feedback – performance association.

Self awareness has been described as a neglected area in research probably because of conceptual and measurement problems, although it may be related to performance and management development (Fletcher, 1997). As a new research area, and perhaps with conceptual and measurement problems, the few studies that have been done have focused on how the concept is related to accurate self assessment, feedback and performance. These studies show that self awareness is related to accurate self assessment (Fletcher & Baldry, 2000) and feedback seeking tendencies (Fletcher, Taylor & Glanfield, 1996; Levy et al., 1995; Scheier & Carver, 1983) and behaviour modification as a result of feedback (Alimo- Metcalfe, 1998). Other studies have found self awareness to be associated with high performance (Bass & Yammarino, 1991; Fletcher & Baldry, 2000; Greguras, Ford & Brutus, 2003; Wohlers & London, 1989; Yammarino & Atwerter, 1993) and career development (Fletcher & Baldry, 2000). Also self awareness has been explored as an individual difference variable, and as an assessment dimension in its own right (Fletcher & Baldry, 2000).
Each of the findings offers insight into how the concept can be usefully employed in explaining the feedback seeking tendencies and performance. But these findings are not coherently linked within a potential self regulation framework where the concept could be more useful in explaining the self regulation process. This situation leaves a research gap. As indicated earlier on (section 1.1), self-awareness has not been considered as a concept that can be applied to elaborate the performance discrepancy detection in the feedback seeking process in the self regulation framework. This is what the researcher proposes to do thereby addressing this research gap.

The section begins with the examination of the various ways self awareness is defined and conceptualised, including the controversy of whether it is a trait or a skill, and as a potential individual difference variable. It highlights the problems with the conceptualisation of self awareness, and the implication for feedback seeking, performance and the measurement of its construct. It proceeds to argue that the theory and dynamics of self awareness provide grounds for feedback seeking, and also explains the discrepancy detection process. Hypothesis on the feedback seeking and self-awareness link and, self-awareness and performance relationship are proposed. Empirical evidence suggesting a relationship between self-awareness and performance is reviewed.

3.6.1. Concept of self awareness

Self awareness has been defined and conceptualised in various ways by different researchers as: a 'psychological state of being attentive to oneself' (Davis & Franzoi, 1999); related to public consciousness (Fenigstein et al., 1975); self reflection through feedback (Church, 1994); reflection and assessment of one’s own work behaviour and skills, (managerial self-awareness (MSA) (Church 1994, 1997); the degree to which individuals understand their own strengths and weaknesses (Wohlers & London, 1989); getting a more accurate insight into an individual's own leadership behaviour (Bass & Yammarino, 1991); seeing oneself as others see us (Alimo-Metcalfe, 1998); modifying a person’s perception of him or her self as a result of feedback from others, and modifying their behaviour (Alimo-Metcalfe, 1998); and bringing a person’s identity in alignment with his/her reputation (Hogan & Warrenfetz, 2003). Also, there is a controversy whether self awareness is trait or a
skill (Church, 1994; 1997) which can be developed (Fletcher 1997), or conceptualised as an individual difference variable (Fletcher & Baldry, 2000), hence a potential mediating or moderating variable in the feedback performance relationship. It is against this background of conceptual issues that Millward (2005) noted that:

the self awareness construct requires further elucidation and validation. (Millward 2005:305)

Examination of the various definitions shows five fundamental dimensions, including implication for measurement using self-other rating congruence methodology (Yammarino & Atwater, 1997), or a public consciousness perspective (Fenigstein et al., 1975) which have implications for feedback seeking. Second, it is a psychological state, related to public consciousness, self reflection and assessment of a person’s own behaviour through feedback. Third, self reflection enables a person to understand his or her strengths and weaknesses by giving that person more accurate insight into his or her behaviour. Fourth, self awareness could lead to behaviour modification, that is performance improvement through feedback. Finally, it is associated with managerial development and performance.

3.6.2 Managerial self-awareness: a trait or a skill?

In terms of the construct of managerial self awareness (MSA), self awareness has been described as process of self reflection through feedback (Church 1994). Also, following a review of several social psychological theories of self-awareness and self directed attention, Church (1994, 1997) defined MSA as the ability to reflect and assess one’s own work behaviour and skills. A question that follows from this view is ‘how do people get the ability to assess accurately their own behaviour and skills?’. This raises further questions, in particular whether self awareness is a skill or a trait and second, whether or not it could potentially differentiate between individuals.

Church (1997) conceptualised self awareness both as a skill and as a personality trait depending on the level and consistency of one’s ability to make accurate self assessments. Building on this conceptualisation, Fletcher and Baldry (2000), noted that on one hand, the skill of self-awareness is related to self assessments that may result in accurate self-other congruence. Trait self-awareness, within the context of management competency on the other hand Fletcher and Baldry argued, is concerned
with the tendency to make accurate self assessments which consistently result in high level of self – other congruence. This conceptualisation suggests that individuals with the trait of self awareness seem to be naturally self – aware, in that they give accurate self- image which is stable over varying competency and performance dimensions, without exposure to feedback.

Fletcher and Baldry reported that the trait of self awareness is found in a minority of individuals, usually high performers. Also, they found that people with high self awareness tend to incorporate comparison of behaviour into their self perceptions, whereas those with low self – awareness, are more likely to ignore feedback about them. This suggests a positive relationship between self awareness and the tendency to use feedback information to modify behaviour. Therefore, it is hypothesised that there will be a positive relationship between self awareness and feedback seeking.

Also, people, with low self awareness are likely to suffer career derailment. On the other hand, people with high self awareness are likely to be successful with their career. This suggests a positive association between self awareness and career success. Further, Fletcher and Baldry (2000) have reported that high self awareness is associated with higher performance ratings in the context of multi source feedback systems. This finding suggests positive relationships between self awareness, feedback seeking and improved performance. Given that trait self awareness is found in minority of individuals, who might not need feedback information in order to give accurate self assessment, a majority of people would lack self awareness and would need to develop the skill through exposure to feedback in order have accurate self assessment within the context of management competency. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to suggest that there would be a positive relationship between self awareness and feedback seeking.

Taking together, this conceptualisation of self awareness and the evidence provided, support two propositions derived. First, the positive relationship between the concept and feedback seeking, This proposition is supported by Fletcher et al. (1996) who argued that the tendency to receive feedback, and willingness to accept and use it to modify behaviour determined a person’s level of self awareness. Thus, the theory and dynamics of self – awareness could form the grounds for feedback seeking behaviour.
Also, conceptualising self awareness both as a trait and a skill makes it a potential individual differences variable. The next section examines the research on the concept as an individual difference variable.

3.6.3. Self-awareness as an individual difference variable

In an attempt to conceptualise self awareness as an individual differences variable, Fletcher and Baldry (2000) investigated personality correlates and cognitive ability predictors of self-awareness of managerial competency. In their study, 45 target managers in a multi-source (360 degree) feedback process assessed themselves on six management competencies and were also rated by 353 bosses and colleagues. The competency dimensions used in the study were: managing the work; strategy and commitment; developing team ability; developing team skills; initiating improvements; and building relationship with others. Target managers completed measures of personality (Catell 16PF and Firo-B) and cognitive ability (Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking). Measures of self awareness were obtained using self–other congruence rating methodology (Yammarino & Atwater, 1997), and were calculated separately in relation to bosses’ ratings and colleagues’ ratings.

The findings indicated that the target managers showed considerable variation in their level of self awareness. Also, a number of personality and cognitive scores were found to be related to self awareness. On the basis of this, Fletcher and Baldry (2000) concluded that it was valuable to consider self-awareness as an individual difference variable, and one which may be associated with personality and intellectual attributes. The finding provides impetus for considering self awareness as a potential individual difference and mediating variable in the feedback seeking process in subsequent studies to enhance a deeper understanding of the concept itself, and the nature of its relationship with feedback and performance.

The study has three main limitations. First the small sample size of 42 managers limits generalisation of findings. Second, managerial self awareness was determined in relation to combined assessment of peers and subordinates, therefore making it difficult to distinguish between the assessment of each of these sources. Thirdly, the study focused on the level of self awareness across a small number of performance criteria.
In recognition of these limitations, Fletcher and Baldry (2000) recommended that future research should examine self awareness to peers and subordinates separately, and use a larger sample of managers across different kinds of organisational settings, with different kinds of competency dimensions.

These limitations are addressed in the current study, first, by using a larger sample size of managers, second, by drawing managers from a cross section of organisations, thirdly by using different performance criteria to assess competency, and finally, subordinates only were used to independently assess managerial competency.

3.6.4 Self awareness theory: grounds for feedback seeking and discrepancy detection dynamics

The original self awareness theory (Duval & Wicklund, 1972) and subsequent revisions (for example, Gibbons, 1990; Hull & Levy, 1979) proposed that at any given time, conscious attention is bidirectional, being focused either on the self or the environment. The self-focused person will engage in self evaluation in which the most salient or important self dimension, the real self is measured against a standard or ideal that the person maintains for that dimension. Self evaluation usually leads to the identification of discrepancy between the real and ideal self. The discrepancy is usually perceived to be negative as a result of high aspirations and achievement motivation, and satisfaction with few aspects of the self. Negative discrepancies, which are unpleasant and uncomfortable to a person lead to objective self awareness and may serve as a motivator and the person may attempt to reduce or get rid of the discrepancy through the possible application of greater efforts and actions aimed at self improvement (Gibbons, 1990; Wicklund, 1975).

The core propositions of the theory, the real - ideal comparison and discrepancy reduction process, suggests that there will be the tendency for the person to engage in feedback seeking behaviour for information aimed at self improvement and development. However, Gibbons (1990) argues that behavioural change is not necessarily motivated by the detection of negative discrepancy alone, but is motivated by a desire to maintain self esteem. Also, self evaluation which might involve admission of shortcomings could result in a commitment to improve performance,
attention being focused on the goal rather than on discrepancy to improve performance. This suggests that for work performance, one might be motivated to improve work related behaviour if performance is perceived to be below standard.

3.6.4.1 **Behavioural standards, self evaluation and self improvement**

In self awareness theory, self or performance improvement through self evaluation is elaborated by the behavioural standards dimension of the theory. According to this proposition, self evaluation will focus on relevant behavioural standards or values which serve as a guide for the individual regarding appropriate behaviour; that is, what should be done and what should not be done within the current circumstances suggesting a relationship between internal standards and behaviour. The theory further proposes that the self aware person would possibly look to others for information about appropriate behaviour. Thus in organisational settings one would tend to look for sources such as superiors, peers and subordinates for feedback information about performance. However, given the information, self evaluation process in deciding whether the information will be used effectively to improve performance to attain the desired standard, according to the theory, depends on one’s self efficacy. Persons with high self efficacy, associated with high expectations, optimism and determination will tend to make use of the information to improve performance. On the other hand, persons with low self esteem and low self efficacy, and with low expectations would not make use of the information to improve performance to the desired standard and will find self awareness aversive. However, Gibbons (1990) argues that people are sensitive to the self esteem implications of their behaviour and will therefore engage in standard behaviour to protect it whether high or low. It can be concluded that self evaluation explains the dynamics of self awareness and its link with feedback seeking behaviour with self efficacy and self esteem mediating and moderating the relationship. The next section further explains the self evaluation motives in relation to self awareness and feedback seeking.

3.6.4.2 **Self evaluation motives in relation to self awareness**

Three main self evaluation motives in the self evaluation process in self awareness and feedback seeking are **self assessment, self verification** and **self enhancement** (Sedikides, 1993). Sedikides defined self assessment as the tendency for people to pursue accurate self knowledge aimed at reduction of uncertainties about their
abilities or personality characters. He argued that obtaining an objective and accurate image of the self in the self evaluation process leads to uncertainty reduction. Self verification, according to Sedikides, aims at confirming or verifying pre-existing or certain self-conceptions. He noted that people will tend to verify their positive self conceptions by seeking positive feedback, and they will also verify negative self conceptions by seeking negative feedback. According to Sedikides (1993), in the self enhancement perspective, people pursue favourable self-knowledge aimed at enhancing their positive self conceptions or protecting the self from negative information. To this end, people will tend to focus on information that has favourable implications for the self and avoid information that has unfavourable implications for the self. What is most important is the consistency between self conceptions and feedback.

Sedikides (1993) in an experimental study compared self assessment, self verification and self enhancement, the three self evaluation motives in relation to the extent to which they influenced the self evaluation process in self awareness and feedback seeking. He found that self enhancement was the most powerful self evaluation motive, followed by self verification and self assessment respectively.

As self enhancement is the most influential determinant of the self evaluation process in self awareness (Sedikides, 1993) people who have bias for self enhancement have an inflated concept of self importance and therefore a tendency to exaggerate accomplishments (London & Smither, 1995) and hence over rate their performance. Most people, if indeed self-enhancement is the strongest motive, are considered to lack self awareness, given the importance of the self evaluation process in self awareness. This is because self assessment or self image is inflated, in the sense that many people tend to enhance their self egos and report high self esteem. If people are sensitive to the self-esteem implications of their behaviour they will engage in standard behaviour to protect it, affording the prediction that the level of self esteem is related to the relative strengths of these three self evaluation motives. Self esteem should be most strongly associated with self enhancement, followed by self verification, and least associated with self assessment. However, empirical findings regarding self-esteem and feedback seeking behaviour are inconsistent, with the majority showing a very small relationship or no relationship at all (Ashford, 1986;
Fedor, et al., 1992; Levy et al., 1995). The implication is that there is the need for feedback seeking for information to increase self assessment.

3.6.4.3. Self-awareness, self evaluation, meta perception and feedback seeking

Two core human consideration dynamics, self-awareness and self evaluation in the feedback seeking process have been discussed. Self evaluation is central in the process of self awareness as it determines whether the individual will detect any discrepancies between the real and ideal self and thereby seek feedback information aimed at self improvement and development. This suggests that following self evaluation, for discrepancy reduction, there will be a behavioural change resulting from the use of information from others for example, peers, subordinates and supervisors to improve performance in an organisational setting. London and Smither (1995) suggested that perceptions of goal (ideal self) and performance (actual/real self) discrepancies lead to self-awareness, and self re-evaluation will be consistent with how others perceive and evaluate us. Thus, in the words of Hogan and Warrenfeltz (2003), self-awareness means perceiving our identity, that is, how we see ourselves to be consistent with our reputation, that is, how others see us. The concept of meta-accuracy (Kenny & De Paulo, 1993) is related in that it refers to the accuracy of people’s perception of how others see them, or in other words, the accuracy of their insight into their own reputation.

Kenny and De Paulo (1993) however argued that people determine how others view them not from the feedback that they receive from others but from their own self perceptions. Drawing on theoretical and empirical views from disciplines such as sociology, clinical, personality and social psychology, Kenny and De Paulo (1993) related their argument to two frameworks; symbolic interaction, that is ‘reflected appraisals’ and self perception. The symbolic interactionists argue that people’s perceptions of themselves are determined by how they think they are seen by important others, usually called ‘reflected appraisals’. In contrast, the self-perception perspective proposes that what we think about ourselves determines how we think others perceive us. In the self perception perspective, Kenny and De Paulo (1993) argued that we directly observe our own behaviour and infer from it what others think about us. Thus from Kenny and De Paulo’s argument, feedback is not necessary for
the accuracy of people’s perception of how others see them, or their insight into their identity and reputation.

3.6.4.4 Conclusions from the Self awareness theory and feedback seeking

The following conclusions can be drawn from self awareness in relation to feedback seeking behaviour as applicable to work organisations. Self awareness could lead to increased feedback seeking for improvement in work related behaviour to improve performance. This is because given a degree of self-awareness, one would tend to seek relevant information from the work environment, specifically from sources such as peers, superiors and subordinates for appropriate work behaviour to improve performance. For example, Scheier and Carver (1983) found a positive relationship between public self awareness and the frequency with which a person compared their performance to available norms. This is because such people who should be most aware of their public selves must also be interested in their performance and how that performance is evaluated by others as well. Thus self awareness should lead to greater feedback desire and seeking behaviour (Levy et al., 1995). People may engage in feedback seeking behaviour for self enhancement as concluded by Sedikides and hence to improve performance. On the other hand, Kenny and De Paulo give lack of attention to feedback seeking as having any impact on behaviour to improve performance. However, the weight of evidence favours an impact of self awareness on feedback seeking behaviour and improvement in performance.

3.6.5 Self-awareness and performance

Theoretical and empirical evidence suggests that self awareness is positively associated with performance. Conceptually, Wohlers and London (1989) defined the term self awareness as the degree to which individuals understand their strengths and weaknesses. In their research, they operationally defined it in terms of congruence in self and others’ perceptions and ratings. Wohlers and London posited that incongruence between self and others’ ratings could lead to behavioural change. This is because one would need to modify their behaviour in order to reduce such discrepancy. According to Alimo-Metcalfe (1998:37), ‘it is about seeing oneself as others see us and involves modifying one’s perception of oneself as a result of receiving feedback from others, and modifying one’s behaviour as a result’.
Hogan and Warrenfetz (2003) conceptualize and operationally define self awareness in terms of identity and reputation. First, one can be aware of one's identity that is how one thinks about and evaluates oneself. Second, one can be aware of one's reputation, referred to as how others think about and evaluate one's behaviour. They then posit that self awareness involves 'bringing one's identity into alignment with one's reputation'. In order to achieve this, they suggest that it is important that management development programmes focus on bringing self views of one's competence into alignment with others' view of one's competence. This is because self awareness which is concerned with a more accurate insight into one's managerial behaviour may be importantly related to one's performance and potential (Bass & Yammarino, 1991). In a study, Bass and Yammarino (1991) found that managers' self ratings were generally inflated compared to subordinates' ratings of managerial performance. Given the potential value of self awareness, they suggested that management development programmes should focus on how they might reduce the discrepancies between their self- and others' ratings particularly their staff. Differences in self- and others' particularly subordinates' ratings of managerial performance may occur as a result of the tendency to enhance a positive self image and maintain self esteem (Sedikidides, 1993). If inflated self ratings of performance could be instance of the general tendency towards self enhancement, then we would get the same through comparing managers' and subordinates' ratings of the latter. However, development of self awareness should enable managers to have more accurate insight into their own performance and modify them for organisational effectiveness. According to London and Smither (1995), discrepancies between self and others' ratings could be reduced through improved performance for organisational effectiveness by the use of feedback information. To this end, managers need to concentrate on improving performance in specific areas rated poorly, tailored to organisational needs and effectiveness, the essence of self awareness and performance.

A positive relationship between self awareness and performance is therefore predicted. Also, there is evidence of positive impact of feedback on managerial performance. Further, the evidence suggests that feedback is effective to the extent that it enhances self awareness of any discrepancy between ideal and actual performance, and that the more self-aware are also the more likely to actively seek
feedback. Thus active feedback seeking and self awareness are both integral to the idea that the effective manager is good at self regulation. Therefore, it is expected that there will be positive association between feedback seeking behaviour and self awareness and that they will both predict managerial performance. The specific performance criteria of interest in a managerial context are interpersonal skills, leadership skills and careers skills adapted and modified from the domain model of managerial competencies (Hogan & Warrenfeltz, 2003).

3.6 Relationships between feedback seeking, self awareness and performance:

Summary
The concept of active feedback seeking and its impact on performance has been discussed. It has been argued that self awareness provides grounds for feedback seeking behaviour. Also, theoretical reasons and empirical evidence that suggest a link between self awareness and feedback seeking have been provided. Further, evidence suggests that both self awareness and feedback seeking could improve and predict managerial performance. The next section discusses managerial performance in the framework of the domain model of competencies. In the managerial context, it provides conceptual and theoretical reasons, and empirical evidence that interpersonal skills, leadership skills, and career skills are defensible criteria for assessing managerial effectiveness.

3.7 Chapter Summary
Chapter 3 provided an overview of the broader theoretical framework under which this research was conducted, i.e. the self regulation approach. It started with a review of theories and models that could explain the feedback process and its impact on performance in organisational settings. It then took the self regulation perspective, which is grounded in the control theory. The origin, evolution, and philosophical assumptions and applications of the self regulation theory were reviewed with the purpose of understanding its basic ideas and posit. It was linked with a review of self awareness theory and goal setting theory, and highlighted the important role of self-efficacy in providing a means of understanding feedback seeking and performance in the self regulation process. The elements of the self -regulatory process for performance improvement are then reviewed. These included the setting of ideal or standard performance, the detection of any discrepancy between ideal and actual
performance through feedback seeking, and discrepancy reduction through improved performance. The chapter examined and showed how within the self regulation framework, self awareness theory can be used to explain and elaborate discrepancy detection and the feedback seeking process. Also, it showed how self awareness is a motive in the feedback process and linked to performance, and how it serves as a potential mediating variable in the feedback-performance association. The hypotheses evolved from this review are that there will be positive association between feedback seeking behaviour and self awareness, and that they will both predict managerial performance. The next chapter discusses managerial competencies, and the performance criteria of interest in this thesis.
CHAPTER 4
MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES: THE PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

4.1 Introduction and Chapter overview
The previous chapter provided a theoretical framework for the thesis exposing the central postulate of studies one and two. A self-regulation perspective on feedback seeking and performance was adopted within the wider framework of Control Theory. This theory maintains that both active feedback seeking and self awareness are integral to the idea that an effective manager is good at self regulation. It was therefore postulated (section 3.6.5) that there will be a relationship between feedback seeking behaviour and self-awareness, and that both in turn will predict the development of managerial competencies. The specific performance criteria of interest in a managerial context are intrapersonal, interpersonal, and leadership skills broadly described as a human dimension of enterprise in Hogan and Warrenfeltz’s (2003) domain model of competencies.

The main aim of this thesis is the assessment of managers’ feedback seeking behaviour, and the impact of this on performance. Specific performance criteria will be developed which have implications for the choice of an appropriate competency model for assessing effectiveness. This chapter examines in detail the term ‘competency’, prior to addressing the concept of ‘managerial competency’, to provide a context in which they can both be better understood. For more discussion about the concepts of manager and leadership, see chapter 2 section 2.1. This chapter then proceeds to introduce and discuss the concept of ‘core’ and ‘generic’ competence on one hand and personal or task specific competencies on the other, before moving on to examine the various competency models located in the literature. Briefly, the competency models discussed here are: the behavioural model; functional model; job competency model; holistic model; multi-dimensional model; and the domain model. The advantages of using the domain model are emphasised comprising: the inner-outer perspectives of performance; intra-personal skills; interpersonal skills; and leadership skills. The implications of all the models for feedback seeking are nonetheless examined. The chapter ends by highlighting in particular the inner-outer perspective of performance in the domain model, which has implications for studying
feedback seeking, and which arguably provides a more integrated theoretical and methodological foundation for the study. A case is then made from the critical evaluation of the models to formulate hypotheses for empirical testing. Finally a summary of the key issues discussed in the chapter is provided.

4.2 Defining competence

There have been several definitions of ‘competence’ over the years since White’s (1959) definition. These definitions emphasise either personality characteristics or intelligence; work behaviours, functions or tasks; knowledge skills and abilities; underlying personality characteristics related to performance; capability to convert organisational resources into valuable goods and services; and contemporary, in terms of performance management systems. However, what is common about the various definitions is that they all emphasise effective performance. Also, the definitions have implications for identifying persons who can perform effectively at specified job positions [managers, leaders and employees]. Through the evaluation of these definitions, how competency has or could be conceptualised is linked to ‘competency models’ because of the emphasis placed on specific set of traits or characteristics that distinguish between different ‘competency models’. This has important implications for the empirical assessment of the explanatory power of ‘competency models’.

It is imperative then to begin by examining and defining competence, consistent with the plea by Le Deist, Delamare and Winterton (2005) who note:

> If competence is important, it follows that its meaning is also important, since without a common understanding there is little chance of integration, alignment or morbidity in practice. (Le Deist, Delamare and Winterton, 2005: 28)

Boon and van de Klink (2002, cited in Le Deist et al., 2005: 29) on the other hand describe ‘competence’ as an inevitably ‘fuzzy concept’, despite acknowledging ‘it is a useful term, bridging the gap between education and job requirement’.

However, White (1959) used the term competence most precisely to describe personality characteristics, in particular cognitive intelligence associated with high motivation and superior performance. On the basis of this definition, intelligence tests were considered good indicators of performance, and were used as predictors of
successful performance in organisations. This is despite the fact that success seldom related to scores on such tests. McClelland (1973) argued that intelligence tests were not necessarily good predictors of successful performance at work because they essentially predicted academic potential. This potential may or may not be translated into any particular work situation or even if it was to be translated, it may work in very specific ways. This implies that the assessment of competency solely on the basis of intelligence and personality characteristics is limiting because it does not reflect conditions directly relating to work or work situations. Therefore, any effective assessment of competency is expected to include work related factors or work environment factors.

Indeed McClelland (1973) argued that the definition of competency should relate to work behaviours and supports the proposition that behaviours were more likely to have a stronger and better predictive validity for managerial performance and effectiveness. This suggests that the concept of competency is associated with managerial performance and effectiveness. Following on from this view, Boyatzis (1982) identified a list of managerial competency including personality traits, cognitive skills and interpersonal skills. He determined empirically the characteristics of managers that enable them to be effective in various managerial positions. His study found that competent managers were more likely to be effective whereas incompetent ones would be ineffective. This suggests that there is a relationship between the concept of competency and managerial effectiveness, a point supported by other researchers (e.g., Hogan & Warrenfeltz, 2003; Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

Consistent with the argument for a competency-effectiveness link, Hogan and Warrenfeltz (2003:78) defined competency as 'a performance capability that distinguished effective from ineffective managers in a particular organisation'. However, this seems somewhat tautologous as a starting point.

Lado and Wilson (1994) discuss another conceptualisation of managerial competence from a human resources perspective. According to this view, managerial competency is about the capability of a manager to determine the acquisition, development, and deployment of organisational resources, and the conversion of these resources into valuable products and services to deliver value to organisational stakeholders.
However, in contemporary modern organisations, the term ‘competence’ or ‘competency’ is conceptualised or defined in relation to performance management systems, where managers are appraised against technical job function requirements, and in relation to precise performance criteria (Cheng & Bliese, 2002). This is a view of competency mainly predominant in the UK, where the Standards Programme defines competency as ‘a description of something which a person who works in a given occupational area should be able to do; it is a description of an action, behaviour or outcome which a person should be able to demonstrate’ (Employment Department, 1991:5). According to this definition, competence comprises the knowledge, skills and behaviours or psycho-social social characteristics needed to perform a role effectively in an organisation to enable the organisation to achieve its strategic goals (Le Deist et al., 2005). In the words of Naquin and Holton (2006:146), competence ‘represents the synthesis of a variety of skills, technologies, and knowledge streams.’

In a managerial context, Bergenhenegouwen et al. (1996) distinguished between personal competencies and task specific competencies, and argued that managers must possess both types of competencies in order to perform effectively. Competencies are generally developed to suit specific organisational needs as organisations set their own standards of such competencies. These various definitions appear to cover issues that are summarised below.

The various definitions of competence emphasise different aspects of it, but fundamentally, they are all linked to effective performance in the managerial domain. This has led to the view that some competencies are generic or overarching, and common to all occupations and span across all organisations. ‘These generic competencies are believed to be fundamental to effective performance in all (or most) occupations’ (Cheetham & Chivers, 1996: 23). However, an opposing view to generic competencies is embodied in what has been described as ‘core competencies’. The idea here is that core competencies are specific to the requirements of a particular job in a particular situation.

The criteria that may be used to define either generic or core competencies have implication for the indicators that may be used to measure and assess competency. In
turn, the set of criteria or indicators that are used to define or determine competency has implication for the competency model one subscribes to. Hence, because of the different criteria espoused by different academics and the differing contexts in which competencies are defined and employed in analysis, there are various models of managerial competencies. These competency models and perspectives and their implication for feedback seeking and managerial effectiveness are examined next.

4.3 Managerial competence models: Introduction/overview
Having defined competence, and clarified core and generic competencies, this section provides an examination of the main competence models found in the literature. It begins with the definition and the usefulness in principle of a competence model in assessing managerial performance and effectiveness. Various models are reviewed, and in particular the implication of these models for feedback about performance is the thrust of the review.

4.4 Definition and importance of a competence model
A competence model describes the performance criteria or the description of the characteristics of a competence performance against which a managers’ performance is measured, reviewed and evaluated. It identifies and describes the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to perform a role effectively in an organisation to achieve the organisation’s goals (Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999). It demonstrates how competent performance is to be recognised (Cheetham & Chivers, 1996).

4.5 Generic and core competency models
Competence models are commonly grouped into generic and core competency models (Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999). Generic competency models are concerned with general competencies required for managerial success whereas, core competencies are concerned with the capabilities required for effective performance in specific organisations (Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999). It is important to identify the specific competencies relevant to particular organisations in order to determine the performance criteria that can be used to determine effectiveness specific to that organisation. However, since the focus of this thesis is not on specific organisations, but on managers in the general working population and drawn from various
organisational settings (see organisational context, chapter 6 section 6.9), the review will focus on generic models, starting with behavioural models.

4.6 Behavioural models
The behavioural model of managerial competence (Boyatzis, 1982; McCleland, 1998), which has been the American tradition, emphasises that job related behaviours are fundamental for effective performance. Boyatzis (1982) identified a number of behaviours that are better predictors of performance capability and provided a useful protocol for specifying behavioural competence. Using the Behavioural Event Interview (BEI) which was adapted from the critical-incident interview, originally developed by Flanagan (1954) and elaborated by Boyatzis (1982), McClelland (1998) distinguished between 238 outstanding successful and 225 typical successful managers among 563 sample of managers occupying various positions in 26 organisations. These managers had been classified and considered as outstanding and typical performers by expert judges.

McClelland used the interviews to identify competence-related behaviours to differentiate the two groups across samples of managers. The study showed that the competencies have predictive validity in that high scores on competence measures were associated with successful performance, and could help identify applicants who have the greatest potential for managerial success. The 12 behavioural competence dimensions which validated difference between typical and outstanding performance and hence predicted managerial success are: achievement orientation; analytical thinking; conceptual/inductive thinking; developing others; flexibility; impact and influence; information seeking; initiative; interpersonal understanding; organisational awareness; self confidence; and team leadership (McClelland, 1998).

A key argument which was advanced by McClelland was that although some particular competencies were more relevant to particular organisations, as managerial success could differ from case to case, generalisations of certain competencies was possible because those within certain broad categories may substitute for each other. 'For example, unusual individual initiative can be reflected in trying to do things better (achievement orientation), planning and thinking ahead (initiative), or seeing things in a new light (conceptual thinking). Similarly, the ability to work well
organisationally can be represented by influencing other people (impact and influence), by understanding organisational politics (organisational awareness), or by showing team leadership’ (McClelland 1998: 333).

The behavioural model of competencies can be considered as a valuable approach to the prediction and assessment of managerial performance, compared to the hitherto models which advocated scholastic intelligence tests. It has the potential to be used across organisations in terms of its generalisability, but it overemphasises behaviours as the predominant predictor of success and competence. This approach ignores other potential factors such as knowledge, skills, and ability, attitudes, personal characteristics, and managerial functions (Mathis & Jackson, 1997) that contribute and interact with behaviours to determine managerial success, thus giving it a narrow perspective of conceptualisation and modelling of managerial competencies. Also, it does not emphasise job – related functional skills, which is competency based and actually determines performance (Le Deist & et al., 2005). Le Deist et al. (2005) argued that contemporary competency has a broader conception including knowledge and skills as well as the behavioural dimension in the McClelland tradition.

Even within the predominantly behavioural approach, many conceptions of competencies now include knowledge and skills alongside attitudes, behaviours, work habits abilities and personal characteristics. (Le Deist et al., 2005: 33)

The behavioural competency model is useful in terms of its potential generalisability, but it falls short of being holistic in that it does not emphasise job related functional skills, knowledge and attitudes which may contribute to performance and subsequently competence. Rather, it downplays or overlooks functional skills. It is precisely this weakness in the behavioural competency model that the functional model of competencies addresses.

4.7 The Functional Model

Functional competence models emphasise the ability to demonstrate performance to the standard required in a particular job (Knasel & Meed, 1994). The models thus attest primarily to competence in a person’s current post (Cheetham & Chivers, 1998). This functional approach in which competence criteria and occupational standards of
competence are grounded in the reality of work, has been the UK tradition and has influenced the development of similar frameworks in some countries in the Commonwealth and the European Union (Le Deist et al., 2005). The functional model is important in that it emphasises the competence required for one's performance, it does not provide specific skills, knowledge abilities or capabilities required, for jobs. The job competence model addresses this shortfall by specifying components of competence and also, attempting to show how the components interact with each other.

4.8 The Job Competence Model

In the job competence model (Mansfield & Mathews, 1985), competence is seen as comprising three basic components: tasks; task management; the role/job environment. Tasks consist of skills needed in a routine way to achieve specific outcomes. Task management involves the use of skills that may be needed when two or more tasks need to be performed together. Role/job environment is concerned with skills that are needed to cope with a particular work environment or a critical situation. The model attempts to show how these components interact with each other. For example, Mansfield and Mathews (1985) argued that the role/job environment component appear to be closely linked to personal effectiveness. However, Cheetham and Chivers (1998) note that the linkage is not well developed. Also, the model does not specify potential skills regarding task management and role/job environment competence (Cheetham & Chivers, 1998).

The behavioural, functional, and job competence models each have a specific emphasis which contribute to the development and understanding of the competence concept. However, it appears that they are not holistic as they are limited in their domains hence their power to explain managerial competencies. The Holistic model (Cheetham & Chivers, 1996, 1998), and the Multi-dimensional holistic model (Le Deist et al., 2005) address this shortfall by integrating the core concepts of the previous models discussed. Examination of the two models indicate that they both appear to be similar in terms of the domain they cover, addressing the same issue with similar conceptualisations, but with different terminology and typology. The two models are examined next, first the holistic model.
4.9 Holistic Model

The Holistic Model of managerial competency (Cheetham & Chivers, 1996, 1998) is an improvement upon the behavioural, functional and the job competency models discussed above. It integrates the key dimensions emphasised by the other models and introduces other skills in addition thus, comparatively, making it more holistic than any of the other models discussed above. The model has five key components: knowledge/cognitive component; functional competence; personal / behavioural competence; values / ethical competence; and meta-competence and are examine in turns.

Cheetham and Chivers (1996:24) define knowledge / cognitive competence as ‘...the possession of appropriate work related knowledge and the ability to put this to effective use’. Functional competence is defined as ‘the ability to perform a range of work-based tasks effectively to produce specific outcomes’. A personal or behavioural competency is defined as ‘the ability to adopt appropriate observable behaviours in work-related situations’. Values/ethical competence is defined as ‘the possession of appropriate personal and professional values and the ability to sound judgements based upon these in work related situations’. Meta-competencies are concerned with communication, self-development, creativity, analysis and problem solving.

According to Cheetham and Chivers (1996, 1998) knowledge / cognitive competence, functional competence, personal / behavioural competence, and values / ethical competence are referred to as core competence and that they are separate aspects of competence but in reality interlinked and to some extent dependent on each other. However, the extent to which they are interlinked and dependent on each other is not clearly defined. Cheetham and Chivers emphasise that the meta competencies either assist in developing other competencies or are capable of enhancing or mediating competencies in any or all of the component categories. Also, the same meta-competencies seem likely to be applicable to all or most professions in that by their nature, they are fundamental and transferable between different situations and tasks. A major strength of this model is that it is more holistic and generic in the sense that it
integrates behavioural and functional dimensions of competencies for performance. Also, it includes ethics and professional values required for effective performance.

4.10 Multi-dimensional Holistic Model

Although the Holistic model is comprehensive in terms of the competencies dimensions it covers, Le Deist et al. (2005) argued for the usefulness of a holistic typology in understanding the combination of knowledge skills and social competencies that are necessary for particular occupations and accordingly proposed a multi dimensional and holistic model of competencies. The model identifies four main components of competencies as including conceptual or cognitive, operational, social dimension or attitudes and meta competencies. According to the model, a conceptual / cognitive component of competence comprises the underlying knowledge and understanding a person may have and apply to his/her work. The operational component is the functional aspect of competence, whereas the social component is about the appropriate social behaviours and work attitudes dimension of competence. The meta component is related to the facilitation and the acquisition of other substantive competencies. The model posits that cognitive, operational and social competencies are universal, that is generic which a person must have in order to be effective at work, but emphasises that all the four components are essential dimensions of competency.

The conceptual, operational and social competencies correspond to the cognitive, functional, and personal values or ethical dimensions of the holistic model respectively. Both holistic and the multi dimensional models consider these competencies as generic. The two models both emphasise meta competencies, concerned with the ability to develop other competencies, described as ‘meta – qualities’ - i.e., ‘creativity, mental agility and balanced learning skill’ (Reynold & Snell, 1988), ‘ meta –skills’ i.e. ‘ skills in acquiring other skills’( Hall, 1986, cited in Cheetham & Chivers, 1996: 22 ). Despite the holistic nature of the holistic and the multi dimensional models the domain model of managerial competencies (Hogan & Warrenfeltz, 2003), (to be discussed next), is more comprehensive, particularly, in terms of the performance criteria of interest in this study.
4.11 The Domain Model of managerial competencies

This section focuses on the domain model. It examines the structure and key elements of the model and offers the justification for its adoption as the preferred model for the thesis. (1) It begins with a description of its essential (a) features and (b) highlights the inner-outer perspective of performance and its, (c) implication for feedback seeking. (2) Also, it provides additional justification for the choice of methodology and framework used for the study. (3) It continues with the discussion of the key elements in the performance domains - the performance criteria in the study: intra personal, interpersonal, leadership skills. (4) It provides theoretical basis for extending the model to include career skills to make it more suitable to answer the main research question. The section concludes with the summary of suitability of the domain model for the study.

The domain model of managerial competencies (Hogan & Warrenfeltz, 2003), posits that all lists of competencies can be organised into four main components comprising intrapersonal skill, interpersonal skill, business skills, and leadership skills. There are three main points about this model that distinguish it from the other models reviewed, and which make it more appropriate to be adopted for the study. First, the model is explanatory richer, compared to the other models. It is more comprehensive in that every existing model can be organised in terms of these four domains which is further categorised into two main dimensions; the ‘non human’ and ‘human’ related skills. Business skills are considered to belong to the ‘non human’ side of enterprise as they are dependent on cognitive ability and least dependent on emotional and interpersonal skills. Business skills, defined by the abilities and technical knowledge needed for the job, involve planning, monitoring budgets, forecasting costs and revenues, cutting costs, mapping strategies, evaluating performance, running meetings and organizing reports. For the most part, these activities can be performed in private. However, more importantly, the model emphasizes that without reasonable interpersonal and leadership skills, good business skills would not really matter. Intrapersonal, interpersonal, and leadership skills are broadly described as the ‘human dimension’ in the model. Second, in addition to having taxonomy of competencies, the key elements
in the performance domains - intra-personal, interpersonal, business and leadership skills are measurable.

Third, it provides a protocol for assessing performance effectiveness and competence on the basis of the 'inner-outer perspective of performance' concept of the model, which is grounded within the framework of self-awareness and feedback about performance, the main focus of the study. This 'inner-outer perspective' of the model provides an appropriate methodological foundation of the study, which is linked to the theoretical framework. The interrelationship between the theoretical framework of the study (theory), and methodological basis provided by the model (method) which provides justification for the adoption of the model for the study is provided. This integration provides a basis for the method and research design for the study.

4.11.1 The Inner-Outer perspective of performance assessment

The domain model posits two perspectives of the assessment of a person's performance; the inner and outer perspectives. The inner perspective is concerned with a person's self-view, that is a person's self-assessments of their skills, described as their identity, that is how a person thinks about him/herself. The outer perspective is concerned with how a person's skills, performance and accomplishment are evaluated by others. This evaluation by others is referred to as the reputation of that person, thus how others think about that person. People other than the person (a manager) being rated do the ratings in the domain model. Hogan and Warrenfetz (2003) suggest that bringing one's identity into alignment with one's reputation defines the level of self-awareness. Hogan and Warrenfetz (2003) highlight the importance to align the inner – outer perspective of performance, which has implication for feedback seeking and self-awareness. They note:

The inner outer perspectives are unique and distinct. Although most of us are largely preoccupied with the first – with our own self-evaluations, the second – other's evaluations of our performance – is substantially more consequential in terms of real world pay off. For example, self-ratings of leadership performance are poorly correlated with actual leadership performance... What people have to say about themselves is largely their theory about their own performance; it is rarely tested or evaluated, and in some cases it is shockingly out of touch with reality... In short, self-evaluations of performance capabilities and successes are not very reliable data sources. Other peoples' evaluations are important sources of data. Their evaluations are reliable in the sense that if they are properly
collected, they will converge. Other peoples’ evaluation in a real sense defines the success of our occupational performance. (Hogan and Warrenfeltz, 2003: 80)

In terms of the domain model, the inner-outer perspective of performance assessment is best aligned by means of a multi-system multi-rater (MSMR) or 360-degree feedback process, which is consequential for feedback seeking behaviour and hence relevant to this study. Hogan and Warrenfeltz (2003) articulate the source of feedback, and importance of feedback information about intra personal, inter personal and leadership skills for managerial effectiveness. Hogan and Warrenfeltz argue that it is a matter of importance for a person to know how his/her intra personal skills, such as self-control, moodiness, and impulsivity are evaluated by others. The reason is that it gives that person the opportunity to modify his/her behaviour if he/she considered the feedback on his/her behaviour and it suggests he/she has poor intra personal skills. In the absence of feedback information about intrapersonal skills, people will lack external views and tend to be strangers to themselves.

People are typically poor judges of their interpersonal skills as noted by Hogan and Warrenfeltz, and that feedback from others will provide more useful information, than introspection to improve interpersonal relationships. With the proper feedback, they note, people could become more approachable, responsive and attentive to others concerns.

In relation to leadership skills, following the same reasoning Hogan and Warrenfeltz argued in the same way. Other people in general, and subordinates in particular are the best source of information regarding a person’s performance as a leader. This is because people are poor judges of themselves as leaders (e.g., Hogan, Curphy & Hogan, 1994). Therefore, feedback about their leadership skills will provide useful information that can enhance appropriate understanding of strengths and weaknesses as a leader and modify behaviour by reinforcing strengths and minimizing or correcting the shortcomings.

As for business skills, Hogan and Warrenfeltz however argued that the inner – outer perspective is less important, compared to the other skills identified because business skills have a heavy cognitive loading. As a result people are able to evaluate their
business skills pretty well. Hence feedback information about business skills does not really matter; however, reasonable leadership skills are essential for business skills to be of any value.

Despite the importance of intrapersonal, interpersonal and leadership skills, organisations select and evaluate managers on the basis of cognitive ability and business skills, the so called ‘non human side’ of enterprise, believing these considerations to be more important for managerial performance. However, this approach ignores the fundamentally human side of managerial competency. Also, there is conceptual and theoretical evidence to suggest that career skills are essential for managerial effectiveness. However, Hogan and Warrenfeltz, (2003) although identifying it as being related to intrapersonal skills, did not elaborate this association in the domain model, which according to them encompasses all competencies. While adapting the model, because of its relevance and suitability for the study as discussed, it is considered appropriate to elaborate and extend it to include the career skills dimension on the basis of theoretical reasons that will be provided (see section 4.11.6).

The specific performance criteria of interest in this study, in the managerial context are intrapersonal, interpersonal, leadership, and career skills. The following sections discuss these criteria in terms of components of the extended model and why these skills are important for managerial effectiveness. Their implications for feedback and performance improvement are examined.

4.11.2 Domain model: Key components

This section discusses the key components of the domain mode, and the performance criteria in this study. It reviews the theoretical and empirical evidence for each component, and the implication for feedback seeking and performance effectiveness. It begins with intrapersonal, interpersonal, leadership and career skills.
4.11.3 Intrapersonal skills/ core self evaluations

Intrapersonal skills defined as ‘internalized standards of performance’ by Hogan and Warrenfeltz (2003) is indicative of the ‘core self evaluations’ construct. The core self evaluation construct is defined as ‘the basic conclusions or bottom line evaluations that individuals hold about themselves’ (Judge & Bono, 2001). They are related in that intrapersonal skills are a demonstration of the core self evaluations construct. Intrapersonal skills comprise core self esteem, attitudes toward authority, and self control. According to Hogan and Warrenfeltz (2003), people with core self esteem are self–confident, have stable, positive moods and are not easily frustrated or upset. On the other hand, people who lack core self esteem are self critical, moody, easily frustrated, and need frequent reassurance. People with positive attitudes toward authority respect and follow rules and procedures, are compliant and conforming and hence easy to supervise. In contrast, those with negative attitudes toward authority ignore rules and violate procedures, tend to be rebellious and hence hard to supervise. Self- control is concerned with the ability to restrain a person’s impulses, stay focused and follow routines. People with good self control are self disciplined, whereas those with poor self control are impulsive and undisciplined. Hogan and Warrenfeltz, (2003) argued that intrapersonal skills form the foundation on which management careers are built. Further, persons with good intra personal skills project integrity, perhaps the most important characteristic of leadership and that successful managers receive high scores on measures of intra personal skills.

Four main traits comprising the core self evaluation construct, an important component of intrapersonal skills are; core self esteem, generalized self- efficacy, internal locus of control, and emotional stability (low neuroticism) ( Judge et al., 1997). Core self-esteem has been considered to be the most important component of core self evaluation as it represents the overall value that an individual places on himself or herself as a person (Judge, et al., 1998). Generalized self – efficacy is concerned with a person’s estimate of his or her ability to cope, perform and be successful. Locus of control is concerned with the individual’s belief that events are a consequence of his or her own actions (internal control beliefs) or events are beyond their personal control (external beliefs). Emotional stability (low neuroticism), manifested by the tendency to be confident, secure and steady, has been empirically tested as one of the dimensions of the five factor model of personality. People with
core self esteem or emotional security are self confident and are not easily frustrated or upset. On the other hand, people with low self esteem are self critical, moody, easily frustrated and need frequent reassurance and positive feedback (Judge & Bono 2001; Hogan & Warrenfeltz, 2003)

Meta-analytic evidence based on 274 correlations (Judge & Bono 2001) suggests that these four core self evaluation traits are among the best dispositional predictors of job satisfaction. Also, intrapersonal skills form the foundation on which management careers are built in that successful managers receive high scores on measures of intrapersonal skills (Hogan & Warrenfeltz, 2003).

4.11.4 Interpersonal skills
In the organisational processes, managerial interpersonal competence is concerned with initiating, building and maintaining relationships with different people such as subordinates, peers and superiors. It is a basic managerial skill and has been identified as a predictor of managerial performance and effectiveness (Hogan & Hogan, 2001). The importance of interpersonal skills for managerial effectiveness is grounded in the Leader- Member- Exchange (LMX) theories of leadership (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Graen & Scandura, 1987; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Schriesheim, Castro & Cogliser, 1999). The LMX theories focus on the quality of exchanges and interpersonal relationships between a manager and a subordinate as primary determinant of managerial effectiveness.

Effectiveness of managers depends on the extent to which they develop high quality interpersonal relationship with their subordinates. Those who develop good interpersonal relationship with their subordinates are effective whereas those who are unable to develop high quality interpersonal relationships are considered ineffective. High quality interpersonal relationships with subordinates are important because they enhance their well being, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, organisational citizenship and performance (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Schriesheim et al., 1999). Feedback about their interpersonal relationship with their subordinates will enable managers to know the quality of the relationship, and whether or not to improve it to enhance their effectiveness.
Eighteen sub dimensions have been identified to describe the quality of LMX. The dimensions are; trust, competence, motivation, assistance and support, authority, latitude, understanding, information, influence in decision making, communications, confidence, consideration, talent, delegation, innovativeness, expertise, control of organisational resources, and mutual control (Schriesheim et al., 1999) Out of this list, communication and trust has been considered as key components that determine the quality of interpersonal relationship between managers and subordinates (Good, 1999; Schriesheim, et al., 1999).

Communication and trust are a recipe for successful employee—managerial relations. (Good 1999:12)

Thus the ability of managers to initiate, build and maintain good relationships with their superiors, peers and subordinates for organisational performance largely depends on managerial communication and the trust the constituents have in their managers. Trust is considered as the foundation for effective communication. The next sections discuss the organisational process of communication and trust and why managerial communication skills and interpersonal trust are important for their effectiveness. It is argued that managerial effectiveness will be enhanced through improved interpersonal relationships when they get feedback about their communication skills and trustworthy behaviour. The next section begins with managerial communication, and continues with trust.

4.11.4.1 Managerial communication

Communication is an important determinant of managerial effectiveness (Berman & Miner, 1985) because managerial roles are essentially communication behaviours which require good communication skills for effective performance (Penly, et al., 1991). (See chapter 2 section 2.3.1.1 for discussion of the communication concept). Effective managerial communication serves important functions of achieving coordinated action, developing information, expressing feelings and emotions and communication of roles (Schemerhorn, Hunt & Osborn, 1994). Considerable research has shown that managerial communication behaviours or superior—subordinate congruence in work related communication is associated with subordinate job satisfaction (Miles, Patrick & King, 1996). Because of the strong impact of managerial communication on employee job satisfaction, Miles, et al (1996) indicated
the need for managers to consider communication practices as part of any effort to improve job satisfaction and organisational performance.

Since managerial roles are essentially communication behaviours, and communication is an important determinant of managerial effectiveness, and feedback enhances effective communication, it can be argued that the more feedback information managers seek about their communication skills, the more likely they are to be effective in performing their roles. However, effective communication goes beyond ascertaining whether or not whoever receives a message understands it in the sense that the sender intended. Importantly, it involves the tendency of the recipient to evaluate the message, and decide whether to believe it and act on it in the organisational process. In the evaluation process, the source credibility, in particular the trustworthiness of the manager (Whitener, et al., 1998) is crucial, because subordinates have to decide whether to believe the message and act on it or not, thus in essence, for the communication to be more effective (Emler, 2001). Thus, making trust the foundation for effective communication. Brockner et al., (1997) noted that the ability of managers to gain the trust of their employees especially their subordinates was a significant determinant of their effectiveness. The next section discusses managerial trustworthiness behaviour in general and particularly, in relation to effective communication, and the implication for feedback and improved interpersonal relationship and effectiveness.

4.11.4.2 Managerial trust

A number of theories of trust are grounded in social exchange theory (Blau,1964), which posits that trust emerges through the repeated exchange of benefits between individuals. In social exchange, one individual voluntarily provides a benefit to another, invoking an obligation on the other party to reciprocate. According to Blau, trust may be initiated or generated through two means: first, through the regular discharge of obligations (i.e., by reciprocating for benefits received from others) and second through the gradual expansion of exchanges over time.

Managerial trust, an important component of the organisational process involves employee uncertainties about management or managers fulfilling their promises or obligations regarding the organisational psychological contract (Millward & Herriot,
or managers and employees economic exchange relationship (Eisenhardt, 1989), and the social exchange relationship (Blau, 1964). Caudron (1996) comments:

In a perfect world, this would never happen. Good news or bad, employees could trust management to give it to them straight, to mean what it said and always to follow through on promises... But this is far from perfect. Management has lost its credibility, employees are scared, and organisational [managerial] trust has hit rock bottom. (Caudron, 1996, cited in Whitener et al., 1998: 12)

Drawing on the works of Blau (1964), Deutsch (1958), Muchinsky (1977), Roberts and O’Reilly (1974 a & b), Whitener et al., note:

‘At the same time that trust in organisations has ‘hit rock bottom,’ researchers [evidence] have shown that interpersonal trust has significant relationships with many organisational variables, such as the quality [effectiveness] of communication and cooperation.... Moreover, trust has long been considered fundamental to cooperative [interpersonal] relationships’ (Whitener et al, 1998: 513).

There are several and different definitions of managerial interpersonal trust. The main elements of these definitions have been summarised by Hosmer (1995) and Mayer, Davis and Schoorman (1995). Drawing on these reviews and the work of others (Deusch, 1962; Gambetta, 1988; Zand, 1972), Whitener et al., (1998) identify three facets of interpersonal trust.

First, trust in another person reflects an expectation or belief that the other party will act benevolently. Second, one cannot control or force the other party to fulfil this expectation- that is trust involves a willingness to be vulnerable and risk that the other party may not fulfil that expectation. Third, trust involves some level of dependency on the other party so that the outcomes of one individual are influenced by the actions of another. (Whitener et al., 1998: 513)

With these components, managerial interpersonal relationship in an organisational context, trust can be viewed as an attitude held by one individual- the trustor (e.g., subordinate) – toward another – the trustee (manager). This attitude is derived from the trustor’s (subordinate’s) perceptions, beliefs and attributions about the trustee (manager), based upon his or her observations of the trustee’s (manager’s) behaviour, labelled ‘managerial trust worthy behaviour’ (Whitener et al., 1998).

Whitener et al. (1998:516) define managerial trustworthy behaviour as ‘volitional actions and interactions performed by managers that are necessary though not
sufficient to engender employees' trust in them.' This behaviour occurs in a social and economic exchange context, in which managers initiate and build relationships by engaging in trustworthy behaviour as a means of providing them with social rewards. Whitener et al. (1998) argue that managers who engage in this behaviour will increase the likelihood that employees will reciprocate and trust them, providing a necessary, but not sufficient, foundation for employees' trust in supervisors or managers.

On the basis of the works of Butler (1991), Clarke and Payne (1997), and Mayer et al. (1995), Whitener et al. (1998) identify five behaviours; behavioural consistency; behavioural integrity; sharing and delegation of control; communication; and demonstration of concern as components or antecedents of managerial trustworthiness. They point out that these behaviours are attributed to the trustee [manager] by the trustor [employee] and argue that when managers engage in such behaviours, it will influence and enhance employees' or subordinates' perception of their trustworthiness.

Behavioural consistency is concerned with how reliable or predictable individual's behaviour is. It reflects the reliability or predictability of managers' actions, based on their past actions. If managers behave consistently over time and across situations, subordinates can better predict managers' future behaviour. Behavioural integrity refers to the consistency between what the manager says and what he or she does. Subordinates observe the consistency between managers' words and deeds, and make attributions about their integrity, honesty, and moral character. Two main behaviours (1) telling the truth and (2) keeping promises are key behavioural antecedents to attributions of integrity; attributions that affect subordinates' trust in their managers. When managers tell the truth and keep promises, in particular fulfil their organisational commitments, their messages and ideas are more likely to be believed.

Sharing control is concerned with employee's participation in decision making, and delegating some control to them. Employees' trust in their managers gets higher when they are satisfied with their level of participation in decisions, and also when they can determine their work roles. Whitener et al. (1998) argue that when managers share control, they demonstrate significant trust in and respect for their employees. Employees value being involved in decision making because it affirms their standing

82
and worth in the organisation. In the framework of the social exchange theory, sharing and delegation are social rewards, in the form of approval or respect that the manager grants to the subordinate and this is likely to increase employee trust in the manager.

Employees perceive their managers as trustworthy when their communication is accurate, forthcoming and well explained. Also when they are given timely feedback on decisions, it increases their trust in managers. Open communication, in which managers exchange thoughts and ideas freely with employees enhances perceptions of trust. When employees perceive that their managers are benevolent, that is they demonstrate concern for their welfare, it increases their trust in them. Managers demonstrate benevolent behaviour when they (1) show consideration and sensitivity for employee needs and interests; (2) act in a way that protects employees' interests, and; (3) refrain from exploiting their employees, that is do not take advantage of their vulnerability even when the opportunity arises.

Thus, when managers engage in these behaviours, they are more likely to be perceived as being trustworthy by their subordinates. Subordinates will tend to believe their ideas and messages which will enhance effective communication and interpersonal relationship in the organisational process.

4.11.4.3 Relationship between Interpersonal skills, feedback seeking and managerial effectiveness

Drawing on Blau’s social exchange theory and Whitener et al.'s (1998) conceptualisation and definition of managerial trustworthy behaviour it is therefore argued that when managers get feedback about such behaviours, it will enhance employees’ perception of their trustworthiness and improve their effectiveness in the organisation process. When managers get feedback about their trustworthy behaviour, they will be more effective. This will increase the level of trust subordinates have in them and enhance the organisational process as it has implication for effective communication. When subordinates perceive that their managers are credible, in particular trustworthy, there will be a tendency for them (subordinates) to believe their messages and act on them to enhance managerial effectiveness in the organisational process. Managers need to have good interpersonal skills with their subordinates, as poor interpersonal skills are some of the characteristics of failed
managers, in essence managerial incompetence. This is because managers with poor interpersonal skills tend to be insensitive, arrogant, cold, aloof, and overly ambitious. Also, they are unable to build a team and get work done at the team level (McCall & Lombardo, 1996). Therefore, if managers get feedback about their interpersonal skills, there would be the tendency for them to improve their performance.

4.11.5 Leadership skills

In this thesis, corporate leadership is conceptualised as a managerial skill and within the performance criteria of interest, a managerial competency. (See chapter 2, section 2.2.5). This section discusses the importance of leadership skill as a managerial competency, leadership effectiveness, and personality and leadership style as the main factors that determine leader effectiveness. It examines the effectiveness of transformational leadership style, compared to transactional leadership, in organisational performance. It concludes with the implications for transformational leadership for understanding the relationship between feedback and performance.

4.11.5.1 Importance of leadership as a managerial skill

Leadership is central to the success or failure of organisations (Judge & Bono, 2000). Evidence indicates that leadership behaviour and effectiveness have important implications for employee well being, work attitudes and performance. For example, Hogan, Raskin, and Fazzini (1990) found out that 60% to 70% of employees reported that the job dimension that was the most important source of dissatisfaction and stress was their supervisor. Also, Harter, Schmidt and Hayes (2002) reviewed the literature on employee satisfaction and showed that employee satisfaction means, in essence, satisfaction with supervisors. That is, supervisor performance is the most important determinant of employee satisfaction. Further, in a meta analysis using 198,514 employees in 7939 business units, Harter et al. showed that employee engagement and satisfaction correlate .64 and .62 with a composite index of business-unit performance. It can therefore be concluded that leadership effectiveness determines employee satisfaction and work performance, and it matters in determining organisational performance and effectiveness.
The question then is what makes leaders effective? It will be argued that managerial leadership effectiveness will be enhanced when they get feedback about their leadership skills.

To be effective, leaders must be able to motivate and be able to direct followers toward organisational goals, mission or vision, and be able to maintain stability and group harmony even when acting as agents of change (Chemers, 2001).

Avolio et al. note:

Leaders need skills and abilities to develop and implement solutions with followers, peers, or subordinates in complex, dynamic context. Moreover, effective leaders must also have the skills to persuade followers often in very difficult complex situations to accept and support their proposed solutions. (Avolio et al., 2003: 284).

Organisational leadership researchers have tried to find out what, then, are the theoretical and practical reasons that make leaders effective to achieve this. However, there are some conceptual and theoretical issues or problems associated with such investigation which need unpacking to throw light on this apparent maze of the conceptual and theoretical confusion.

4.11.5.2 Leadership effectiveness: conceptual, theoretical and measurement issues

The main issues examined in this session and the order in which they are examined are the conceptualisation of leader effectiveness, what are the components of effectiveness, the evaluation or measurement of effectiveness, and the source of evaluation and the implication for feedback seeking.

First, defining leadership effectiveness is difficult, not least, because the choice of what constitutes effectiveness tends to be arbitrary (Lowe et al., 1996). As such, measuring effectiveness varies from one study to another and usually reflects the researcher’s philosophy and implicit theory about leadership (Yuki, 1998). Implicit Leadership Theory (ILT) is concerned with how people view, understand, define, evaluate, and perceive leadership from their own experiences and prototype of effective leadership. Much of the research on ILT have been done by Lord and his associates (for example Lord, 1997; Lord, Brown, Harvey & Hall, 2001; Lord, Forti...
& De Vader, 1984) and focuses on factors that lead people to perceive others as effective leaders. In a review of ILT literature, Avolio et al. concluded that:

the work of Lord and associates has demonstrated leadership as being in the eyes of the beholder. (Avolio et al., 2003: 281)

Studies have shown that a leader and his or her effectiveness tends to be defined and evaluated differently depending on the source of information such as subordinates, peers and superiors (Atwater & Yammarino, 1997; Facteau, et al., 1998; Yammarino & Atwater, 1997). The Implicit leadership theory thus has implications for understanding the relationship between feedback and performance. The implication is that leaders need to seek feedback from the sources that will potentially assess their effectiveness. The more leaders seek feedback the more they will know how their performance is being evaluated by these sources. If their performance is below their sources’ expectation, they could use the feedback information for performance improvement.

In measuring leadership effectiveness, three different dimensions of measures have been used (Avolio et al., 2003). These are (a) perceived (subjective or process-oriented) versus actual (objective or outcome-oriented) measures; (b) short-term versus long-term measures: and (c) leadership effectiveness measures derived from above (i.e. performance evaluation by superiors) versus below (i.e. performance evaluation of and by subordinates). Observational measures include perceived leader effectiveness, satisfaction, commitment, and loyalty, whereas actual performance was profit sales increases, and percentage of goals met. Most leadership studies have used perceived and actual measures evenly. Also, a large percentage use performance measures obtained from subordinates (Avolio et al., 2003).

4.11.5.3 Factors determining leadership effectiveness- personality and leadership style- transactional versus transformational

Two main factors have been investigated to influence leadership effectiveness; personality traits, and leadership style; transactional versus transformational leadership.
4.11.5.4 Personality and Leadership

The literature provides evidence that personality factors are associated with leadership effectiveness. In research on the relationship between personality and leadership, Judge et al. (2002) conducted a meta-analysis in which they examined 78 studies comparing personality and leadership. They organised personality in terms of the Five Factor Model (Wiggins, 1996) the dimensions of which are extraversion, emotional stability, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness. These dimensions define the elements of Hogan and Warrenfeltz's (2003) domain model of managerial and leadership competencies adopted for the study. Emotional stability and conscientiousness define the first element of the model—intrapersonal skills; extraversion and agreeableness define the second element—interpersonal skills; and openness which is related to vision is linked to the fourth domain, leadership skills.

Judge et al. (2002) classified their leadership criteria in terms of emergence and effectiveness. Emergent leadership is concerned with factors associated with someone perceived by others to be a leader when there is only limited information about that person’s actual performance. Personality predictors of emergent leadership are the dimensions of the big five model. In contrast to perceiving one to be a leader, leadership effectiveness refers to a leader’s actual performance to achieve organisational goals. Leadership effectiveness is measured in terms of team, group, or overall organisational effectiveness; and it is assessed by the leader’s supervisor, peer, or subordinate. They found that all five dimensions significantly predict indices of leader effectiveness, with emotional stability the strongest, and agreeableness the weakest predictors. The multiple r with leader effectiveness was (0.48) which provides evidence that personality predicts indices of leadership effectiveness.

On the other hand, there is the tendency for leaders to be ineffective because of personality flaws. Managers who fail are found to exhibit some personality flaws including overly controlling, irritable and exploitative. Also, lack of good social skills, decisiveness, honesty, self esteem, self confidence and ambition are associated with leadership failure (Howard, 2001). McCall and Lombardo (1996) summarize the characteristics of failed managers, in essence managerial incompetence, in terms of four themes: poor interpersonal skills (being insensitive, arrogant, cold, aloof, overly,
ambitious); inability to get work done at the team level; inability to build a team; inability to make transition after promotion.

In an earlier review, based on the big five model of personality, Hogan et al. (1994) found a consistent link between leader effectiveness and surgency (e.g. dominance, extraversion, sociability), conscientiousness, agreeableness, and emotional stability. Thus the literature provides evidence that personality does indeed matter in determining leadership effectiveness. The focus is whether leadership matters in terms of organisational performance and effectiveness.

4.11.5.5 Transformational Leadership
Two main factors characterise modern leadership. One factor is concerned with initiating and organizing work and emphasises on getting the job done, whereas the other is concerned with showing consideration for employees and focuses on satisfying the self-interest of those who do good work (Bass, 1997). Leadership that is based on transactions between manager and employees is called transactional leadership. This leadership involves an exchange process, that is, transaction in which subordinates’ needs are met if their performance measures up to explicit or implicit contracts with the leader. Such leaders achieve performance by the use of contingent rewards or negative feedback (Hater & Bass, 1988). Thus, transactional leadership is based on the notion that leaders could influence followers or subordinates to achieve organisational goals by establishing exchanges with followers. In contrast to transactional leaders whose influence is located in and limited to the ability to establish exchanges with followers and then monitoring the exchange relationship, that is leadership focusing on contingent rewarding and monitoring, transformational leaders have a far greater and broader impact on the followers by transcending the exchange relationship and encouraging real empowerment (Alimo-Metcalfe, 1998; Bass, 1985). Thus, it is argued that leadership is more effective if transformational leadership is added to the manager-employee relationship (Bass, 1985). Specifically, although contingent reward behaviour is significantly related to multiple measures of leader effectiveness, charisma adds unique variance beyond that of contingent-reward behaviour for understanding leader effectiveness (Waldman, Bass & Yammarino, 1990). In transformational leadership, leaders broaden and elevate the interests of their employees, they generate awareness
and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group, and they stir their employees to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group. In contrast, non-leadership is labelled laissez-faire.

Bass' (1985) theory and other theories of transformational leadership (e.g., Shamir, House & Arthur, 1993) identify four characteristics of a transformational leader as: idealized influence (charisma); inspirational motivation; intellectual stimulation; and individualized consideration which are all believed to contribute to perceptions of leadership effectiveness. Idealized influence is considered as the quality that transformational leaders have that enable them to serve as charismatic role models that followers strive to emulate (Bass et al., 1996). Drawing on Weber's notion of charisma, Bass (1988) identified the distinguishing characteristics of transformational leadership as self confidence, expressive behaviour, requisite abilities, interests and personal traits of the charismatic leader, that is self-determination, insight, freedom from internal conflict, eloquence, activity and high energy level. According to Judge and Bono (2000: 751) 'idealised influence' often simply referred to as 'charisma,' is the most prototypic and often the single most important dimension or characteristic of transformational leaders. Bass describes inspirational motivation as leaders providing a clear and inspiring vision or mission and optimism about its attainability to followers.

Transformational leaders may arouse followers emotionally and inspire them to extra effort and accomplishment such that as subordinates become competent with the transformational leaders' encouragement and support, contingent reinforcement maybe abandoned in favour of self reinforcement (Bass, 1985, 1990b). Bass (1996) found a positive relationship between idealised influences or charisma and inspirational motivation in practice. This suggests that transformational leaders are able to motivate their followers through inspiration, because they are charismatic or have idealised influence on them.

Also, transformational leaders give individual followers consideration for their needs and goals. Further, transformational leaders stimulate and encourage followers to question and challenge leaders on organisational structures policies and procedures, aimed at enhancing follower creativity through organisational problem identification
and contribution to their solution (Bass, 1985, 1996). Thus, transformational leaders encourage followers by acting as a role model, motivating through inspiration, stimulating intellectually and giving individualized consideration for needs and goals (Bass & Avolio, 1993). Moreover, such leaders are credited to be responsible for performance beyond ordinary expectations as they transmit a sense of mission, stimulate learning experiences and arouse new ways of thinking (Hater et al., 1988).

Transformational leadership has been found to be associated with subordinate work attitudes, perception and assessment of leader effectiveness, and leader effectiveness and organisational outcome. Transformational leadership theory has been the most widely researched theoretical perspective in addressing leader effectiveness (Judge & Bono 2000). In a review, Judge and Bono (2000) showed that 207 post-1990 articles cited transformational leadership theory, whereas 190 cited all other theories combined.

Transformational leadership has a positive impact on both subordinates' work attitudes, and their perception of leadership effectiveness, and organisational outcomes (Bass, 1999; Fuller et al., 1996). Substantial evidence from studies indicates that transformational leadership is significantly associated with a variety of objective outcome measures including high levels of organisational commitment, work motivation, job satisfaction, and performance of staff; employee innovation, employee satisfaction with leader, harmony and good citizenship, (Alimo-Metcalfe, 1998; Hetland & Sandal, 2003), which reflect leader effectiveness (Judge & Bono, 2000). Subordinates' perceptions of transformational leadership add to the prediction of their satisfaction and effectiveness ratings beyond that of perceptions of transactional leadership (Hater et al., 1988).

For example, Judge and Bono (2000) using subordinate ratings found that transformational leadership predicted leadership effectiveness. The reliability of subordinate assessments of the four dimensions of transformational leadership ranged from 0.72 to 0.86). The inter-rater agreement of the four dimensions ranged between 0.73 and 0.88 respectively, providing strong psychometric support for subordinate ratings. Moreover, their ratings significantly differentiate top performing managers (identified as such through other sources) from ordinary managers. In addition,
managers who behave like transformational leaders are more likely to be seen by their colleagues and employees as satisfying and effective leaders (Bass, 1990b). Thus, these findings indicate that managers' transformational leadership is associated with perception of, as well as effectiveness.

Attributes associated with transformational leadership generalize across cultures and therefore tend to be universal (Bass, 1997). Some attributes associated with transformational leadership which were considered the best possible achievable attributes across 62 countries were; encouragement, motivation, confidence building, dynamism and foresight (Den Hartog et al., 1999). Thus there is considerable theoretical and practical evidential basis to show that transformational leadership is associated with positive employee work attitudes, organisational outcomes and leadership effectiveness.

**4.11.5.6 Implications of transformational leadership for understanding the relationship between feedback and performance**

Transformational leadership has implications for understanding the relationship between feedback and performance for three reasons. First, it has impact on subordinates, in particular its effectiveness depends on the ability to inspire and persuade followers to go beyond immediate self interests to collective vision, goals and interests, and motivate them to exceptional performance (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1993; Lowe et al., 1996). Second, it has the utility for increasing organisational satisfaction, commitment and effectiveness in general and specifically, employee positive work attitudes (Bass, 1999; Hetland & Sandal, 2003). Third, subordinates' and others' perceptions and ratings determine transformational leadership effectiveness (Bass, 1999; Fuller et al., 1996). As a result, transformational leaders seek feedback on their own behaviour and performance from their followers because they determine their effectiveness; hence they are accountable to their followers as source of persuasive power (Alimo-Metcalfe 1998). Alimo-Metcalfe notes that:

consistent with the 'empowering' tone of the transformational leadership, modern writers of leadership are almost turning the historical notion of management, as a fundamentally a top-down influence process, on its head. Leadership is being conceptualized and extolled as an authority 'bestowed' on a manager by his/her followers. (Alimo-Metcalfe 1998: 36)
On the relationship between rating effectiveness and transformational leadership behaviour which has implication for feedback seeking, he continues:

> a manager is more likely to be perceived as transformational by their staff if the manager’s self perception of their effectiveness and rating is consistent with the rating provided by the staff. (Alimo-Metcalfe 1998: 36)

Thus, transformational leaders tend to seek feedback from their followers about their leadership behaviour in order to have insight into their performance, and improve their effectiveness. The more feedback transformational leaders seek, the more likely they are to use the information to improve their performance and the more they will be perceived as being transformational and rated as being effective.

4.11.6 Career skills

The concept of ‘career skill’ may not be a very popular terminology in the literature. However, this terminology is adopted to fit the proposed and extended managerial competence model as used in the study. In conceptualising career as a skill, the more important career related concepts will be reviewed and, drawing on the review, propose career as a skill, and provide theoretical reasons for this proposition, in relation to the model and achieving the research objectives. The discussion begins with an examination of the concept of career, career success, managerial career success, the main focus or direction of career research and their significance. The proposed career skills concept is conceptualised and the value it will add to study of managerial competencies, its usefulness in answering the research question and importance in career literature are discussed.
4.11.6.1 Career concept

The career concept is multidimensional and multifaceted, comprising many aspects, constructs, variables and dimensions, which have implications for investigation. As Millward (2005:163) notes ‘the literature on careers is multi-disciplinary, multi-level, and difficult to distil.’ The most used and researched terms in the career literature are career development; (Boerlijst 1998; Millward, 2005); career success (Judge et al., 1995; Seibert & Kramer, 2001; Tharenou, 1997); career advancement (Tharenou, 1997); career progression (Thomas, et al., 2005; Tharenou, 1997); career ladder; (Thomas et al., 2005; Millward, 2005); career satisfaction (Judge, et al., 1999) executive career success, and managerial career success (Judge et al., 1995; Thomas et al., 2005). It is therefore important to define and examine the concepts starting with the definitions.

From an occupational and organisational perspective, Boerlijst (1998, cited in Millward, 2005:104) defines career as a ‘sequence of successive positions as ascertained by an observing agency (self and/or other) that a career occupant has held or acquired within a certain period of time on aspect variables that have a certain relevancy to a certain context like role, position, status or other externally verifiable markers’. He relates this definition to career development, which on the other hand, he says, ‘pertains to the interventions of a person or body geared to the application of determinants (self-originated and/or externally originated) for the influencing of the career consistent with policy objectives’ (Millward 2005:164). This definition tends to link career and career development and success. It highlights how a person’s career begins, unfolds and becomes successful.

Millward notes:

This definition accommodates both objective and subjective facets of career, the time dimension (historically prospectively) and the importance of understanding how careers arise, unfold and become successful within particular contexts… It also emphasizes, that careers are not confined to managerial or white collar occupations and may include self-employment and other non conventional career phenomena (for example, part-time working). (Millward 2005: 164)

Notwithstanding the suggestion that careers are not confined to managerial occupations, this discussion will focus on managerial career related concepts as the
interest of the study is in managerial competencies and will conceptualise managerial career success as a managerial skill.

4.11.6.2. Conceptualisation of career success
There are many perspectives to theorising, conceptualising, defining and hence measuring career success (or career advancement, Tharenou, 1997). However, what these definitions have in common are that career success is related to work an achievement which can be perceived or real, and therefore has measurement implications. For example, career success can be defined as the real or perceived achievements individuals have accumulated as a result of their work experiences (Judge, et al., 1995). Seibet and Kraimer (2001) defined it as the accumulated positive work and psychological outcomes resulting from one's work experiences. These definitions suggest that career success has a psychological dimension as a career is perceived, and then judged as successful and is therefore subjective. It can also denote a real or tangible work achievement or outcome and therefore be objective. Most researchers recognise these two facets and therefore conceptualise and operationally define career success into subjective and objective dimensions. However, these dimensions are arguably considered as different outcomes of an individual's career experiences (e.g. Judge et al., 1995; Judge, et al., 1999; Millward, 2005; Thomas et al., 2005).

It is important to distinguish between subjective and objective facets of career success. Intrinsic or subjective career success is defined as an individual's subjective reactions to his/her own career and it is most commonly conceptualised as consisting of two components: current job satisfaction and career satisfaction (Judge et al., 1995, 1999). In contrast, objective career success is defined as the extrinsic or observable work outcomes of a person that can be evaluated by others. Indicators of objective career success include pay and the number of promotions in one's career, and occupational status, that is, the attainment of high status and prestigious jobs.

Commenting on the objective and subjective facets of career, Millward notes that:

the so-called 'objective' or external career is reflected in the use of structural terms like 'career ladder', 'promotion' and 'demotion'. Such a career is typically the prerogative of managers and professionals, thereby
restricting the applicability of the concept. Here 'success' constitutes upward progression through a series of related jobs, and or in a public and positional sense, denoting increased status, power and authority’ (Millward 2005: 164).

Millward (2005) observed that 'objective' career may be either entirely dependent on progression within an organisation ('locals'), or dependent on a profession or occupation which may involve movement from one organisation to another ('cosmopolitan'). On the other hand, movement may involve a change of job or simply increased responsibility within the same job. Thomas et al. (2005) argued in support of upward mobility as predicting or determining career success. Utilising the upward mobility perspective to career success, Thomas et al. (2005) further argued that, managers would be successful in their careers if they worked hard (contest mobility) and received organisational support (sponsored mobility). Also, they proposed and found empirical support for their proposition that salary, promotion, and career satisfaction are three aspects and unique constructs of career success.

Furthermore, Thomas et al. (2005) found support for the hypothesis that organisational sponsorship and stable individual differences are more strongly related to subjective career success, whereas human capital and socio-demographics are more strongly related to objective career success. This strongly suggests that career concepts have expanded beyond the managerial domain to accommodate both subjective and objective dimensions. Correspondingly, research has begun to explore internally generated facets, thus subjective dimension of careers that facilitate personal success (for example, efficacy, resilience, self-insight, self motivation) (Millward, 2005).

4.11.6.3 Managerial/executive career success
Managerial career success has been conceptualised as comprising two dimensions: objective (pay/salary, ascendance/promotion) and subjective (job satisfaction, career satisfaction) (Judge et al., 1995; Thomas et al., 2005). Subjective career success is defined as a person’s feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction with his/her career. (Judge et al., 1995). Judge et al. (1995) posited that there is a link between objective success and subjective appraisals in that people define their success based, in part, on their objective accomplishments. Because a career is a sequence of work-related
positions occupied through a person’s working life, career success has been defined to include current job satisfaction just as the career includes the current job. Career satisfaction is defined as the satisfaction a person derives from the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of his/her careers, including pay, advancement, and developmental opportunities.

Managerial career success is an important issue because it is associated with managerial performance and effectiveness and consequently it contributes to organisational success and profitability (Tharenou, 1997). However, how and why people advance in contemporary management hierarchy in organisations has not been well understood (Kotter, 1995b). This is because the concept of career advancement or career success is multidimensional and multifaceted, comprising several categories and dimensions of variables and constructs (Millward, 2005; Tharenou, 1997; Thomas et al., 2005). It is therefore important to examine the variables associated with career success, particularly in the managerial domain as part of the concept of managerial effectiveness.

4.11.6.4 Antecedents/predictors of Managerial Career success

The main variables that have been investigated as determinants of career success in the managerial domain are: ‘managerial skills’ comprising interpersonal dealings, leadership and supervision, mechanics of management, and personal behaviour (Tharenou, 1997); human capital and organisational sponsorship (Thomas et al., 2005) and individual differences and personality traits (Tharenou, 1997; Thomas et al., 2005; Seibert et. al., 2001; Judge et al., 1999). These variables are examined in turns, to show how they influence managerial career success.

Skills are important for leaders’ effectiveness because they provide specific capacities for action from traits (Locke, 1991), and should increase performance and subsequently advancement (Tharenou, 1997). Borman and Brush (1993) classified management performance into four groups: interpersonal dealings and communication; leadership and supervision (both people domains); technical activities and the mechanics of management (the task domain); and personal behaviour and skills. Drawing on Locke (1991), Borman and Brush (1993) reported that managerial skills found to be related to managerial advancement are interpersonal
and people skills, leadership and supervision, administrative skills and mechanics of
management and technical skills, and personal behaviour and skills (Tharenou 1997).
People skills both interpersonal and communication comprise interpersonal,
clarifying, conflict management, team-building, and networking; leadership and
supervision skills consist of leadership, motivating, supervisory, supporting;
administrative skills /mechanics of management and technical skills comprise
planning, decision- making, problem solving, meeting objectives, administration,
delegating, hiring, technical skills, performance; personal behaviour and skills consist
of adaptability, responsibility, learning, flexibility, perseverance and resourcefulness.
Thus consistent with Borman and Brush's (1993) managerial performance
dimensions, Tharenou (1997) found out that interpersonal, leadership task and
personal skills are related to entry into and managerial advancement at all career
stages, including later advancement and success.

Managerial career success does not depend on the acquisition of management skills
alone. It involves hard work and organisational support (Thomas et al., 2005). In a
recent meta-analysis, Thomas et al. (2005) suggested that career success is largely a
function of two important career experiences: working hard (human capital) and
receiving sponsorship (organisational sponsorship). Working hard, they noted,
represents a merit based explanation for career success because enhancing a person's
competency through job-related knowledge, skills and abilities should be rewarded in
the career contest. In contrast, attracting and obtaining sponsorship reflects a more
political explanation for career success.

Traits are stable predispositions to certain kinds of actions that, when combined with
other factors, are proposed to predict organisationally relevant behaviours, including
managerial success (Locke, 1991). Tharenou (1997) argued that traits predict
advancement, because a person's motives, such as ambition, drive him/her toward
achieving his/her goals through managerial advancement. This is because the
managerial role allows a person to implement his/her self concept in the
organisational context through occupational choices. Tharenou reported that
conscientiousness, as will to achieve, measured as advancement motives, ambition
and achievement motives, and openness to experience, measured as general cognitive
ability predict managerial career advancement. However, he found little evidence for
extroversion, agreeableness and emotional stability as predictors of managerial career success.

Thomas et al., (2005) noted that stable individual differences and personality traits played an important role in determining career success because careers unfold over time and are often driven by a person’s enduring attitudes and behaviours. Moreover, a planned career development is important to securing career success and is often guided by a person’s internal attributes.

There is empirical evidence supporting the relationship between personality traits and career success from a longitudinal study including three intergenerational studies, conducted over a span of 50 years, following participants from early childhood to retirement. Judge et al. (1999) found that three variables of the Big Five personality traits (Costa & McCrae, 1992) specifically neuroticism, extraversion and conscientiousness significantly predicted career success. Judge et al. (1999) explained that neuroticism, which refers generally to lack of positive psychological adjustment and emotional stability is negatively associated with career success. This is because persons with high neuroticism that is, who higher score on the neuroticism measures are more likely to be specifically affected by negative moods such as anxiety, fear, depression and irritability. And negative life events are likely to reduce job performance and hinder effective career management and career success. Extraversion predicted career success because it is associated with tendency to be socially oriented (outgoing and gregarious), surgent (dominant and ambitious) and active (adventuresome and assertive). This is related to the experience of positive emotions, and also, extraverts are more likely to take on leadership roles (Watson & Clark, 1997). Conscientiousness, which has emerged as the Big 5 construct most consistently related to performance across jobs (Barrick & Mount, 1991) predicted career success because it is related to a person’s degree of self control, need for achievement, order, and persistence. It manifested in three related facets – achievement orientation (hardworking and persistency), dependability (responsibility and carefulness), and orderliness (planful and organized).

Judge et al. (1999) concluded that knowledge about a person’s personality in early life was an effective predictor of that person’s later career success, irrespective of whether
career success was measured through subjective reactions or objective indicators. This view is corroborated by Hogan & Warrenfetz' (2003) assertion that intra-personal skills, that is core self evaluations which develop in early life, predict a person's later career development and success.

4.11.6.5 Conceptualising Managerial 'Career skills'

Drawing on Judge et al. (1995), Seibet and Cramer (2001), and Thomas et al. (2005) 'career skill' can be conceptualised in terms of managerial/executive career success, comprising two components: career satisfaction and job satisfaction (see measures, section 6.11). Borrowing from Hogan and Warrenfetz (2003) the term 'skill' could be defined as a well honed behavioural capacity that distinguishes between effective and ineffective managers (Hogan & Warrenfetz, 2003). Skill, rather than 'success' is being used here, because the performance managerial competency domain of interest consists of a number of skills; intra personal; interpersonal; leadership; and career skills. Moreover, effective managers are more likely than ineffective managers to be successful in their careers. Therefore the term career skill is considered appropriate in this context.

4.11.6.6 Justification of career skills in domain model

In the original domain model of managerial competencies, Hogan and Warrenfetz (2003) posited that all managerial competencies can be categorised into four main dimensional skills: intra personal; interpersonal skill; leadership; and business. Conspicuously, career skills were not considered in their model. However, they argued that intra personal skills laid the foundation for career success, but did not elaborate or consider career as a skill. This, therefore, leaves a competency gap, which this thesis attempts to fill by including career skills in the domain model. The reason is that career skill is important because as noted in the literature, it is associated with managerial performance and effectiveness (Tharenou, 1997). Also, it is related to other skills outlined and elaborated in the model. Therefore, the concept of career skill is being proposed as an extension to fill the gap in the model to make it more holistic, increase its explanatory richness and power, and to accommodate the research interest.
The concept of career skill lends itself to the proposed extension of the domain model. From the literature reviewed (e.g., Judge et al., 1999; Tharenou, 1997; Hogan & Warrenfetz, 2003; Thomas et al., 2005), there is a conceptual, theoretical, and empirical basis for linking career skills to intrapersonal, interpersonal, and leadership skills in a managerial competency domain. Further, the domain model lends itself to inclusion of the concept of career skill to enhance the explanatory rich and power of the model.

4.12 Evaluation of the competency models:
Each model, behavioural, functional, job competency, holistic, and the multidimensional are evaluated in terms of their performance criteria, implications for feedback seeking and their usefulness in addressing the research question. However, the skill and ability implications of these models are not easily aligned with the managerial performance criteria of interest in the study: intrapersonal; interpersonal, leadership and career skills. Also, the models do not provide a clear methodological framework (i.e., operational implications are unclear) for assessing effective performance within a feedback context. Only the domain model aligns with the interests of this thesis.

4.13 Suitability of Domain model in the study
There are three main points about the domain model that distinguish it from the other models reviewed, and which make it more appropriate to be adopted for the study. First, the model is explanatory richer, compared to the other models. It is more comprehensive in that every existing model can be organised in terms of four domains; intrapersonal, interpersonal, leadership and business skills. More importantly, the model emphasises that without reasonable interpersonal and leadership skills, good business skills would not really matter. Second, in addition to postulating a taxonomy of competencies, the key elements in the performance domains - intrapersonal, interpersonal, business and leadership skills, are measurable.

Third, it provides a protocol for assessing performance effectiveness and competence on the basis of the ‘inner-outer perspective of performance’ concept of the model. This concept is grounded within the framework of self-awareness and feedback about performance which are the main focus of the study. This ‘inner – outer perspective’
of the model provides an appropriate methodological foundation of the study, which is linked to the theoretical framework. The inter relationship between the theoretical framework of the study (theory), and methodological basis provided by the model (method) provides justification for the proposed research design.

In short, the domain model of managerial competencies addresses the limitations identified in the other models and can be considered more appropriate and suitable for current purposes. In particular, the 'inner – outer perspective' of performance assessment, which is the core element of the domain model integrates all relevant theoretical and methodological considerations.

4.14 Chapter summary

This chapter introduced the term competency and managerial competency to provide the context for examining the key thesis proposition about the relationship between feedback seeking and performance. In particular it introduced and discussed the concepts of core and generic competencies on one hand, and personal or task competencies on the other. Generic competencies are believed to be fundamental for effective performance in all or most occupations whilst core competencies are specific to the requirements of a particular job in a particular situation. The concept of 'competency model' was introduced and examples provided as follows: behavioural, functional, job competency, holistic, multi dimensional, and the domain model.

The domain model was selected on theoretical and methodological grounds for more detailed attention. The core assumptions of this model: the inner-outer perspective of performance, intra personal skills, and leadership skills were identified and discussed. The implications of all models for feedback seeking behaviour were examined, highlighting the particular relevance of the inner-outer perspective of performance assessment to the current thesis. It was shown to have implications for feedback seeking, and provided a means to integrate all theoretical and methodological considerations raised in earlier discussions. The inner perspective is concerned with a person's self assessments of their own skills, whereas the outer perspective concerns how a person's skills, performance and accomplishment are evaluated by others. In terms of the domain model, the inner-outer perspective of performance assessment is best aligned with the multi-system multi-rater (MSMR) or 360- degree feedback
process, which is consequential for feedback seeking behaviour and hence relevant to this study.

The only shortfall of the domain model however is that it does not incorporate any consideration of career skills. A case was nonetheless made for integrating career skills into the domain model to enhance the explanatory power of the extended domain model.
CHAPTER 5  METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction and chapter overview
This chapter discusses the methodology of the thesis. It begins with a statement of the aims of the research, introduces the research questions, and continues with epistemological consideration of the research. A rationale for employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches in research studies 1 to 2, and study 3 respectively is provided.

5.2 Aims of the research and research questions
As indicated in the introductory chapter, the main aim of this thesis was to investigate the feedback – performance association, and to test the theoretical proposition that self-awareness plays a role in this association in a managerial domain in a real organisational setting.

The study sought to answer the following research questions
1. What is the relationship between feedback seeking, self awareness and performance/managerial competence?
2. How can we explain the feedback seeking process in a managerial domain in a real organisational setting?

5.3 Thesis epistemology
This thesis seeks to contribute to knowledge in feedback seeking as a managerial self regulation process with implications for management effectiveness. The thesis employed both quantitative and qualitative methods within a realist framework. Studies 1 and 2, in adopting a quantitative approach, sought to test specific hypothesis based on existing theories/models and propositions aimed at the explanations of the feedback seeking process. Study 3 however sought to explore and offer a coherent theoretical approach which could adequately explain the feedback seeking process.
5.4 Research methodology

5.4.1 How different are qualitative and quantitative approaches?
Traditionally, there are two broad approaches to social and psychological research: quantitative and qualitative, but some studies may use a blend of these two approaches (Gilbert, 1993; Punch, 2005). Polit and Hungler (1996: 15) provide the following definitions of quantitative and qualitative research.

Quantitative research involves the systematic collection of numerical information, often under conditions of considerable control and the analysis of that information. While qualitative research involves the systematic collection and analysis of more subjective narrative materials, using procedures in which there tends to be a minimum researcher-imposed control.

Generally speaking, qualitative methods are distinguishable from quantitative methods insofar as they:

- focus on interpretation rather than on quantification; an emphasis on subjectivity rather than objectivity; flexibility in the process of conducting research; orientation toward process rather than outcome; a concern with context — regarding behaviour and situation as inextricably linked in forming experience; and finally, an explicit recognition of the impact of research process on the research situation. (Cassel and Symon, 1994; cited in Brewerton and Millward, 2001: 12)

However, Maxwell (1999) notes that there is more to the contrast of qualitative and quantitative methods than simply different ways of doing the same thing. These two approaches address different research questions and purposes. Each approach has its own strengths and limitations. Therefore, choosing between them or using them together constitutes a major research decision and requires thoughtful consideration. However, where a particular research situation requires the use of both approaches, their usage could be justified and considered appropriate.

5.4.2 Rationale for adopting quantitative and qualitative approaches
The choice of research method should reflect the purposes of the research. In this respect, Punch (2005) suggests that the first step is for the researcher to clarify the objectives of the research, for example, whether the research sets out to test, verify, build or generate theory. According to Punch, this distinction usually correlates with the type of research method use and he writes:
Quantitative research has typically been more directed at theory verification, while qualitative research has typically been more concerned with theory generation. (Punch 2005: 16)

In relation to the present research, as indicated in the introduction the purpose of studies 1 and 2 is mainly directed at theory verification and study 3 at theory generation.

5.4.3 Why quantitative methodology (in studies 1 & 2)

Studies 1 & 2 aimed to investigate 1) the relationships between feedback, self awareness and performance/managerial competence and 2) managerial feedback seeking tendencies, regarding the feedback information sought and the preferred feedback sources. Quantitative methodology, specifically analytic survey was employed in studies 1 & 2. Oppenheim (1992: 21) describes an analytic survey as follows.

The analytic relational survey is set up to explore associations between particular variables. Its design is in many ways similar to that of the laboratory experiment, it is usually set up to explore specific hypothesis. It is less oriented towards representativeness and more towards finding associations and explanations less towards descriptions and enumeration and more towards ‘how often’ than ‘why’ and ‘what goes with what’.

In the current thesis there was a need to identify the concepts and variables central to the explanations of the feedback seeking process, and to gather data on them to measure and assess the extent to which they can adequately provide an explanation for the feedback seeking process. However, whilst the data from an analytic survey can shed light on how to explain the feedback seeking process, further questions may arise that require a deeper understanding of the processes involved in feedback seeking. Qualitative methodology was considered appropriate for this purpose in study 3.

5.4.4 Why qualitative methodology in study 3?

Study 3 aimed to provide theoretical insight beyond the extant literature on the feedback seeking process in a managerial domain in an organisational setting. A qualitative method was thus employed. Moreover:
Qualitative research is increasingly becoming more accepted in psychology. It’s appeal perhaps lies both in being able to meet some of the limitations of quantitative research which has been traditionally been the dominant paradigm in psychology and on the assumptions it makes about the nature of social phenomena and the basis of scientific knowledge. For instance, qualitative research considers meanings to be negotiable and variable rather than fixed; it is often concerned with understanding the uniqueness and particularity of human experience rather than seeking to establish general regularities; and it avoids overwriting internally structured subjectivities with externally imposed system of meanings. (Henwood and Pidgeon, 1992; Henwood, 1996; cited in Lyons, 2002: 269)

Therefore, both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were considered appropriate and were employed in the studies for this thesis.

The researcher in a more formal sense... can potentially draw on a whole range of different techniques, both qualitative and quantitative, in addressing the issue of interest. (Brewerton and Millward, 2001: 13)

The next sections discuss the multi-system-multi-rater (MSMR/360 degree) upward feedback technique; the quantitative approach used in studies 1 & 2, and the repertory grid interviews technique, including the grounded theory approach to data analysis used in study 3.

5.5 Studies 1 & 2: Quantitative methodology - analytic survey using MSMR/upward feedback technique

It is important to understand the concept of MSMR and upward feedback, and the practicalities and challenges involved in its implementation. Clear understanding of the concept and the potential practical challenges involved in its implementation enabled the researcher to address such issues and to undertake a successful study.

The implementation of the multi-rater [and upward] feedback needs to be planned and executed faultlessly, however, the challenges are wide ranging .... [Successful implementation requires ] .. an understanding of the overall process, both in conceptual and practical terms. (Rowson 1998: 46)

Therefore it will be important to discuss the MSMR concept and the practical issues involved which were adequately addressed by the researcher for successful implementation in the study. This section begins by discussing the MSMR/upward rating concept, including the description of the technique, its history, purpose and
usage. It proceeds to examine the practical considerations involved in the implementation of this methodology/technique in research. Practical considerations examined are; confidentiality issues; choice of raters and concerns for biases; administration of questionnaires; averaging of responses from multiple raters and; the nature of feedback provided. Since the study employed the upward ratings methodology, the section moves on to elaborate this technique, highlighting its origin, philosophy and justification for its usage in organisations and research, psychometric properties, and some empirical evidence for its usage in assessing managers. The section ends with the suitability of the upward feedback technique for the research and how it was implemented in the study.

5.5.1 MSMR /360- degree feedback/upward feedback -Conceptual issues

5.5.1.1 The concept of MSMR/ upward rating
The multi-source-multi-rater feedback technique (MSMR) is a process by which performance evaluations of an employee, for example a manager, are collected from more than one source, for example subordinates, peers, supervisors and customers (London & Smither, 1995). Performance evaluation ratings are provided on the target person's (the person who is being evaluated) current level of competence along specific behavioural indicators. The target person who is being rated will usually provide a self-assessment of his or her performance or competence on the same behavioural dimensions (Bailey & Fletcher, 2002). MSMR is sometimes called 360-degree feedback when performance ratings of a manager from the key sources or constituencies represent the full circle of relevant viewpoints, i.e. subordinates, peers, supervisors, customers and suppliers who may be internal or external to the organisation, and self ratings (London & Smither, 1995). When performance ratings are provided by multiple subordinates, the process is referred to as upward feedback (Dunnette, 1993).

In MSMR/upward feedback, the ratings are usually averaged and compared with the target, for example the managers' self ratings in a written report. The process may be paper based, and the data obtained can be amenable to SPSS statistical analysis. On the other hand, the process may be completed through specifically designed software packages (Fletcher & Baldry, 1999). The ratings are compiled into a feedback report with the aim that the report can help the target person, for example the manager, to
identify his or her strengths and weaknesses regarding performance, and whether his or her work behaviour meets a standard or criterion level of performance. It is intended to enable the appraisee, for example the manager, to better understand how he or she is viewed by others and therefore get more accurate insight into their competence. It provides areas where managers might need to develop their skills for performance improvement. When this feedback information is provided to the manager, the main objective is that the manager can use it to facilitate the development of his or her skill for performance improvement (Bailey & Fletcher, 2002; London & Smither, 1995; Tornow, 1993). This study employed the upward feedback method and discussion will thus focus on this technique explaining justification for its usage, and how it was applied.

5.5.1.2 History, usage and applicability

According to London and Smither (1995), MSMR is grounded in the philosophy of survey feedback (Nadler, 1977) and performance appraisal (Latham & Wexley, 1994). It is a fairly new technique used mainly in the western developed countries, and may be least known or used in developing countries. The history of MSMR feedback systems is relatively new as it was developed and first used in the US in the mid 1980s (Earley, 1986) and the UK in the early 1990s (Algera & Steel Works, 1990; Redman & Mathews, 1997; Redman & Snape, 1992). The majority of studies to date in MSMR and upward feedback have been conducted in the USA (Antonioni, 1996; Fletcher & Baldry, 1999; Pollack & Pollack, 1996) and in private and public sector organisations in the UK (Fletcher, 1997; Bailey & Fletcher, 2002; Warr & Bourne, 1999) and recently, in Australia (Heslin & Latham, 2004). There is little evidence of the popularity of the use of MSMR in the rest of Europe (Fletcher, 1997).

MSMR is mainly used for the development of managers, particularly interpersonal relationships, leadership and team building. It is rarely used for administrative purposes, that is in the context of annual performance appraisal and performance related pay (Fletcher & Baldry, 1999). Although the MSMR is used for management development purposes, the focus of discussion here is its methodology, and why and how the technique was employed in this thesis. The next section discusses the practical issues associated with the methodology of the technique, and how it was applied in the study.
5.5.2 Practical considerations: Methodology of the MSMR/Upward feedback technique

This section discusses the methodology of the technique/system. This is concerned with practical issues in the design and implementation of MSMR feedback research which may affect the ratings ascribed to a person by others, or the persons self-assessment. For developmental purposes, the issues may affect the target person e.g., the manager’s responses to the feedback ratings and acceptability of peer ratings or upward feedback. Pertinent issues include: confidentiality and anonymity; choice of raters and concerns for biases; averaging of responses; feedback report. (Practical issues and potential challenges were adequately addressed for the successful implementation of the methodology in the study). The section ends with the suitability of the MSMR/upward feedback technique for the research and how it was applied in the study.

5.5.2.1 Confidentiality/Anonymity

An important practical consideration in the implementation of the MSMS/ upward feedback technique is whether it offers confidentiality and anonymity to respondents. Respondents are more likely to give candid assessments when they are sure of their anonymity, that is not identifiable by the target person being rated, and are also sure of confidentiality of responses. On the other hand respondents, for example subordinates, are more likely to be less candid in their assessments, and tend to be lenient when they are not sure of their anonymity and confidentiality of responses. This is because they might fear the adverse reactions from the persons receiving the feedback, for example the manager (Pollack and Pollack, 1996). Concerns about confidentiality are likely to become more prominent in developing countries and cultures where there is less familiarity with the 360 degree feedback. As a result, respondents are more likely to ask more questions about the process, especially around confidentiality issues (Rowson, 1998).

Confidentiality and anonymity concerns, which have implications for attitudes to MSMR and the provision of accurate and candid upward feedback, may be particularly so in:
a rigid hierarchy in a collective society where members are expected to maintain absolute loyalty and obedience to authority in their obligations’ (Howard et al., 1983: cited in Rowson 1998: 46)

In such situations, upward ratings could possibly be influenced by politeness, or acceptance of authority. These effects could be minimised if respondents understood the relevance of the process to both managers and employees and the organisation as a whole (Rowson, 1998).

5.5.2.2 Choice of raters
In practice, many organisations allow a person (manager) to choose who provides their feedback assessment to him or her. This may be due to administrative reasons, but more importantly it is because arguably, the target person who is being evaluated is actually the best person to judge who is most familiar with his or her work (Fletcher & Baldry, 1999; Fletcher, Baldry & Cunningham-Snell, 1998). When a person is allowed to choose his or her own raters, the issue is whether they will choose their friends who may be lenient in their ratings. This is because friends may be biased in their ratings, and may be less likely to give negative feedback about the person being rated (Wohlers & London, 1989). However, McEvoy & Beaty (1989), argue that friendship bias does not necessarily reduce the reliability and validity of such appraisals. For these reasons, as noted by Rowson (1998), the choice of respondents or raters is crucial to the success and usefulness of 360 degree feedback.

5.5.2.3 Administration of questionnaires
Some practical problems in the administration of questionnaires typical of MSMR implementation can affect response rate.

Even the simplest process of distributing questionnaires and arranging for them to be returned to a central processing point [as in self report surveys] can go horribly wrong [in MSMR surveys] with questionnaires going astray... More importantly, in cultures where 360 degree feedback is completely new, respondents do not know what is expected of them. (Rowson 1998: 46)

An important consideration in the implementation of MSMR is concerned with how to administer the questionnaires. Questionnaires can be distributed directly to the managers and their chosen/nominated raters. On the other hand, it can be done
through the managers to their raters. Either of these approaches is likely to make the completion and collection of the questionnaires difficult.

5.5.2.4 Averaging of responses from multiple raters
An important feature of the MSMR methodology is the averaging of responses from the multiple measures to get a composite score or feedback report. There are two main reasons for this. First, it enhances anonymity of responses, and minimises the possibility of biases which could result from idiosyncrasies of the raters. Second it facilitates or enhances statistical analysis of the data, and enables the feedback to be interpreted and made meaningful to the recipient. However, when this approach is taken the feedback loses the sensitivity of the data as the target person (manager) would not be in a position to know how he or she is being perceived by the various raters for example, subordinates. Thus, although averaging of responses has practical and statistical significance, in practice, it is likely to cover up some important differences in perceptions and assessments of the target person for example a manager (Fletcher & Baldry, 1999).

5.5.2.5 The nature of feedback provided
Another practical consideration is the nature of the feedback report produced. The majority of MSMR systems produce a summary of feedback ratings on the target (manager). The reports usually produce separate assessments provided by the various sources to enable the target person (manager) to see how he or she is perceived by their bosses, peers and subordinates. (See section 6.14 for how the feedback data was used in this study).

These practical issues in the implementation of the MSMR feedback /upward feedback methodology were adequately addressed in the study (see chapter 6 section 6.13). As the study adopted the upward ratings, the next section discusses the rationale for this technique, the psychometric properties, and how it was applied in this research.

5.5.3. Upward feedback: Justification for subordinate ratings
There are two main reasons for subordinate ratings, which dates back to the early 1970s. First, there was dissatisfaction with the traditional top – down assessments and
at this time, organisations introduced mechanisms to deal with this issue. Subordinate or upward rating is a system introduced to deal with the dissatisfaction with upward ratings. Second, there was a change in organisational structure, from the hierarchical to flatter structures, which led to the acceptance, recognition, and justification of upward ratings (Fletcher & Baldry, 1999).

Flatter organisational structures enable supervisors and managers to have a wider span of control over more work units and hence, more subordinate staff. Flatter organisational structures facilitate, enhance and justify upward ratings in three main ways. First, subordinates are more likely to observe, and be affected by managerial behaviours, especially leadership behaviours, than the manager’s or supervisor’s peers and bosses (London & Beaty, 1993). Subordinates are thus placed in a better position to assess managers’ work behaviours, particularly, leadership behaviours and effectiveness (Hogan & Hogan, 1994; Judge, Bono & Gerhardt, 2002). Second, subordinates are more likely to have more contacts with the supervisor or manager than his or her supervisor or peers which gives them the opportunity to observe different managerial behaviours (Pollack & Pollack, 1996). Because of the likelihood of their most frequent contacts with their managers, subordinates would be in a better position to have the relevant and enough information to assess their managers interpersonal skills. Also, bosses may be more concerned about managerial technical competency, whereas subordinates would be more influenced by trust and interpersonal relationship. Also, in most organisations, subordinates generally outnumber the manager’s or supervisor’s peers and superiors so they constitute the largest rating group (Pollack & Pollack, 1996). For these reasons subordinate ratings are justified in most organisations. Also, subordinates are in a better position to assess a manager’s leadership and interpersonal competence. These provide some justifications for using upward ratings to assess managers’ leadership and interpersonal competence in this study.

5.5.3.1 Psychometric properties of upward ratings

The reliability and validity of upward ratings of a manager have been established (London & Wohlers, 1991; McEvoy & Beaty, 1989; Mount, 1984). The reliability of individual subordinate ratings using intra rater agreement, that is the level of correlation between subordinate ratings of a particular manager, may be low. This
suggests that the reliability of a single subordinate rating may be low. However, when the responses are averaged, the ratings tend to reach acceptable reliability (McEvoy & Beatty, 1989). Also, there is positive relationship between the reliability of subordinate ratings and the number of raters (London & Wohlers, 1991). Assessments provided by three raters can give an acceptable or optimum reliability (Bailey & Fletcher, 2003; Fletcher, Baldry & Cunningham-Snell, 1998; Heslin & Lathan, 2004; Spreitzer, Perttula & Xin, 2005). This provides justification for averaging scores in upward ratings in particular, and in MSMR methodology in general. In this study, assessments of a manager were provided by three subordinates, and ratings were accordingly averaged.

5.5.3.2 Empirical evidence on the usage of upward ratings
The literature on evaluation of leadership effectiveness provides empirical evidence that shows that subordinate ratings provide a good measure of managerial performance, with acceptable predictive validity (McEvoy & Beatty, 1989). In one study, McEvoy and Beatty (1989) found that subordinate ratings were as good predictors of managerial effectiveness as assessment centre scores, one of the most popular ways for predicting a person’s potential for a senior management position. In another study, Judge and Bono (2000) using subordinate ratings, found that transformational leadership predicted leadership effectiveness. The inter rater agreement of the four dimensions of transformational leadership behaviours ranged between 0.73 and 0.88, and the reliabilities ranged between 0.72 and 0.86, which provided strong psychometric support for upward ratings.

5.5.4 Application of the MSMR/Upward ratings in the study
Using the upward feedback approach to data collection the study invited managers to complete a self-report questionnaire on the way they perceive themselves, and to ask up to three of their staff to complete a much briefer questionnaire on their managerial perceptions. Managers completed a self-report questionnaire on their feedback seeking behaviour, self awareness, intrapersonal skills, job satisfaction and career skills (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Bass & Yammarino, 1992). Subordinates rated their managers on interpersonal skills and transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1992; Fletcher & Baldry, 1999; Furnham & Stringfield, 1991; Gerstner & Day, 1997; Hogan & Hogan, 1994; Hogan & Warrenfetz, 2003; Judge & Bono, 2000;
McEvoy & Beaty, 1989; Spreitzer et al., 2005). In order to obtain a complete data set for managers, subordinate staff responses were matched to the corresponding manager in question. The appropriate statistical analyses were carried out on the data to test for the various hypothesis and address the research questions. Studies 1 & 2 are reported in chapter 6 of this thesis. The results however raised further theoretical issues which warranted the design and implementation of study 3 using qualitative methodology.

5.6 Study 3 : Qualitative methodology: Repertory grid interview technique and Grounded theory analytic approach

Study 3 sought to explore the explanations for the feedback seeking in a managerial domain in a real organisational setting. The repertory grid interview technique (RG) was employed to collect data and the grounded theory analytic approach (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Glasser & Strauss, 1967; Henwood & Pidgeon, 1992) was used for data analysis. The RG is based on Kelly's (1955) theory of personal construct psychology (PCP). The RG has been found to be useful in studies on management development and occupational and organisational psychology context (Brophy, 2003; Cassel, et al., 2000; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Holman, 1996; Fransella & Porter, 1990; Fromm, 2004). Using the grounded theory approach to data analysis, the findings produced interesting theoretical insight into the feedback seeking process. A fuller more detailed description and defence of the RG and grounded theory technique is provided in chapter 7.

5.7 Chapter summary

This chapter discussed the methodology of the thesis. It began with a statement of the aims of the research and an introduction of the research questions. It continued with a brief description of the choice of research method and the justification for adopting a quantitative approach in studies 1 and 2 on one hand, and a qualitative approach in study 3 on the other. In studies 1 and 2, the hypothesis tested did not appear to have provided adequate explanations for the feedback process. The results warranted further research, study 3, which could offer a richer understanding of the feedback seeking process in a managerial domain in a real organisational setting. Accordingly a qualitative approach was considered appropriate for this purpose.
Under the quantitative approach, it discusses an analytic survey using the multi-system – multi-rater (MSMR/360-degree feedback) and the upward feedback methodology employed in studies 1 & 2. The main issues discussed here were the description and usage of the MSMR concept, and the practical considerations and potential challenges associated with the implementation of the technique. The practical consideration included the methodology, design and delivery of the technique; confidentiality issues; choice of raters; administration of questionnaires; averaging of responses from multiple raters; and the nature of feedback provided/how to use the data in research. Clear understanding of these considerations enabled the researcher to address them adequately and successfully implement the MSMR/upward rating methodology in the study. It proceeded to discuss in detail the rationale for employing the upward feedback technique, providing the psychometric properties and empirical evidence for its usage. It concludes with how the technique was employed in the study, and the need for a qualitative study.
CHAPTER 6 EMPIRICAL STUDIES 1 & 2

6.1 Overview of chapter
This chapter presents studies 1 & 2 of the thesis. It begins with a brief reiteration of studies on feedback-seeking, a statement of research aims and specific research questions. It proceeds to describe the research design and methodology that was employed in the study, and the results obtained. Using Multi-System- Multi - Rater (MSMR/ 360 degrees feedback) and upward feedback technique, two studies investigated managerial feedback seeking propensities in an organisational setting. The first study investigated the relationships between feedback, self awareness and performance. The second study investigated managers feedback seeking tendencies, the type of performance feedback information sought, and the preferred feedback sources. Both studies are based on a total sample of 568 participants comprising 142 managers and 426 manager-matched subordinate staff. The chapter concludes with a summary and discussion of the main findings of the studies, including the direction of the thesis, which warranted a third study (study 3).

6.2 Introduction
This section provides a brief review of the two main issues which are the focus of research on the feedback seeking process, and the basis for studies 1 and 2. It begins by highlighting the inconsistencies in findings on the relationship between feedback and performance, and the inadequate explanation of the feedback seeking process. It moves on to show the reasons why findings in feedback research have yielded little insight into the processes involved in feedback seeking particularly, in a managerial situation in real organisational settings. Following that, a proposition is made that the concept of self awareness can be used to provide an explanation of the feedback seeking process. On the basis of this proposition, the objectives of studies 1 and 2, were to investigate the feedback seeking-performance association, and to provide an explanation for the feedback seeking process using the concept of self awareness.

As demonstrated in chapter 2, research findings on the potential impact of feedback on performance are inconsistent (De Nisi & Kluger, 2000; Kluger & De Nisi, 1996). However, the majority of work leans towards a positive impact of feedback on
performance (Atwater, et al., 2000; Brutus et al., 1999; Hergarty, 1974; Heslin & Lathan, 2004; Maurer et al., 2002; Morrison, 1993; Smither et al., 1995, 2003).

But why feedback has a positive impact on performance has not been determined or explained (Atwater et al., 2002; Avolio et al., 2003). In an attempt to tackle this situation, several studies have investigated motives (Fedor et al., 1992; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990; Trope & Neter, 1994; Tsui & Ashford, 1994) situational factors, including feedback source characteristics, and individual differences variables (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Atwater et al., 2000; Bailey & Austin, 2006; Fedor et al., 1992; Fletcher & Baldry, 2000; Levy et al., 1995; Morrison & Bies, 1991; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990; Tsui & Ashford, 1994; Tuckey et al., 2002; Vancouver & Morrison, 1995; Vande Walle & Cummings, 1997) which are likely to underlie or influence feedback seeking behaviour.

But these findings have yielded little insight into the processes involved in feedback seeking particularly, in a managerial situation in real organisational settings. Also, findings in the extant empirical literature are not coherently linked to explain the feedback seeking process. A review of the relevant literature also points to the absence of any sound theoretical basis in understanding the feedback seeking process.

Most of these studies are laboratory based (Ivancevich & Machon, 1982; Levy et al., 1995; Northcraft & Ashford, 1990) and hypothetical scenarios (Tuckey et al., 2002; Vancouver & Morrison, 1995) which might not be applicable in real working situations. First, although hypothetical scenarios enable the manipulation of independent variables, and provide a level of control that can not be achieved in a field setting, the findings might not be applicable in real organisational settings (Vancouver & Morrison, 1995). Second, laboratory studies and experiments, which might be computer generated, deal with simple tasks and simple form of information on performance under the control of the experimenter. As acknowledged by Algera and Steel Works (1990) the difference between the feedback process in a laboratory situation and in an actual work situation in organisations can be very considerable. This is because in work organisations or situation, tasks are more comprehensive, and the feedback process can be complex, involving interpersonal and power relationships. Third, most of the studies are quantitative in nature which do not in
themselves provide adequate explanations of the feedback process (Alveson, 2002). Fourth, the findings are not linked to offer a coherent explanation of the feedback seeking process. Therefore, a theoretical proposition that can provide explanation for the feedback performance – association is needed.

A core human consideration which can enhance our understanding of the feedback seeking process is self-awareness (Atwater et al., 2000; Fletcher, 1997; Fletcher & Baldry, 2000). Atwater et al. (2000) argued that performance improvement resulting from feedback could be attributed to self awareness of any discrepancies between ideal and actual performance. Thus both active feedback seeking and self awareness could be considered as integral to the idea that an effective manager is good at self regulation (Ashford & Tsui, 1991). However, the concept of self awareness has been described as a neglected area in research because of conceptual and measurement problems (Fletcher, 1997).

Yet arguably, feedback is effective to the extent that it enhances self awareness of for example, any discrepancy between ideal and actual performance). It is also likely that the more self-aware, a person is, the more likely it is that the person will actively seek feedback. The few studies in this area show that self awareness is related to accurate self assessment (Fletcher & Baldry, 2000), feedback seeking tendencies (Fletcher, Taylor & Glanfield, 1996; Levy et al., 1995) and high performance (Bass & Yammarino, 1991; Fletcher & Baldry, 2000; Greguras, Ford & Brutus, 2003; Yammarino & Atwater, 1993). Also, self awareness has been explored as an individual difference variable (Fletcher & Baldry, 2000) hence it could be investigated as a potential mediating variable in the feedback seeking process. As argued in chapter 3, within a managerial self regulation framework, the concept of self awareness can be used to explain and enhance our understanding of the feedback seeking process.

The objectives of studies 1 & 2 were to investigate the feedback seeking- performance association, and provide explanation for the feedback seeking process using the concept of self awareness.
6.3 Research questions

Based on the aims of the research and the literature review presented in chapters 2 to 4, and the introduction of this chapter, the research questions addressed in studies 1 & 2 are presented below.

Study 1
1) Does active feedback seeking have a positive effect on managerial performance/competencies?
2) Is there any relationship between feedback seeking, self awareness, and performance?
3) Does the concept of self-awareness explain or contribute to an explanation of the feedback seeking process?
4) How does the concept of self-awareness enhance our understanding of managers' performance feedback seeking?

Study 2
1) Are managers likely to seek feedback about their performance?
2) What performance feedback information are managers likely to seek?
3) From whom are managers likely to seek feedback about their performance?

First, in addressing the research on inconsistencies in findings on the feedback-performance association, it was hypothesised that

\[ \text{there will be positive relationship between feedback seeking and performance (H1)} \]

Second, in order to explain the feedback seeking process, two main hypotheses were tested. It was hypothesised that

\[ \text{there will be a positive relationship between feedback seeking behaviour and self awareness (H2a).} \]

\[ \text{there will be positive relationship between self-awareness and performance (H2b).} \]
Thirdly

*self awareness could mediate the association between feedback and performance* (H3).

Essentially, the relationships between feedback seeking, self awareness and performance, and the self awareness mediating hypothesis are presented in figure 6.1 below

![Diagram of Competencies](image)

Figure 6.1 A model of self awareness mediating hypothesis

Thus, as it was argued in the literature review, the self awareness concept could be useful in explaining feedback seeking and performance, *within a self regulation framework* (see Chapter 3). The specific performance criteria of interest in a managerial context are intra personal, interpersonal, leadership, and *career skills* adopted from Hogan & Warrenfeltz's (2003) domain model of managerial competencies (see Chapter 4).
6.4 Variables of study (1 & 2)

It is important to clarify the independent (predictor) variables, and the dependent (outcome) variables which are the focus of the analysis.

Feedback seeking behaviour (Fsb) as an independent and dependent variable

Feedback seeking behaviour is a key variable central in the thesis. For current purposes, it is conceptualised as a) the tendency for a manager to ask a potential source about his or her past performance for information, and b) with the intention of increasing knowledge about the appropriateness of the performance, that is, to assess how correct, accurate or adequate that performance is (Iglen et al., 1979). Feedback seeking is used as both an independent, and dependent variable, depending on the focus of analysis. A central argument in the thesis is that feedback seeking is positively associated with performance, and could predict managerial competency. In this case it is used as a key independent variable as a predictor of managerial competency. On the other hand it will be used as both an independent and dependent variable in its association with self awareness. In this sense it was expected that feedback seeking would depend on the level of self awareness. Thus self awareness could enhance feedback seeking. This is because, arguably, feedback is effective to the extent that it enhances self awareness. Conversely, it is also likely that the more self aware are also the more likely to actively seek feedback.

Independent variables

There are three other key independent variables used in the analysis: self awareness, feedback perception, and intrapersonal skills.

Self awareness

As demonstrated earlier (Chapter 3) there are various definitions, conceptualisations and controversies surrounding self-awareness, indicating that the self awareness construct needs operational clarity and also further validation (Millward 2005). It can be conceptualised in terms of self-other rating congruence (Yammarino & Atwater, 1991) or from a public consciousness perspective (Fenigstein, Scheier, & Scheier, 1975). For the purpose of this study, it is conceptualised from the public
consciousness perspective. Drawing on Buss (1980), Fenigstein (1979), and Fenigstein et al., (1975), it is specifically conceptualised as the extent to which managers will show concern about, or interest in, others’ opinions about their performance, be responsive and give attention to the expectations and standards by which the work environment evaluates their work behaviour or performance. Defined and conceptualised in this way, there is the tendency for managers who are more self aware to seek feedback about their performance. It is also likely that the more feedback they seek, the more self aware they become.

Self awareness is used as a key independent variable in its relationship with feedback seeking, and also, as a predictor of performance. Further, it is used as a potential mediating variable in the feedback –performance association.

**Feedback perception (FbP)**

Following the theoretical basis for the relationship between feedback and self awareness, it was considered that a concept /variable describing the usefulness of feedback will be important in the study. Drawing on Alimo-Metcalfe (1998), Fletcher and Baldry (2000), and Wohlers and London (1989), perception of the usefulness of feedback is conceptualised simply in terms of how managers perceive the usefulness of feedback. In this sense, it is conceptualised as the extent to which managers perceive that feedback about their performance will enable them to have accurate insight into their performance, know their strengths and weaknesses regarding their performance, or give them accurate insight into their performance, and/or modify their work behaviours for performance improvement. Feedback perception is used as an independent variable in its association with self awareness, and feedback seeking.

**Intrapersonal skills**

‘Intra personal skills’, comprising self esteem, self efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability, are all indicative of the ‘core self evaluations’ construct (Judge & Bono, 2001) and as such can be treated as a competency dimension consistent with the domain model (Hogan & Warrenfeltz, 2003). Intrapersonal skills are considered as independent variables in this thesis for the following reason: they tend to be relatively stable, predict job satisfaction (Judge & Bono, 2001), and also future managerial career skills and success (Hogan & Warrenfeltz, 2003). Individuals high in self –
esteem exhibit positive evaluations toward themselves and their capability to deal with things, successfully and complete tasks. The relationships between self esteem, feedback seeking behaviour and performance are inconsistent with the majority, showing very small relationship or no relationship at all (Ashford, 1986; Fedor, et al., 1992; Leyy et al., 1995). Self efficacy, a key independent variable in the analysis, is a good predictor of managerial performance outcomes (Bailey & Austin 2006; Bandura, 1986; Gist & Mitchel, 1992; Maurer et al., 2002; Robertson & Sadri, 1993). People with high efficacy are more likely to make use of feedback information to improve performance.

Dependent variables
The key dependent variable central to the thesis is managerial competency, the performance criteria of which are interpersonal skills (trust, communication), leadership skill (transformational leadership), and career skills (job satisfaction, career satisfaction) (see chapter 4). Intra personal skills, are considered as independent variables, as defended earlier.

6.5 Research design
The study employed a correlational and predictive design, using an analytic survey approach, and the MSMR technique for data gathering. An experimental design is the most powerful one for determining causal relationships (Black, 1999), moreso, when after all we usually want to know or say what causes what (Fife-Schaw, 2002). This is because in experimental design,

the researcher has control over the relevant independent variables and allocates participants to conditions, at random in an attempt to make sure that they know exactly what is responsible for the changes they observe. (Fife-Schaw 2002: 75)

However, there were reasons why it was not possible or appropriate to use this in the study. Specifically, it was not possible to set up an event in which the levels of independent variables could be manipulated, or assign participants to various
conditions in a real organisational setting because of practical considerations and limitations. It will nonetheless be possible to observe relationships between key variables in a correlational design. Moreover, the correlational design allows for the importation of the logic of experimental research to guide the study and to provide a sound scientific rationale (Oppenheim, 1992; Punch 2005). Punch (2005: 78) writes:

"The logic of correlational surveys is based on the logic behind experimental design. Because we can rarely experiment, research methodologists have applied the principles of experimental reasoning to the non-experimental research situation, developing logically equivalent non-experimental designs for those situations where variation occurs in the independent variables of interest, but where it is not possible to manipulate or control that variation for research purposes."

Although in correlational research, variables appear related to one another, it is difficult to determine whether there is a causal relationship. Because of the practical limitations that make it difficult to conduct experimentally controlled studies, correlational studies are often the most appropriate design in many real world domains (Fife-Schaw, 2002). In the current context, a correlational design was deemed appropriate to investigate the key relationships between feedback seeking, self awareness and competencies in a managerial domain in a real organisational setting. Moreover, the study used the multi-system multi-rater (MSMR) and upward feedback approach to data collection (see chapter 5 section 5.5). Using this design, the study invited managers to complete a self-report questionnaire on the way they perceive themselves, and to ask up to three of their staff to complete a much briefer questionnaire on their managerial perceptions. Managers also completed a self-report questionnaire on their feedback seeking behaviour, self awareness, core self evaluations (self efficacy, locus of control, self esteem, and emotional stability), job satisfaction and career skills. The staff rated their managers on interpersonal skills (managerial trust and communication) and transformational leadership.

6.6 Social/ Organisational Research/ MSMR Survey in a developing country
A consideration that had to be addressed was the application of survey, in particular the MSMR and upward feedback methodology, which is predominantly used in
developed countries and western cultures (Bailey & Fletcher, 2002). In developing countries, particularly in Africa, and specifically, Ghana where the research was conducted, traditionally the young (subordinates) are expected to respect the ideas and opinions of the elderly (managers). In essence, the former are not expected to question the latter, a situation which might have implications for upward ratings. This is particularly so when Spreitzer et al., (2005) in a cross cultural study on transformational leadership in the US and Taiwan argued that the individual value of traditionality (emphasizing respect for hierarchy in relationships) moderates the relationship between six dimensions of transformational leadership and leadership effectiveness. Their findings suggested that traditionality may matter in upward ratings of transformational leadership behaviours. The issue for the current thesis was therefore the need to anticipate that management performance is a potentially highly sensitive consideration in Ghana, especially in relation to upward ratings. Particular considerations arising in association with conducting successful surveys in developing countries include cultural differences, unfamiliarity with research, suspicion about the purpose of the research, lack of comprehension, the perceived applicability of the questionnaire, and the need for elaborate fieldwork logistics (Bulmer & Warwick 1983).

However, Bulmer and Warwick draw attention to successful surveys conducted in developing countries in the 1970s, under the guidance of central research staff located in London and others conducted in India. Thus, successful surveys can be conducted in developing countries as research problems and challenges are encountered not only in such countries, but in developed countries as well.

A good case could be made that the problems encountered in those [developing] countries are not so much unique as more frequent, more severe, and intractable than those elsewhere... The distinctive feature of survey research in developing countries is not the presence of this difficulty but its prevalence and severity. (Bulmer and Warwick, 1983: 145)

Therefore, noting the problems which may affect the undertaking of surveys, particularly, the potential usage of MSMR in developing countries and finding solutions to them, should be seen as essential.
Bulmer notes:

Moreover, many of the problems of sample surveys, including lack of comprehension by local respondents, suspicion about the purpose of research, distortions in responses, repeat themselves in different form in the observational study. (1983:18)

The researcher acknowledged the potential problems and challenges in the application of the MSMR and the upward feedback survey in a developing country. However, he considered that if they are adequately addressed, it would not be impossible to conduct a successful study (see section 6.13) as research problems and challenges are encountered in developing countries and elsewhere.

6.7 Pilot study

A pilot study is a planned preliminary research, the purpose of which is to test certain aspects of the research that are not clear in a study, or to test the researcher's plans on the ground (Oppenheim, 1992). A pilot study has clear objectives. The study was piloted on 16 participants with managerial responsibilities, with two main objectives. First, to assess the practicality of the study and second, to pre test the questionnaires (see appendix 1). Testing the practicality was concerned with the research process including willingness of participation generally and willingness of managers in particular to be assessed by their staff, confidentiality and anonymity issues, and also to maximise staff responses (by reducing the likelihood of participant non-compliance). Pre-testing questionnaires was to establish whether would-be participants will understand the questions and instructions. Consequently, the study was piloted on 16 participants, with managerial responsibilities from November - December 2005.

The nature and procedure of the study and the purpose of the pilot study were explained to participants in the questionnaire. It asked the managers/leaders to complete a self-report questionnaire on the way they perceived themselves, and to ask up to three of their staff to complete a much briefer questionnaire on their managerial perceptions. Two main issues were emphasised to participants regarding the pilot study. First, that the questionnaire responses would be anonymous but it was critical that staff responses could be matched to the manager/leader in question otherwise
the exercise would be pointless. The second was that the researcher was not much interested in the content of the manager's own staff's replies, but in the viability of the procedure. Participants were informed that they were selected not only because of their managerial responsibilities but also because of their ability to provide some constructive feedback on the research process.

The pilot study achieved its objectives. Participants provided constructive feedback which gave an indication about the practicality of the study, raised some confidentiality issues, and amendments to wording for clarity of some question items. Also, the study gave indication of a low response rate (60%) and concerns about confidentiality of responses, which were later addressed in the main study, in particular the difficulty in getting all three subordinate staff and the manager in question to complete the questionnaires for data analysis. Consequently, there was the need to administer a large number of questionnaires in anticipation of low response rate in the main study.

6.8 Ethical considerations

All social [and/or psychological] research involves ethical issues. (Punch 2005:276). [This is particularly so] when humans are used as subjects in scientific investigations - as they are usually are [in social/psychological research] - great care must be exercised in ensuring that the rights of those humans are properly protected. (Polit and Hungler 1996:117)

Polit and Hungler (1996) draw attention to broad areas of ethical concerns in social research, which include respect for human dignity and justice. More focused areas of ethical concerns for researchers in the social sciences are suggested by Fontana and Frey (1994), Oppenheim (1996) and Punch (2005). Fontana and Frey emphasise the need to obtain informed consent from would-be respondents, to ensure respondents' right to privacy, protection from harm and the protection of their identity. These same areas of concern, are reiterated by Oppenheim, who notes:

The basic principle governing data collection is that no harm should come to the respondent as a result of their participation in the research. (1996: 83). The respondent's right to privacy and the right to refuse to answer certain questions ... should always be respected, and no undue pressure should be brought to bear on the respondent. (1996: 84)
Consequently, ethical issues were considered in this research. The research conformed to the ethical guidelines produced by the British Psychological Society's (BPS) Division of Occupational Psychology, the *Guidelines for Professional Practice and Conduct For Occupational Psychologists* (1996). These guidelines cover the concerns raised by Fontana and Frey (1994), Oppenheim (1996), Polit and Hungler (1996) and Punch (2005). The BPS (1996) guidelines include: explanation of the potential impact of research to participants in advance of informed consent; information about all features of the research, the research procedures, the publication of results; and confidentiality of research data. These guidelines are also adhered to by the newly formed Ghana Psychological Association (GPA) which is currently drawing up its constitution and adopting codes of conduct from the BPS and the American Psychological Association (APA).

Practical steps were taken to ensure that ethical issues were observed. As suggested by Oppenheim (1996) and Punch (2005) the front page of the questionnaire (information sheet) contained information about the following: purpose of the study; procedure; request for consent from would-be participants; assurance of confidentiality of respondents and responses; and the ability of would-be participants to refuse to participate, or free to withdraw.

The nature and procedure of the study and the purpose of the study were explained to participants in the questionnaire. It asked the managers/leaders to complete a self-report questionnaire on the way they perceived themselves, and to ask up to three of their staff to complete a much briefer questionnaire on their managerial perceptions. Two main issues were emphasised to participants regarding the nature and purpose of the study. First, it was emphasised that the questionnaire responses would be anonymous and confidential but it was critical that staff responses could be matched to the manager/leader in question otherwise the study would be pointless, hence the need to pre-code the questionnaires. Second, it was emphasised that the study was not intended for subordinates to undermine the authority of their managers, but to enable the managers see themselves the way their subordinates see their leadership and interpersonal skills, an exercise which could be useful in performance management; and moreover the study was for academic research purposes only.
Participants were encouraged to feel comfortable about answering all the questions frankly as every effort would be taken to ensure that the strictest confidentiality was maintained. They were assured that it would not be possible for anyone who knows them, including the person who approached them to complete the questionnaire, to personally identify them with the answers provided. Participants were requested to seal the complete questionnaires in envelopes provided, and return them directly to the researcher or his assistant. Participants were made to understand that participation was voluntarily, and they reserved the right to freely withdraw from the study at any time, and without giving reason for withdrawing. It was realised that participants were prepared to offer verbal consent, but would not sign any form of documentation.

6.9 Organisational Context

Data for the study were obtained from participants drawn from organisations in Ghana: including academia (26.1%); banks and financial (19.0%); hospitality and retail (6.3%), manufacturing (5.6%), non-governmental organisations (8.5%) and others such as private, and public services (34.5%). The researcher considered it appropriate to do the study in a number of organisations rather than one large single organisation, for the following reasons. First, the nature of the study was such that it was difficult to get an adequate matched manager-subordinate sample from one organisation, as there are not large corporate organisations in Ghana, a developing country in Africa. More importantly, the study was concerned with generic managerial competencies, common to most occupations and spanning across most organisations, rather than core job competencies, which are specific to particular jobs in a particular situation for specific organisations (Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999). (See chapter 4, section 4.5).

The researcher directly contacted the participating organisations and introduced himself with a covering letter (see appendix 2). The researcher met with the Human Resources Managers or their representatives in the various organisations, introduced himself, and explained the proposed research, its aims, procedures and the potential benefits to the organisation of participation. It was explained that the questionnaires would take between 10-20 minutes to complete, and that when they were distributed, participants would be given 1-2 weeks to return them.
6.10 Participants

The sample for this study comprised managers and their subordinate staff drawn from across organisations in Ghana. All the participating organisations are located in Accra, the capital city of the country. Due to the nature of the study, and the design, employing the MSMR, at this stage, it is important to clarify and classify the samples for the purpose of analysis. First; the target participants, second; the sample that responded/participated in the study, and third; the sample that was actually used in data analysis. These samples are described in detail later in this section.

Choice of a large sample size was in anticipation of participant non compliance (i.e. not complying with the research procedure), the explicit right to withdraw from the study (ethical issue) and knowledge of the typically low response/return rate of questionnaires (particularly in a study requiring completed questionnaires from management sets comprising of one manager and three subordinate staff to make the study meaningful). Low return rates of questionnaires are typical in research surveys in organisational settings (Breweton & Millward, 2001). Moreover, as it was found in the pilot study, this problem can be particularly serious in research which involves questionnaires about a sensitive topic (Barrett, 2002), such as this study involving performance management in a multi-system multi-rater upward rating framework (Fletcher & Bailey, 2000).

To ameliorate the anticipated low response rate, and have a reasonable sample size (about 150 sets, a set comprising one manager and three subordinates) for the study, 972 (i.e., 243 sets, a set comprising one manager and three subordinates) were administered/sent out to 243 managers and 729 of their staff in some organisations in Ghana. The organisations included academia, banking and finance, hospitality, retail and manufacturing companies. Consistent with previous studies using 360 degrees feedback/upward ratings, (e.g. Bailey & Fletcher, 2003; Heslin & Lathan, 2004; Spreitzer, Perttula & Xin, 2005), each target manager was to be rated by three subordinate staff. However, due to non response from some managers and subordinates, and the inability to get all the groups (each group comprising a manager and three subordinates) completing their questionnaire set, not all completed questionnaires were useable in the analysis.
Out of the 972 questionnaires distributed, 673 completed questionnaires were returned. However, 568 questionnaires comprising 142 from managers and 426 from staff, representing a response rate of 58.4% were used in the analysis. Only those responses from managers with three subordinate ratings were used in the analysis for four reasons. First, rating scales involve subjectivity, therefore multiple ratings for a target manager is more reliable than individual scores (Scullen, 1997). The average of scores provided by three raters gives the optimum reliable score for a target ratee (Shrout & Fleiss, 1979). This method has been used in previous studies (e.g., Bailey & Fletcher, 2003; Heslin & Lathan, 2004; Spreitzer et al., 2005). Second, ratings from subordinates reporting to the same manager are averaged to create a single score for each item. Third, to make a case for aggregating the scores depends on the inter-rater reliability which provides an indication of consistency between the set of ratings on the same manager, performed by the three raters (Flemenbaum & Zimmerman, 1973). The inter-rater reliability is computed using intra-class correlations (ICC, Shrout & Fleiss, 1979). Fourth, in data analysis, ICC is more applicable when there are $k$ observers, rating $n$ targets with no missing data (i.e., each of the $n$ targets is rated by exactly $k$ observers) (Shrout & Fleiss, 1979). On this basis, the researcher considered it appropriate and therefore decided to use only managers who had ratings from all the three raters in the analysis. In this case, $k=3$, and 142 managers had all their three subordinate ratings returned to researcher.

Managers

One hundred and forty two managers comprising 103 males (72.5%) and 39 females (27.5%) provided assessment on their self awareness, feedback seeking behaviours, core self evaluation, personality variables, and job and career satisfaction. Managers were selected from a cross section of organizations: academia (37); Banking and Financial (27); Retail (9); Manufacturing (8) Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs, 12) and others (48). The average age of managers was 41.15 years (s.d. = 6.68 years; range 26 to 67 years), with an average fulltime work experience of 15.01 years (s.d. 7.66 years, range 1 to 41 years). The managers had held managerial positions in their current and other organisations between 1 to 22 years (mean = 6.18 years, s.d. = 3.40).
Subordinate raters

The subordinate raters consisted of 426 staff, comprising 280 males (65.7%) and 146 females (34.3%). Their ages ranged from 22 to 60 years (mean = 33.87, s.d. = 7.18 years). Staff have worked with their current manager between 1 to 12 years (mean = 3.63 years, s.d. = 2.53).

6.11 Measures

Two sources of measures were used in this study; a self report questionnaire, which was completed by the managers, and an upward feedback instrument, filled out by each manager’s corresponding subordinate staff. Some independent variable measures and dependent variable measures for managers were obtained from different sources to avoid common method variance, a problem that may arise from the use of self report questionnaire measures within organisational research (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). Common method variance refers to ‘the conflation of response – response correlations when all data derive from the same source [manager], i.e. from each questionnaire respondent [manager]’ (Brewerton & Millward, 2001: 108). Although, common method variance may be rarely strong enough to invalidate research findings (Doty & Glick, 1998), obtaining measures from different sources is also in consonance with the research design, and studies on MSMR feedback studies (e.g., Bailey & Fletcher, 2002; Heslin & Latham, 2004; Johnson & Ferstl, 1999; Spreitzer et al., 2005). Managers’ self report instrument comprised measures on their self awareness, feedback seeking behaviour; interpersonal skills; and career skills. The upward feedback instrument consisted of the measures on the managers’ interpersonal skills (trust and communication) and transformational leadership behaviours. Each of the two instruments is now described in detail in turn, beginning with the self report measures.
6.11.1 Managers' self report instrument

Self-appraisals and self-ratings may be unreliable indicators of behaviour and job performance, as they tend to be inflated, suffering from biases such as leniency error and social desirability biases (Borman, 1974; Thorton, 1980; Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). However, they may be useful in providing information about the self-rater's disposition (Atwarter & Yammarino, 1992; Bass & Yammarino, 1991). Therefore, it was considered appropriate for managers to evaluate themselves on the following variables: self awareness, feedback seeking behaviour, feedback perception, intra personal skills/core self evaluations, self efficacy, and locus of control, self esteem, personality variables, job satisfaction and career success.

Feedback seeking behaviour

The feedback seeking measure was adopted from Tuckey et al.'s (2002) 14-item instrument. Eight items asked managers to indicate the likelihood of seeking feedback about their performance.

Self awareness

Appropriate measurement of self awareness is problematic and controversial (Atwater et al., 1998; Bailey & Fletcher, 2002; Fletcher, 1997, 2001). Managerial self awareness (MSAw) was measured with the 7-item revised public self conscious scale (Scheier & Carver, 1985), alpha = .84. This scale is an improvement on Fenigstein et al's (1975) public self conscious scale. In this study, this scale was used on the basis that self conscious individuals necessarily engage in self awareness behaviour, in that people who score high on it will be habitually aware of and concerned about their appearance, social behaviour and the impression they make on others (Davis & Franzoi, 1999). In self-awareness theory as articulated by Buss (1980), and Fenigstein, et al., (1975) public consciousness is essentially self awareness. That is a high score on this scale indicates high self awareness.
Feedback Perception

Six items asked managers to indicate the extent to which they perceived feedback would be useful to enable them to know their strengths and weaknesses, see themselves as others see them, know their reputation, and give accurate insight into their leadership behaviour, and change their behaviour. An example item is, ‘Feedback will give me more accurate insight into my leadership behaviour’.

Feedback information sought

Four items asked managers to indicate the likelihood of seeking feedback information about the following: emotional stability and self control; interpersonal relationship with their staff; leadership behaviour; and technical competency. In the upward feedback questionnaire, subordinates were asked to indicate the extent to which their managers sought feedback on the above behaviours, except for technical competency as it would be inappropriate for them to assess that dimension (see Chapter 4).

Feedback sources

Three items asked managers to indicate their likelihood of seeking feedback from each of the following sources: immediate boss; colleague; and subordinate. To cross-validate managers’ responses, in the upward feedback instrument, subordinates were asked to indicate the extent to which managers sought feedback from them. This was done in order to determine managers’ preferred source, and any congruence between subordinates’ expectations and managers’ tendency to seek feedback from them.

Intra personal skills (core self evaluations)

Self-Esteem (SE)

This was measured with Rosenberg’s (1965) 10-item instrument with high scores indicating high self-esteem.

Self-efficacy (EFF)

Self-efficacy was measured with a modified four-item version of Jones’ (1986) efficacy scale. A sample item of this scale is ‘My job is well within the scope of my abilities’. Reliability (alpha coefficient) was reported as being 0.71 by Jones (1986) for the original scale and other modified versions of it have achieved similar levels.
For example, Jex and Bliese (1999) who used a 5-item modification achieved an alpha of .70. High scores indicate high perceived self efficacy.

**Locus of control (LOC)**

Levenson’s (1973) locus of control (coefficient alpha=0.67), scale was used as a measure of general locus of control in this study. High scores on this scale represent internality.

**Emotional stability (Low Neuroticism (NEU))**

The big 5 personality instrument (BFI) a 44-item scale was used to assess emotional stability (low neuroticism), a core self evaluation construct, and other personality variables (consistent with 5-factor model of personality). Responses to the neuroticism scale were extracted after respondents have completed the BFI.

**Career skills**

**Job satisfaction**

The 5-item instrument used to measure job satisfaction was adopted from the Job Perception Scale (JPS; Hatfield, Robinson & Huseman, 1985). The JPS is a job satisfaction measure consisting of seven point scales measuring satisfaction along five dimensions; work promotion, supervision, co-workers and pay (reliability coefficient = 0.88). Satisfaction with pay was reworded to include ‘overall remuneration package’ including pay pension, and other benefits. High scores represent high levels of job satisfaction. (Coefficient alpha was 0.76 for the current sample).

**Career success/satisfaction**

Career satisfaction was measured with an adopted version of the five-item scale developed by Greenhaus, Parasuraman, and Wormley (1990). Sample items of this scale are: ‘I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career’; ‘I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for the development of new skills’. Greenhaus et al. (1990) reported an acceptable level of internal consistency for this scale (alpha = 0.88). Managers rated the items on a 7-point scale from strongly agree (coded 7) to strongly disagree (coded 1).
6.11.2 Subordinate ratings - Upward feedback instrument

The subordinate upward feedback rating questionnaire consisted of measures on two competency dimensions: managerial interpersonal skills, comprising managerial trust and communication; and transformational leadership behaviours. It has been argued that it is appropriate for raters to evaluate and provide performance ratings on only those dimensions they are in good position to rate ((Borman, 1974; Thornton, 1980). This has been considered as the best approach within the MSMR, and upward ratings, and described as a 'hybrid' multi-trait-multi-multi-rater analysis (Borman, 1974). Consequently, subordinates were asked to assess their managers' interpersonal relationship, because people are typically poor judges of their interpersonal skills (Hogan & Warrenfetz, 2003), and managers are more likely to interact more frequently with their subordinates than other organisational constituents (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Schriesheim et al., 1999). For leadership skills, other people, and, subordinates in particular, are the best source of information regarding a person's performance as a leader. This is said to be because people are poor judges of their own performance as leaders (Hogan & Warrenfetz, 2003). Subordinates were therefore asked to rate the leader's transformational leadership behaviour because they are in a position to see the leader's behaviour on a daily basis (Spreitzer et al, 2005). Also, leadership is concerned with the ability to influence followers, and subordinates are more likely than other people in the organisation to be influenced and experience the impact of their leader's transformational leadership behaviour (Bass & Avolio, 1992). Further, there is empirical evidence for the reliability of upward rating of managerial and leadership behaviours and performance (e.g., Bass Yammarino, 1991; Furnham & Stringfield, 1994; see chapter 5, section 5.5.3).

Managerial trust

Managerial trust was assessed with the Bromiley and Cummings (1995) Organisational Trust Inventory Short (OTI-SF). The OTI-SF is a 12-item instrument that measures trust related behaviours on three dimensions/subscales with the following composite reliability; Affect, .93; Cognitive, .93; Intent to behave, .90.
Managerial communication

Managerial communication was measured with 11-items from the superior–subordinate communication scale (Miles, Patrick & King 1996). The instrument has been shown to predict subordinate job satisfaction.

Transformational leader behaviours

Transformational leadership behaviour was measured using a 12-item instrument adopted from Bass and Avolio’s (1992) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) Form 6S. It has 4 sub-scales, with 3 items each: idealized influence (charisma); inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation; and individualized consideration. High scores indicate more transformational leadership behaviours.

Additional items

-Subordinate perception of managerial feedback seeking and upward rating.

Three items asked staff to indicate the extent to which managers seek feedback about their intra personal skills, interpersonal skills and leadership skills from them. Another item asked staff to indicate the extent to which they expect their managers to seek feedback about their performance from them.

For each item, raters assessed the target manager’s competency along a 7-point rating scale from ‘strongly agree’ (coded 7) to ‘strongly disagree’ (coded 1). Consistent with similar 360 degrees feedback studies (e.g., Bailey & Fletcher, 2002), all subordinate raters provided feedback anonymously and by the nomination of the target manager.

6.12 Procedure

This section provides a detailed description of how the data was collected. It describes the distribution/administration of questionnaires, and how the questionnaires were coded to match managers to staff responses. Also discussed are the research problems and challenges and accordingly the ameliorating actions taken by researcher.

The researcher met with the Human Resources Managers or their representatives (some of whom were the researcher’s former occupational psychology students, and keen to assist in the research process) in the various organisations, introduced
himself, and explained the proposed research, its aims, procedure and the potential benefits to the organisation of participation. They were informed that it would take about 20 minutes to complete the questionnaires, and that respondent would be given up to two weeks to complete filling them up.

The questionnaires and envelopes were distributed through the organisations' representatives. When the questionnaires were distributed, participants were given two weeks completion time, which was extended to six weeks as they were returned in bits. Participants were requested to put their completed questionnaires in the sealed envelopes that were provided, and put them into designated boxes in their organisations. During the data collection period, the researcher was frequently in contact with the organisational representatives and many managers and staff to facilitate the completion of the questionnaires. All completed questionnaires were collected by the researcher in sealed envelopes from the various organisations. Data collection took place from January to March 2006.

6.13 Research problems and challenges and the ameliorating actions taken by researcher

There were three main issues that posed as problems and challenges to the researcher during the data collection; research topic area and obtaining access to organisations; novelty of the MSMR technique, upward rating and implications for participation and confidentiality and accuracy of responses; and the availability of the research report to participating organisations. All these issues pertain to the sensitivity of the topic including initial organisational access, practicalities of the research procedure and reporting feedback to organisations which are all critical aspects of the organisational research process (Brewerton & Millward, 2001).

With regards to obtaining access to organisations, some of the organisations declined to participate due to the sensitive nature of the research topic. Such organisations said they were not interested in any performance related research whether it had implications for organisational outputs or individual assessments.
Most of the participants wanted to know more about the MSMR procedure and especially the upward rating approach. This was not strange as the study appeared to be the maiden in Ghana, a developing African country because, as noted earlier on (see chapter 5, section 5.5) the vast majority of research using the MSMR feedback techniques have been conducted in major developed countries like the US (Early, 1986; Fletcher & Baldry, 1999; Johnson & Ferstl, 1999) and the UK (Bailey & Fletcher, 2002; Warr & Bourne, 1999). The researcher explained the procedure and its rationale to interested participants. It was emphasised that the intention was not for subordinates to undermine the authority of their managers; on the contrary it could help in the development of managers, which could be valuable for managers, staff and organisations. Also, it was emphasised and explained that the study was strictly for academic research purpose and not for organisational administrative usage as in the traditional performance appraisals.

Another important issue that had to be addressed was that of confidentiality of responses. This was to facilitate a reasonable response rate, and also, the accuracy of responses. Many subordinates expressed concerns and scepticism about how to ensure confidentiality of responses as their managers know that their subordinates are assessing them. The researcher explained that there was the need to provide candid assessment of their managers on the dimensions requested (communication, trust, and leadership) as the managers would be happy to know themselves, to enable them to identify their strengths and weaknesses lie, and whether their current behaviour on the assessed dimensions met the expected competence level as assessed by their subordinates. Such feedback information could facilitate their development in the required areas. To ensure confidentiality, all completed questionnaires were sealed in envelopes provided, and collected directly by the researcher.

Many managers were interested to know the outcome of the research. The researcher explained that all the responses would be collated into a doctoral thesis, and a copy will be available at the Balme Library, the main library of the University of Ghana, in due course. Many managers and staff welcomed the study as indicated by their participation, and comments made on the questionnaires. Others requested extra questionnaires to be used as a guide for their assessment and development. Some managers saw the study as an 'eye opener for performance appraisers' and as a tool.
Extra questionnaires were requested for personal development use. Some of the few comments (only 8 and not adequate for content analysis) read,

'The questions are fair and direct. The outcome [of the study] would be an eye-opener for administrators, managers and Heads of Department, etc., who are involved with appraisals'

'Reference to questions 17-31 (feedback seeking) I would say that due to the interpersonal relationship with my boss, colleagues and subordinates which is so cordial, feedback on my performance, whether positive or negative comes voluntarily rather than asking for it, and I am satisfied with that strategy. However, I have to go a step further to assure my subordinates that they are safe with me by presenting myself trustworthy, considerate and kind. This is to enable them come out of the culture of silence due to the negative reactions to subordinates by some bosses when their true colours/pictures are painted. I therefore go to the extreme to seek feedback on my performance from my subordinates'

Having addressed the issues and challenges, the study was considered successful as it achieved a reasonably large sample comparable to those in other studies, for a substantive study. The completed and retuned questionnaires were coded for data analysis using the SPSS

6.14 Coding of questionnaires to match managers to staff responses
In order to match managers to their corresponding staff responses, there were two stages of the questionnaire coding procedure. The first was coding for the administration of the questionnaires whereas the second coding, which was done on the completed questionnaires was for data entry and analyses. The first case involved coding of the 972 questionnaires, for 243 managers and 729 staff. In this case the first manager was coded M1, and the three corresponding staff; m1s1, m1s2, and m3s3; second manager coded M2, with corresponding staff; m2s1; m2 s2, and m2s3 respectively up to M243, with staff m243 s1, m243 s2, and m243 s3. However, due to non response of questionnaires sets, 568 cases only which were used for data analysis required re-coding for data entry.
For the valid 568 cases (comprising 142 managers and 426 staff) used for data entry and analyses (see section 6.10), the managers were coded; \( N1, N2, N3 \) up to \( N142 \). The staff were coded \( 1, 2, 3, 4 \) up to 426, such that staff 1, 2, and 3 will match their corresponding manager \( N1 \), staff 4, 5, 6 will match manager \( N2 \); staff 7, 8, 9 will match manager \( N3 \) etc., up to staff 424, 425, 426 with manager \( N142 \). [The coding follows the formula \( N \) (manager), matching subordinates \( 3N-2, 3N-1, & 3N \) respectively] Using this coding procedure, the scores from the three subordinate staff reporting to the same manager could be appropriately matched to the manager in question in the data entry for analysis using the SPSS.

### 6.15 Data Analysis methods

There were three main stages of the data analysis: initial analysis; descriptive statistics and the main analysis, which involved testing of the hypothesis formulated in the study. Since the data was obtained from different sources (i.e., managers and subordinates), and in order to get an appropriate and complete data set for managers for analysis, the purpose of the initial analysis was to match subordinate staff responses to the appropriate manager in question. The data was also screened for missing values, outliers, and normal distribution verification of the various scales/variables used in the analysis. The purpose was to establish whether they were amenable to parametric statistical analysis. In order to determine the robustness of the scales/measures the dimensionality of the items in the different variables was analysed (factor analysed) using Principal Component Analysis (PCA). Also, descriptive statistics and reliability indices were computed regarding the variables/measures/scales. Correlational analyses were subsequently performed to examine the relationships between the variables. In the main analyses, the various hypothesis formulated in the study were tested using regression and mediation analysis, and repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA). In the following sections, details of the analysis are described, and the results obtained are presented, in the order of, averaging upward feedback ratings, descriptive statistics, and hypothesis testing.
6.15.1 Initial analyses (1): Upward feedback ratings, overall score and inter rater reliability.

Ratings (on managerial trust, communication and transformational leadership) from subordinates reporting to the same manager were averaged to create a single score for each item. The overall score was computed as the mean for these item scores. This statistical technique is consistent with similar studies (Atwater, et al., 2000; Bailey & Fletcher, 2003; Fletcher & Baldry, 2000; Heslin & Latham, 2004; Smither et al., 1995).

To assess the appropriateness of averaging subordinate ratings together, the inter-rater reliability was computed using intra class correlations (ICC: Shrout & Fleiss, 1979); see sections 5.5.2.4 & 6.10). The inter - rater reliability coefficients obtained for the measures were trust = .80, communication = .82 and transformational leadership = .85 respectively. These values are high, and comparable to those obtained by, Atwater, et al., (2000); Heslin & Latham, (2004); Simther et al., (1995). These results are main significant in the subsequent analysis of the data for two reasons. First, it justifies averaging the scores from subordinates reporting to the same manager to create a single score for each item. Second, it provides evidence of the inter - rater reliability of the upward feedback instrument. Accordingly, aggregating of trust, communication and leadership items across subordinates for each manager was deemed appropriate. Scores for subordinates reporting to each manager were averaged into one subordinate rating for each manager. Each manager’s score on the variables was computed as the average subordinate rating for each item, summed across the items composing that scale. The corresponding reliability coefficients (Cronbach’s alpha) for the scales are trust = 0.87, communication = 0.88 and transformational leadership = 0.90 respectively (see table 6.1).
6.15.2 Initial analyses (2): Descriptive statistics, normality of variables, factor analysis, and reliability analysis

Frequency analysis was done to examine descriptive information and normality regarding the variables of interest.

**Normal distribution of variables**

Regarding issues of normality, all the variables were either normally distributed or did not substantially depart from normality (Table 6.2). Normality was accepted when skewness and kurtosis were between -1/+1. Eight variables (feedback seeking, self efficacy, locus of control, neuroticism, conscientiousness, agreeableness, communication and transformational leadership) were normally distributed as skewness and kurtosis values were < +1 /-1. Other variables (self awareness, feedback perception, self esteem, job satisfaction, career satisfaction and trust) had skewness values <-1 and kurtosis values < absolute 2 i.e., ( < absolute 7 ) and were not considered as substantially deviated from normality (West, Finch & Curran, 1995). All the variables were used in parametric statistical tests. As in regression analysis, it is more important that the dependent variable is normally distributed (Pallant, 2001; Tabachnick & Fidel, 2001) as attention would be paid in the standardized residual distribution to check any violation of the normality assumptions.

**Factor Analysis of the Main Measures/Variables**

The data were analysed by means of a principal components analysis using (PCA) Direct Oblimin rotation to ascertain the robustness of the different measures. (The BFI Personality inventory was not factor analysed because much previous research has confirmed its factor structure (see Costa & McCrae, 1992), and also the ratio of items to participants (less than 3:1) was too low to conduct a viable factor analysis (Brace, Kemp & Snegar, 2003). Before performing PCA, the suitability of the data on the various measures for factor analysis was assessed. Inspection of the various correlation matrices of the items comprising the different measures revealed the presence of many coefficients of 0.3 and above. All the values of Kaiser-
Olkin (KMO) Measure for Sampling adequacy for the measures ranged from 0.73 to 0.88, which is greater than the recommended value of 0.6 (Kaiser, 1974).

The dimensionality of the items for the variables/measures was analysed to determine their robustness. The pattern matrix coefficients achieved simple structure. One factor/component was extracted from each measure. The following shows the amount of variance explained by one factor solution of each of the various measures: self-awareness (40.73%); feedback seeking (37.28 %); feedback perception (40.34 %); self esteem (34.44 %); self efficacy (44.51 %), locus of control (35.99 %), job satisfaction (41.99 %), career satisfaction (48.06 %), communication (36.41 %), trust (35.23 %), and transformational leadership (38.22 %). These results indicate fairly good measures/scales, and additionally as indicated by their high reliability coefficients (Table 6.1). (See appendix 4 for the various component matrices/ pattern matrices).

*Descriptive Statistics and Reliability analysis*

Descriptive and reliability information regarding the variables are presented in Table 6.1. There were some reliability issues regarding the extroversion and openness to experience subscales of the BFI. They had reliability coefficients of less than 0.60. These scales were therefore abandoned and not used in the analysis due to their low reliability indices. The other three subscales: neuroticism, agreeableness, and conscientiousness were adequately reliable with alpha coefficients of 0.76, 0.68 and 0.71 respectively. All the other scales were highly reliable. Descriptive and reliability information regarding the variables are presented in Table 6.1.
Table 6.1 Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Indices for variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>sd</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Self Awareness</td>
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<td>1.28</td>
<td>-.83</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>.73</td>
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<td>Feedback Seeking</td>
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<td>0.76</td>
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<td>-.03</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
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Correlation Analysis - Correlation matrix

Inter-correlations were explored between the main variables to obtain Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficients. This was done to find out the significant relationships of interest in order to proceed to multiple regression analysis to test for the various hypotheses (see Table 6.2).
Table 6.2 Pearson's correlations between the variables in study 1 & 2

<table>
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<th>FBP</th>
<th>LOC</th>
<th>EFF</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>NEU</th>
<th>CONS</th>
<th>AGR</th>
<th>CSAT</th>
<th>TLEAD</th>
<th>TRUST</th>
<th>COM</th>
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<td>.066</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SAW: Self Awareness; FBP: Feedback perception; LOC: Locus of control; EFF: Self Efficacy; SE: Self Esteem; NEU: Neuroticism; CONS: Conscientiousness; AGR: Agreeableness; CSAT: Career Satisfaction; TLEAD: Transformational Leadership; TRUST: Trust; COM: Communication; JSAT: Job Satisfaction; FSB: Feedback seeking behaviour

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). N=142
6.16 MAIN ANALYSIS: STUDY 1
In the first study, three main hypotheses were tested. These are the proposed association between feedback seeking and performance/competence (H1), the self awareness and feedback seeking link (H2a), and the self awareness and performance relationship (H2b). The third hypothesis (H3) tested the potential for self awareness to mediate the feedback seeking process. Multiple regression analysis was used to test the two hypotheses. Mediation regression analysis was run to test the third hypothesis.

6.16.1 Relationship between feedback and performance/managerial competence
Hypothesis 1: It was hypothesised that feedback seeking behaviour (FbB) (and Feedback perception (FbP)) will predict managerial skills, specifically trust, communication, transformational leadership, job satisfaction and career satisfaction. This hypothesis is based on the research findings of the impact of feedback on performance, which are inconsistent and inconclusive; however, most studies suggesting a positive impact (e.g., Kluger & De Nisi, 1996; Smither et al., 2003; see chapter 2 section 2.3.8).

To test this hypothesis, separate multiple regression analyses were carried out using the enter method, with feedback seeking behaviour, and feedback perception as the independent variables and each of the competency dimensions: trust, communication transformational leadership, job satisfaction and career satisfaction as the dependent variables in each regression. The results are summarized in Table 6.3.
Table 6.3: Regression Analysis – Prediction of competencies from Feedback perception (FbP) and Feedback seeking behaviour (FSB).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>Adjusted R²</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DV = COM</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FbP</td>
<td>.345***</td>
<td>.107</td>
<td>9.463***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSB</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DV = TRST</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FbP</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>2.972*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSB</td>
<td>-.173*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DV = TRSLD</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FbP</td>
<td>.208*</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>3.025*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSB</td>
<td>-.032</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DV = JSAT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FbP</td>
<td>.307**</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>7.140**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSB</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DV = CASAT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FbP</td>
<td>.091</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>4.033*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSB</td>
<td>.198*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: df = 2,139. *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001.

COM = Communication; TRST = Trust; TRSLD = Transformational leadership; JSAT = Job Satisfaction; CASAT = Career satisfaction.

Feedback seeking predicted career satisfaction and trust only. However, feedback perception predicted communication, transformational leadership, and job satisfaction.

Taking everything together, this hypothesis was partially supported as either feedback perception or seeking behaviour but not both simultaneously predicted each of the competencies. Feedback perception, definable in terms of the perception of the usefulness of feedback (i.e., feedback as a means of enabling managers to see their performance as others see them) predicted managerial communication, transformational leadership, behaviour, and job satisfaction. This suggests that the more managers perceived that feedback would be useful in providing them with useful performance benchmark information (i.e., which could enable them to know their strengths and weaknesses, give them more accurate insight into their leadership behaviour, know their reputation and change their behaviour) the better their communication skills were in the eyes of subordinates, and the more likely
subordinates were to see them as transformational leaders. Such managers also expressed more job satisfaction. Thus, feedback perception only had the strongest overall impact on subordinate rated management competences. On the other hand, feedback behaviour, defined by the tendency/propensity/likelihood to seek feedback, predicted managerial trust and career satisfaction. It is important to note, however, that the greater the self-reported feedback seeking the less they were perceived by subordinates as trustworthy. One interpretation of this is that managers who are uncertain of how trusting their subordinates perceive them are more likely to seek feedback to ascertain why. On the other hand, managers who sought more feedback on their competencies were more satisfied with their careers. Notably, career satisfaction also was positively associated with self efficacy. These findings appear to support the general conclusion of many other studies which suggests that the relationship between feedback seeking and performance is inconsistent (De Nisi & Kluger, 2000; Kluger & De Nisi, 1996). The positive association between feedback seeking and feedback perception is nonetheless noteworthy. The relationships between feedback, self awareness and performance are presented in figure 6.2.

Figure 6.2 A model of the relationships between feedback seeking, self awareness and performance.
6.16.2 Relationship between self awareness and performance

It was hypothesised that SAw would predict managerial competencies, specifically trust, communication, transformational leadership, job satisfaction and career satisfaction (H2b). This hypothesis is based on the evidence in the literature which suggests that self awareness is positively associated with performance, and a potential for developmental performance improvement and career success (e.g., Fletcher, 1997; Hogan & Warrenfetz, 2003; London & Smither, 1995). To test this hypothesis, the inter-variable correlation matrix (Table 6.2) was examined to determine how each of the dependent variables correlated with SAw, as the independent variable, in order to carry out regression analysis. Contrary to expectation, none of the competency dimensions significantly correlated with self awareness.

The hypothesis that self awareness will have implications for managerial performance in the eyes of subordinates as suggested in the literature was not supported. The only competency dimension which approached significance as a correlation was career success (Adjusted R square = .01, F (1,140) = 2.77, Beta=.14, p = .09). This could probably have lent some support to the hypothesis that self awareness has a potential for managerial career success, but it is a very weak relationship.

6.16.3 How well does self awareness explain feedback seeking?

Two hypotheses were tested on the self awareness feedback seeking link. First, it was hypothesised that there would be a positive relationship between self awareness and feedback seeking behaviour (H2a). Second, it was hypothesized that self awareness could mediate the association between feedback and managerial competence (H3).

6.16.3.1 Relationship between self awareness and feedback seeking behaviour

It was hypothesized that there will be positive relationships between self awareness (SAw), feedback perception (FbP) and feedback seeking behaviour (FSB) (H2a). The hypothesis on the self awareness – feedback seeking link, and self awareness as a potential mediating variable in the feedback seeking process were tested using standard multiple regressions and mediated regression analysis.
Separate multiple regression analyses were carried out, first SAw was regressed on FbP. Second, FSB was regressed on FbP. Third, both FbP and SAw were entered together, with FSB as the dependent variable. The results of the regressions are presented in table 6.4. In all, the results suggest positive relationships between SAw, FbP, and FSB and that SAw and FbP could both predict FSB. Therefore, the hypothesis of a positive association between self awareness and feedback seeking was supported. Further analysis was carried out to explore how self awareness could serve as a mediator in the feedback seeking process.

6.16.3.2 Does Self awareness mediate the feedback–performance association?

The main hypothesis was that self awareness could mediate the association between feedback and managerial competence (H3) (Fletcher & Baldry, 2000). Regression and mediating analysis were therefore carried out to explore self awareness as a potential mediating variable in the feedback seeking process. First, exploration of self awareness as a mediating variable in the feedback–performance association required the following relationships: between feedback seeking behaviour and self awareness; self awareness and performance/managerial competence and; feedback seeking behaviour and competence (Baron & Kelly, 1986). From the analysis, there was a positive relationship between self awareness and feedback seeking but self awareness did NOT predict any of the competency domains. As a result there was no basis for exploring the potential for a mediating relationship in a case of a feedback–performance association. Therefore, the hypothesis (H3) that self awareness could mediate the feedback–performance association was not supported.

However, further analysis was carried out to explore self awareness as a potential mediating variable in the feedback seeking process by including feedback perception (FbP), awareness (SAw) and feedback seeking behaviour (FSB) into the regression equation. Detailed description of the analysis, which yielded significant results is presented next.
6.16.3.3 Self Awareness as a mediator between Feedback Perception and Feedback seeking Behaviour

In general, a given variable may be said to function as a mediator to the extent that it accounts for the relation between the predictor and the criterion. The central idea in the mediating model is that the effects of stimuli on behaviour are mediated by various transformational processes internal to the organism. A mediator explains how external physical events, or often, internal psychological variables take on internal psychological significance. It explains how or why such effects occur. The causal chain involved in mediation is diagrammed in figure 6.3.

Figure 6. 3: Path diagram of the Mediational model (after Baron and Kelly, 1986 p1176)

The model assumes a three-variable system such that two causal paths feed into the outcome or dependent variable (DV); the direct impact of the independent variable (IV; Path 3; direct explanation), and the impact of the mediator (Path 2). There is also a path from the independent variable to the mediator (Path1). A variable functions as a mediator when it meets three conditions. First, variations in the level of the independent variable significantly account for variations in the potential mediator (i.e., Path 1). Second, variations in the potential mediator significantly account for variations in the dependent variable (i.e., Path 2). Third, when Paths 1 and 2 are controlled, a previously significant relation between the independent and the dependent variables is no longer significant, with the strongest indication of mediation occurring when Path 3 is zero. When Path 3 is reduced to zero, there is a strong evidence of a single dominant mediator, and from a theoretical perspective it is both a necessary and a sufficient condition for an effect to occur. If the residual Path is not
zero, this indicates the operation of multiple mediating factors, a significant reduction indicates that a given mediator is indeed potent, albeit not both a necessary and sufficient condition for an effect to occur (Baron & Kenny, 1986, p.1176). Thus, 'full mediation arises if path 3 is reduced to zero and partial mediation if a substantial drop occurs in the magnitude of the unstandardized beta coefficient' (Tharenou, 2001: 608).

6.16.3.4 Testing Mediation- the mediated regression method of analysis
Mediation was first tested using the classic approach postulated by Baron and Kenny (1986), and further, using the Aroian Test to strengthen the mediation claims (Fife-Schaw, 2006). Baron and Kenny's approach consists of three steps: First it was assessed if the mediator (i.e., SAw) was related to the IV (i.e., FbP) using regression analysis. As shown in table 6.4, FbP predicted SAw. So the potential mediator was related to the independent variable.

Second, the extent of the relationship of the independent variable with the dependent variable was assessed: the DV (FSB) was regressed on the IV (FbP). As can be seen in the regression analysis for the mediated test (Step 2, Table 6.4) FbP predicted FSB. So FbP's relationship could be mediated.

Finally, it was assessed if there was a mediator effect. The DV (FSB) was regressed simultaneously on both the IV (FbP) and on the mediator (SAw) (Step3, Table 6.4).

The mediator (SAw), had significant effect on the DV (FSB) whereas the IV (FbP) had no significant effect on the DV(FSB). The results indicate that SAw is the mediator between feedback perception and feedback seeking behaviour, with all four of Baron and Kenny’s requirements being met. Table 6.4 summarizes the results for the mediation regressions.
Table 6.4: Mediated Regression Analysis—Self awareness as a mediator between Feedback perception, and Feedback seeking behaviour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>Adjusted R²</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DV = SAw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FbP</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>17.40***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DV = FSB</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FbP</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>5.97*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DV = FSB</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FbP</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>7.61**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAw</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p<.05; **p <.01; p<.001

However, according to Fife-Schaw (2006), mediation testing is an area where there is some agreement about the broad principles involved but some argument about the details. He argues that traditionally, people check that Baron and Kenny’s conditions have been met and leave it at that without doing a stronger test using the Sobel or Arorian test to strengthen the mediation claims (Mackinnon et al, 2002; Preacher & Hayes, 2004). Therefore, in order to strengthen the mediation claims, a stronger test for mediation, that is, the indirect effect of the IV (feedback perception) on the DV (feedback seeking behaviour) via the mediator (self-awareness) is significantly different from zero, was further carried out employing the Aroian Test. The Aroian Test equation which is more robust in testing mediation is shown below.

Aroian test equation: \( z \) value = \( \frac{a \times b}{\text{SQRT}(b^2 s^2 a^2 + a^2 s^2 b^2 + s^2 a^2 b^2)} \)

The test involves running two regressions. First, regression analysis with the IV predicting the mediator gives \( a \) the unstandardised regression coefficient and \( s a \) the standard error of the coefficient. Secondly, a regression analysis with the IV and Mediator both predicting the DV gives \( b \) the unstandardised regression coefficient and \( s b \) the standard error of the coefficient respectively. When the figures obtained from the analysis were plugged in to the equation utilizing the Aroian Test on line calculator (Fife-Schaw, 2006), the results yielded Aroian \( z = 2.37 \), which is greater than 1.96, and significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). These test results strengthen the
finding that self-awareness indeed mediated the association between feedback perception and feedback seeking behaviour.

The results support the hypothesis of a positive relationship between self awareness and feedback seeking behaviour, as expected. But self awareness did not serve as a mediator in the feedback performance association as hypothesized. However, it did mediate the relationship between feedback perception and feedback seeking. Specifically, the mediation analysis suggests that feedback perception causes self awareness, which causes feedback seeking behaviour.

The direct explanation: Relationship between FbP and FSB
Feedback perception, defined by the tendency of managers to perceive that feedback will enable them to see themselves as others see them, understand their strengths and weaknesses, give them more accurate insight into their performance/leadership behaviour, know their reputation and change their behaviour, is associated with feedback seeking behaviour, that is, the tendency to seek more performance feedback. When managers perceive that feedback about their performance is useful to their performance development they will tend to seek it. Thus, the extent to which managers seek performance feedback will depend on their perception of the usefulness of feedback in their behavioural self regulation process. The more they perceive feedback to be useful the more likely they will seek it. By contrast, the less they perceive the usefulness of feedback, the less likely they will seek it.

The mediator explanation
According to the mediation hypothesis (Baron & Kenny, 1986), mediating events shift roles from effects (DV) to causes (IV), depending on the focus of analysis. Thus, successful mediation is caused by the IV and causes the DV. Based on the proposition of the mediating hypothesis, the results suggest that feedback perception causes self awareness which causes feedback seeking. This means that in organizations when managers perceive the usefulness of feedback, they will tend to be self aware, that is concerned about their social behaviour/performance, and others' (organizational members/sources) opinion about them, and the general impression they make on others, and as a result are more likely to seek feedback. On the other hand, when
managers do not perceive the usefulness of feedback in behavioural self regulation, they will not be self aware, and hence will not seek feedback about their performance.

6.16.4 Relationships between feedback seeking behaviour, career satisfaction and self efficacy

As indicated in the evaluation of hypothesis 1, there was a positive relationship between feedback seeking and career satisfaction, a competency dimension. Also, the correlation matrices table shows a significant association between career satisfaction and high self efficacy. This suggests potential association between feedback seeking, career satisfaction and self efficacy and more importantly a relationship between feedback seeking and self efficacy. However, very little or no relationship between self esteem and feedback seeking and efficacy was found.

6.16.5 Summary of study 1 main findings

1. There was a positive relationship between feedback seeking and career satisfaction, a competency dimension, which was also associated with self efficacy. Feedback seeking was negatively associated with trust. However it was feedback perception that predicted transformational leadership, managerial communication and job satisfaction.

2. There was no relationship between self-awareness and managerial competence/performance. However, there was a weak relationship between self awareness and career success. Also, there was a positive relationship between self awareness and feedback seeking. However, self awareness served as a mediating variable in the feedback seeking process.

3. Self awareness did not mediate the feedback-performance association as predicted. However it did mediate the relationship between feedback perception and feedback seeking.
6.17 MAIN ANALYSIS (STUDY 2)

6.17.1 Aim of study 2
Study 2 sought to answer the following questions about managers' feedback seeking propensities:
1) Are managers likely to seek feedback about their performance?
2) What performance feedback information are managers likely to seek?
3) From whom are managers likely to seek feedback about their performance?

To investigate these questions which could offer further explanations for managerial feedback seeking behaviours, two main analyses were conducted to understand managers' feedback seeking propensities about their competencies, which is their intra personal, interpersonal and leadership skills. First, the aim was to assess the tendency for managers to seek feedback about these competencies /skills in general, that is, from any source rather than a specific or preferred source. For this purpose managers were asked to rate the likelihood of seeking feedback on their intra personal skills (q29) interpersonal skills (q28) and leadership skills (q30) in the managers' self report instrument.

Second, managers' preferred feedback sources were explored. For this purpose, first, managers were asked to indicate the likelihood of seeking feedback from the three main sources, that is their immediate bosses/supervisors (q25); colleagues (q26) and; subordinates (q27) in their self report questionnaire. Second, subordinates were asked to indicate the extent to which managers seek feedback about their intra personal skills (q159), interpersonal skills (q160) and leadership skills (q161) from them in the upward feedback instrument. For each item, raters had to rate the target managers' feedback seeking behaviour along a 7-point rating scale from 'extremely likely to ask' (coded 7) to 'extremely unlikely to ask' (coded 1); a target level of higher than '4' was chosen by researcher as the cut-off level to be described as 'more feedback' (Bailey & Fletcher, 2002).

6.17.2 Data Analysis method
Repeated measures ANOVA and Bonferroni post-hoc tests were carried out to determine first the likelihood of managers to seek feedback about their performance,
and also the information they are likely to seek and second, their preferred feedback sources. Frequency analysis was carried out to determine whether or not subordinates expected their managers to request upward feedback from them. Finally, to determine whether subordinates' expectation for the request for upward feedback was met, repeated measures t-test was conducted to identify any differences between subordinates' expectation for the request for upward feedback and the likelihood of managers seeking such feedback.

6.17.3 Are managers likely to seek performance feedback? What feedback information are they likely to seek?

Descriptive data for average feedback ratings obtained from managers on their feedback seeking tendencies and the information sought, are presented in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5: Descriptive data: average feedback ratings on managerial feedback information sought, obtained from managers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback type</th>
<th>Raters</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
<th>Skew</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Managers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N=142)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intrapersonal</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>-0.36</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.04</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
<td>-0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>-0.58</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean values indicated that on the average managers perceived themselves to be meeting the criterion levels of feedback seeking behaviour on the various skills (as indicated by values of '4' or higher).

A one-way repeated measures ANOVA was carried out to find out significant differences in managerial assessment of their feedback seeking behaviour on their interpersonal, intrapersonal, and leadership skills. There was a significant effect for the type of feedback information on feedback seeking behaviour, Wilks' Lambda = .706, $F_{(2,140)} = 28.764, p < .0005$, multivariate partial eta squared = .169. The value of partial eta squared (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001) obtained was .16, which according to the generally accepted criteria proposed by Cohen (1988) (.01 = small, .06 = moderate, .14 = large effect) indicates a large effect size suggesting highly significant differences in feedback seeking behaviour on interpersonal, intrapersonal and leadership skills. The results suggest that managers are most likely to seek feedback on
their interpersonal skills, less likely on their leadership skills and least likely on their interpersonal skills.

Following significant effect of feedback type on feedback seeking behaviour, further post hoc tests were accordingly conducted to identify which behaviours differed (Stevens, 1996). Results are presented in Table 6.6

Table 6.6: Post-hoc Comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback type</th>
<th>Compared with</th>
<th>Mean diff</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Sig. a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal(1)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.86*</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>.38*</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrapersonal(2)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.86*</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-.48*</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership (3)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.38*</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>.48*</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: *mean difference significant at .05 level. a. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

Employing the Bonferroni post-hoc test, significant differences were found between all the feedback types. Significant difference was found between interpersonal and intrapersonal feedback types (p<.001), between interpersonal and leadership skills feedback types (p<.01) and between intrapersonal and leadership skills feedback type (p<.001). Inspection of the mean values indicates that managers are most likely to seek feedback on their interpersonal skills, more likely on leadership skills and least likely on intrapersonal skills. However, the low mean rating score of 4.62 just above the cut off point, suggests that managers are likely or unlikely to seek feedback information about their performance or competence on these skills.

6.17.4 Managerial Feedback Sources

Descriptive data showing managers most preferred feedback sources are presented in Table 6.7

Table 6.7: Managerial preferred feedback sources (N=142).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
<th>Skew</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bosses</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>-0.41</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>-0.58</td>
<td>-0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subordinates</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>-0.86</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Similarly, repeated measures ANOVA and post-hoc multiple comparison analysis were carried out to determine managers' most likely/preferred feedback source; bosses, colleagues, and subordinates (q25, q26, q27).

There was a significant effect of feedback source on feedback seeking behaviour (Wilk's Lambda = .94, F(2,140) = 5.10, p<.05, multivariate partial eta squared = .07). The value of partial eta squared obtained .07, which according to the generally accepted criteria (Cohen, 1988) indicates moderate effect size, suggesting slight differences in managerial preferred feedback sources. Managers will most likely prefer to seek feedback from their colleagues, less likely from their supervisors and least likely from their subordinates.

This suggests that subordinates are the least preferred source of managerial performance feedback, supporting previous studies that managers often resist subordinate appraisal. Following post hoc tests, significant differences between the feedback sources are presented in Table 6.8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Compared with</th>
<th>Mean diff.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bosses (1)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-.30</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues (2)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.46*</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subordinates(3)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-.46*</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: mean difference is significant at .05 level.

Employing Bonferroni post-hoc test, significant difference was found between feedback sources from peers and subordinates. There were no significant differences between bosses and subordinates, and between peers and bosses as the more preferred source of managerial feedback. However, given the moderate effect of feedback source on feedback seeking behaviour, managers will most likely prefer colleagues as source of feedback information, and less likely from bosses and subordinates. Note also the mean average preferred feedback source rating score of 4 which suggests that managers are not keen to seek feedback from these sources, and that they are likely or unlikely to seek feedback from these sources.
6.17.5 Subordinates' expectation of upward feedback

If subordinates are the least preferred source of managerial feedback seeking, the question that arises is whether or not subordinates expect request for upward feedback. To explore this question, q.162 'in all, I expect my manager to ask me for feedback about their performance in the organisation' in the upward feedback instrument was analysed. This analysis was to explore any discrepancies between managerial feedback seeking behaviour/source and subordinates’ expectations of upward feedback. Subordinates had to indicate the extent to which they agreed with statement along a 7-point rating scale from 'strongly agree' (coded 7) to 'strongly disagree' (coded 1); a target level of '4' was chosen as the cut off level (average subordinate ratings was used in the analysis).

First, the mean value of the ratings 5.34 (SD=.95) indicated that subordinates expected upward feedback. Second, frequency analysis indicated that 72.5 % of the subordinates (N=426) agreed that they expected their managers to seek performance feedback from them as indicated by values higher than ‘4’. This suggests that in general, subordinates expect a request for upward feedback from their managers.

Finally, repeated measures t-test was carried out to determine any discrepancies between subordinates’ expectation of managers to request upward feedback (q162, average subordinate ratings) and the likelihood of managers seeking feedback from subordinates (q27). Results indicated significant disparity between subordinates’ expectation of requests for upward feedback and the likelihood of managers seeking feedback from them. Subordinates’ expectation of upward feedback (mean=5.40) was higher than the likelihood of managers seeking feedback (mean=4.19) from them (t=7.86, df=141, p<.001).

These findings suggest that subordinates expect their managers to seek more feedback from them, whereas managers are unlikely to meet their feedback request expectations. This lends some support to the earlier finding that subordinates are the least preferred source of managerial feedback. This suggests that in work organisational settings, subordinates' expectation of upward feedback is not met. Thus if managers would seek feedback, they might seek it from other sources than subordinates.
6.17.8 Summary main findings study 2

1) Managers appear to actively seek very little feedback about their performance.

2) If managers would seek feedback about their performance, they would be more likely to seek it from sources other than their subordinates.

6.18 Discussion of studies 1&2

The focus of the thesis is to investigate managers' performance feedback seeking behaviour by addressing (1) the inconsistencies in research findings on the feedback performance association, and 2) inadequacies in our theoretical understanding of the managerial feedback seeking process. Accordingly, three main hypotheses were formulated (see Chapter 6, section 6.2). In addressing the research on inconsistencies in findings on the feedback-performance association, a positive relationship between feedback seeking and performance was predicted (H1). Second, in order to explain the feedback seeking process, it was hypothesised that there will be a positive relationship between feedback seeking behaviour and self awareness (H2a), and also, self awareness will be positively associated with performance (H2b). Thirdly, it was hypothesised that self awareness could mediate the association between feedback and performance (H3). Finally, managers' feedback seeking tendencies regarding the type of information sought, and their preferred sources were investigated. The main findings of the study are summarised and discussed below.

Out of the five competency/ performance criteria (trust, communication, transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and career satisfaction), feedback seeking was associated with only two of them (trust, and career satisfaction). Surprisingly there was a negative relationship between feedback seeking and trust; whereas the relationship between feedback seeking and career satisfaction, was positive. Career satisfaction was in turn positively associated with self efficacy. However, feedback perception rather than feedback seeking predicted transformational leadership, managerial communication and job satisfaction. Therefore, the hypothesis (H1) of a positive relationship between feedback seeking and performance was not fully supported.
For the explanation of the feedback seeking process, there was a positive relationship between self awareness and feedback seeking, supporting H2a. However, there was no relationship between self awareness and managerial competence/performance which was contrary to prediction (H2b). These two findings indicate that self awareness might not fully explain the feedback seeking process as it has no relationship with performance. Interestingly however self awareness did mediate the relationship between feedback perception and feedback seeking (as opposed to feedback seeking and performance). Also noteworthy is that managers are likely to seek very little feedback about their performance, and if they do they are more likely to seek it from other sources rather than from their subordinates.

In short, the relationship between feedback and performance is not robust. There is no association between self awareness and performance. Self awareness is a potential mediating variable in the feedback seeking process as it mediates the feedback perception and feedback seeking association, but not the feedback–performance association. It is not associated with performance; it does not appear to fully explain the feedback seeking process. Feedback perception is associated with feedback seeking, but is more strongly associated with performance than feedback seeking. Feedback perception in fact appears to be a potentially important consideration in explaining and conceptualising feedback seeking. The thrust of the main findings in this discussion are presented below.

Feedback and performance

These findings provide some insight into the feedback seeking process but they do not appear to provide an adequate and/or coherent explanation for the process. First, on the feedback–performance association, feedback significantly predicted only two of the managerial competencies (trust and career satisfaction), whereas feedback perception predicted more (transformational leadership, managerial communication and job satisfaction.). There are several reasons why this study may not have evidenced an association between feedback seeking and performance. One of these pertains to the criterion issue and another to cultural differences.

With regards to the criterion issue, the focus of the study is on generic competencies across organisations but not job specific competencies specific to organisations.
Generic competencies were considered in the study for the purpose of generalisability of the findings as indicated earlier on (see chapter 4, section 4.5, competency models; & chapter 6, section 6.3.1, organisational context). However, feedback seeking may be a very job specific local and highly contextual consideration. Evidence from other fields in psychology demonstrates that the more strongly aligned the predictor and the criterion domain in level of specificity, the greater the likelihood of observing a clear or strong relationship. Thus, generic efficacy is less predictive of performance than domain specific efficacy (Bandura 1982, 1997). The same applies to the prediction of behaviour from intentions – the more specific the intention in relation to behaviour, the more likely it is that the intention will predict that behaviour (Ajzen 1985, 1991; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980, 2000). Hence it may have been the generic way in which competences are conceptualised and measured in this study that precluded the likelihood of identifying a strong association between feedback seeking and performance.

Another criterion issue which could possibly account for the lack of association between feedback and performance observed here, is the focus on non-technical competencies i.e., the human side of the managerial enterprise (Hogan & Warrenfetz, 2003). Studies on management development and managerial competencies have been predominantly on technical competencies, hence the need to conduct studies on feedback and self awareness against softer managerial performance criteria (Fletcher & Baldry, 2000; Hogan & Warrenfetz, 2003). However, it may be that the more nebulous, subtle and human aspects of the management enterprise are, the less likely it is that feedback will be sought. Firstly, the ‘subjective’ nature of these criteria may make them susceptible to wide variations in interpretation (which is then glossed over in the averaging process across subordinate performance ratings), and therefore in the eyes of managers less trustworthy as a focus of feedback seeking. Secondly, people find it more difficult to handle ‘soft’ feedback that could be construed as highly personal and therefore potentially very threatening to efficacy and self-esteem (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Ashford & Tsui, 1994; Miller, 1976; Staw & Ross, 1980; Tuckey et al., 2002; Vancouver & Morrison, 1995). Unfortunately we know very little about what kind of feedback is most naturally sought by managers and from whom. To secure feedback about matters of personal style for example, may be
'risky' for a manager to entertain. From a manager's perspective, seeking such feedback from either subordinates and/or seniors could potentially undermine their perceived credibility (e.g., by revealing personal insecurities) putting the legitimacy of their job at risk. On the other hand, this may depend on considerations of trust within the leader-member exchange relationship (with subordinates) and also in relation to seniors (Figure 6.1). In relationships of mutual trust, there may be more willingness to seek feedback on the human side of management matters. On the other hand, a mutually trusting relationship may 'depend' fundamentally on the integrity of the human side of management enterprise, making it less likely for the perceived need to secure personal feedback. Here, trust (as a dependent variable) was negatively associated with feedback seeking: that is, the less subordinates trust their manager, the more likely it is that a manager will seek feedback on their behaviour. This raises theoretical issues about the linking mechanisms between feedback seeking and performance, which will be addressed later.

The use of job specific competencies rather than generic ones, or the use of technical competencies performance criteria might alternatively have yielded different results. Task specific feedback has perhaps less licence for interpretation depending on the extent to which the task is circumscribed around the achievement of particular outcomes. Moreover, it is likely to be easier to seek feedback on task matters because it is more 'issue' oriented than person-based. All of these explanations for why the current findings may not have yielded the predicted results remain purely speculative but nonetheless could generate useful and constructive lines of enquiry for future work.

It nonetheless remains that studies on feedback performance association have yielded generally inconsistent findings with some studies suggesting a positive impact, others having negative or no impact (Kulger & De Nisi, 1996; De Nisi & Kluger, 2000). Variations in the criterion domain in both conceptual and operational terms may account in part for this, but there are also other potential explanations. One other potential explanation is that there are 'sample specific' factors at work. In the current study, there may have been cultural factors inhibiting the likelihood of managers actively seeking feedback from their subordinates, and in turn, the requirement on subordinates to produce upwards ratings of managers is anathema to the Ghanaian
work culture of power, distance and respect (Hofstede, 1991; see also Bailey & Fletcher, 2002; Bulmer & Warwick, 1983; Spreitzer et al., 2005). In Africa, particularly in Ghana, traditionally the young (subordinates) are not expected to question (assess) the ideas and opinions of the elderly (managers) a situation which might have implications for their upward ratings (e.g., reluctance to use ratings discriminatively).

Another potential explanation requires that we challenge assumptions about the proposed association between feedback seeking and performance. Earlier it was noted that the lower the perceived trust of managers by subordinates, the more likely it is that their manager said that they sought active feedback. This may suggest that active feedback seeking on 'human' skills by managers is largely contingent on their relationship with subordinates. If there is low perceived trust in them by subordinates (which is a soft indicator of their management performance) then a manager may be more inclined to want to understand why (e.g., by consulting peers or seniors). Again, these interpretations remain speculative but are worthy of further consideration particularly in relation to the hypothesised link between self-awareness and performance.

Self awareness and performance
On the basis of the evidence which suggests that self awareness is associated with performance and especially in relation to leadership development, performance improvement, and career success (Fletcher, 1997; Hogan & Warrenfetz, 2003; London & Smither, 1995; Wohlers & London, 1997), it was hypothesised that self awareness will predict managerial competencies. The findings show that there was no significant association between self awareness and any of the competency domains in the study contrary to expectation. This suggests that managers' self awareness (as self-reported) has no implications for management behaviour in the eyes of subordinates, as suggested in the literature. Also, consequently, self awareness did not mediate a relationship between feedback and managerial performance (Fletcher & Baldry, 2000) since it is not related to performance and hence has no potential for a mediating relationship in a feedback –performance association (Baron & Kenny, 1986).
The lack of association between self awareness and performance could possibly be due to how it was measured in the study. As demonstrated in the literature review (see chapter 3 section 3.6.1), and particularly noted by Millward (2005), the self awareness construct is complex requiring further elucidation. It is a conceptually ill-defined and understood notion which also poses measurement problems (Fletcher, 1997) despite its potential for management development. Looking beyond the 'performance' literature, some clarity was sought by consulting the literature on public consciousness (Fenigstein et al., 1975), i.e., the extent to which managers will show concern about, or interest in, others' opinions about their performance, be responsive and give attention to the expectations and standards by which the work environment evaluates their work behaviour or performance. This definition would on the surface seem to have implications for feedback seeking and was measured accordingly (see chapter 6, section 6.1.2 for variables of study, & section 6.3.2, measures). A positive association between feedback seeking and self awareness was found in the study, which validates the use of the public consciousness perspective in this particular field of study. The absence of any operational link between self-reported self-awareness and subordinates' perceptions of management performance may thus be a function of a relatively impoverished understanding of feedback seeking mechanisms. This issue will be discussed further below.

**Self awareness as a mediator in the feedback seeking process**

Although self awareness did not mediate the feedback-performance association as discussed, it did mediate the relationship between feedback perception and feedback seeking. Drawing on Alimo-Metcalfe (1989), Fletcher & Baldry (2000), and Wohlers and London (1989), feedback perception was conceptualised simply in terms of how managers perceive the usefulness of feedback for their performance improvement and development. Based on an understanding of how mediation works (Baron & Kenny, 1986), this finding suggests that feedback perception causes self awareness which causes feedback seeking. The implication is that in organisations when managers perceive the usefulness of feedback for their performance improvement and development, they would tend to be self aware, i.e., they would be interested in, or concerned about their social behaviour / performance, and others' (organisational sources) opinion about them, and the general impression they make on others and as a result are more likely to seek feedback. On the other hand, when managers do not
perceive the usefulness of feedback in behavioural self regulation, they would not be self aware, and hence less likely to seek feedback about their performance. Thus, feedback perception may be a fundamental construct within the mechanism of feedback seeking.

Considerations of self awareness as a moderator in the feedback seeking process
To further explore how the concept of self awareness could be used to explain the feedback seeking process, a moderator hypothesis alternative was also examined. There might be an argument for moderation insofar as the link between feedback seeking and performance could be stronger for those high on self-awareness than those low on self-awareness. In this sense, the direction and/or strength of the relation between feedback seeking (independent variable) and performance (criterion variable) would depend on the level of self awareness (moderator) (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Conceptually, the basic considerations of a moderator hypothesis according to Baron and Kenny (1986) are that there should be a relation between feedback seeking and performance and that there should be interaction between self awareness and feedback seeking. However, the self awareness (moderator variable) should not be correlated with both feedback seeking (predictor) and performance (criterion/dependent variable) to provide a clearly interpretable interaction term. Therefore, exploring a self awareness – moderator hypothesis could be considered as a conservative position given that the relationship between feedback and performance was not robust. However, since there was no relationship between self awareness (potential moderating variable) and performance (criterion variable), thus meeting one of the requirements for moderating hypothesis, it was deemed necessary to explore whether this could be demonstrated. Another requirement for a self awareness moderating hypothesis is that there should be no relationship between feedback seeking and self awareness. Here, however, there was a strong association. For these reasons self awareness could not potentially moderate the rather weak relation between feedback seeking and performance.

Feedback perception
The importance of feedback perception in the study is noteworthy. As indicated earlier this was conceptualised and operationally defined in terms of how managers perceive the usefulness of feedback for their performance improvement and
development in the behavioural and managerial self regulation. To summarise, feedback perception is associated with managerial competence /performance, specifically, communication, transformational leadership and job satisfaction. Also, self awareness mediates the feedback perception and feedback seeking association. In these contexts, feedback perception could have a wider implication for organisations and managerial performance, and the understanding and conceptualisation of managerial feedback seeking.

Managerial feedback perception has implications for managerial trust, the psychological contract in organisations, relationships, and the Leader-Member exchange theories (LMX) of leadership (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Grean & Scandura, 1987; Grean & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Schriesheim et al., 1999) (see figure 6.4).

![Figure 6.4 A model of feedback seeking, feedback perception and performance](image-url)
The importance of interpersonal skills and relationships for managerial effectiveness is grounded in the LMX theories of leadership. According to these theories, managers who develop a high quality relationship with their subordinates, which has implications for the psychological contract in organisations, are perceived as effective. A Psychological contract is a voluntary commitment that individuals make with others. Psychological contract in organisations or employment is the belief system of individual workers (subordinates) and employers (managers) regarding their mutual obligations. It is concerned with relationships that involve considerable investment by both employers or managers and employees or subordinates, and a high degree of mutual interdependence (Rousseau & Schalk, 2000). Managers who develop good relationships with their subordinates are perceived as effective whereas those who are unable to develop high quality relationships are considered ineffective. When managers develop high quality relationships with their subordinates they are more likely to be considered as trustworthy (Good, 1999) which could enhance subordinates well-being, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, organisational citizenship and performance (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Schriesheim et al., 1999). In this way managers would be seen as fulfilling the organisational contract (Millward & Herriot, 2000). Feedback about their relationships with their subordinates would enable managers to know the quality of the relationship, and the extent of their effectiveness in this context. Feedback perception, which is concerned with the extent to which managers perceive the usefulness of feedback in enhancing their performance and effectiveness, would be particularly useful in this regard. The more managers perceive the usefulness of feedback, about their relationships, trust, and the fulfilment of the psychological contract, the more likely it is that they would be perceived as effective.

**Feedback seeking, career satisfaction and self efficacy**

Other important findings in the study are the relationship between feedback seeking and career satisfaction, which was in turn related to self efficacy; and managerial feedback seeking tendencies and the preferred sources of feedback. Managers who sought more feedback on their competencies were more satisfied with their careers. Career satisfaction was also positively associated with self efficacy. These findings suggest a potential association between feedback seeking and self efficacy; however, the study did not find any significant association between them.
Likelihood of managers feedback seeking and sources

With regards to managerial feedback tendencies and sources, the findings suggest that managers appear to actively seek very little feedback about their performance. If they do so, they would be more likely to seek it from sources other than from their subordinates. This may be due to the perceived risk associated with seeking feedback from subordinates: in the eyes of managers, subordinates may sense insecurity and start to question managerial efficacy and hence their status legitimacy. The agenda of projecting efficacy therefore may inhibit feedback seeking from subordinates. Again, this constitutes a hypothesis to be tested more directly in future work.

Evaluation of study: strengths and limitations

There are some strengths and weaknesses in this study which are noteworthy. The study has a sound theoretical basis and robust methodological approach. The literature on the potential relationships between feedback seeking, self awareness and performance was extensively researched to identify the potential variables and theoretical framework for the study. The variables were clearly conceptualised and operationally defined and measured. The key independent variables, feedback seeking, feedback perception and self awareness, and the dependent variable, the performance criterion, have a strong conceptual and theoretical basis. Based on the extant literature, the hypotheses were well articulated and tested with aim of developing explanations for managerial feedback seeking in real organisational context. The theoretical framework, the self regulation perspective, the inner (self) – outer (others) perspective of performance assessment which has implication for feedback seeking and self awareness, provide a methodological foundation in the 360 degree feedback and upward feedback approach. The study is based on the integration of theory and methodology. Although the hypotheses tested were not fully supported, the findings are not rendered superfluous as they provide useful insight into the feedback seeking process. Theoretically, in particular, the implication of feedback perception in the conceptualisation of feedback seeking is noteworthy.

Also on a practical level, the study would appear to benefit managers as indicated by some of the comments they made on the questionnaires one of which reads ‘... The outcome [of the study] would be an eye-opener for administrators, managers, and
Heads of Department, etc., (see chapter 6, section 6.13). However, as indicated earlier, eight managers only gave comments (brief) on their questionnaires and were therefore considered inadequate for substantial content analysis. It would appear nonetheless that a qualitative study would provide an interesting and much richer account of managers' feedback seeking behaviour (Alveson, 2002; Hamlin, 2004) as a complement to the survey work.

6.19 Conclusions and future direction
The findings in the study afforded insight into the feedback seeking process but do raise more questions than answers. The findings suggest that there is a complexity to the feedback seeking mechanism that could be understood better with a process perspective using qualitative analysis. The questions raised for further study are outlined below: Why would managers actively seek feedback about their performance? When are they likely or unlikely to actively seek feedback? When are managers likely to seek feedback from their subordinates and what kind of feedback are they likely to seek? To what extent do managers see feedback as useful in enhancing their performance? Is there any theoretical potential in the concept of feedback perception as a means of explaining performance feedback seeking behaviour? What role if any might self-awareness play?

In order to answer these questions and address the research question of the thesis, study 3 was designed to further investigate managers' performance feedback seeking behaviour using qualitative research employing the repertory grid technique. The aim was to investigate managers' performance feedback seeking propensities, to provide a much a richer account and further explanation of managerial feedback seeking behaviour.

6.20 Chapter Summary
This chapter presented studies 1 & 2 of the thesis. It began with a review of studies on the feedback-performance link, feedback-self awareness association, relationships between feedback, self-awareness and performance and statement of the aims of the research and the research questions. It proceeded to describe the research design and methodology that was adopted in the study, and the results obtained. Using a correlational design using data from a quantitative analytic survey study from within a
Multi-System- Multi – Rater (MSMR/ 360 degrees feedback) and upward feedback framework, two studies investigated managerial feedback seeking propensities in an organisational setting.

The first study examined the feedback- performance association, and the relationship between feedback, self awareness and performance. The second study investigated managers' feedback seeking propensities, the information sought and the feedback sources. Both studies are based on a total sample of 568 participants comprising 142 managers and 426 subordinate staff. After presenting the research design and methodology, and preliminary analysis of the data, the chapter presented results for studies 1 and 2 respectively. The chapter ended with a summary and discussion of the main findings of the studies, including the direction of the thesis, which warranted a third study (study 3).

Four main findings were obtained from the two studies. First, there was a positive relationship between feedback seeking and career satisfaction, a competency dimension, which was also associated with self efficacy. Contrary to expectation, feedback seeking predicted only two out of the five competence dimensions which were investigated. Also, there was no relationship between self awareness and managerial competence/performance as predicted. There was a positive relationship between self awareness and feedback seeking, with self awareness mediating the feedback seeking process. However, self awareness did not mediate the feedback-performance association as predicted, but it did mediate the relationship between feedback perception and feedback seeking. Managers are likely to seek very little feedback about their performance, and they would be more likely to seek it from other sources rather than from their subordinates.

Evaluations of the findings show that although they provide some insight into the feedback seeking process, they do not provide adequate and coherent explanation for the process. First, the feedback performance association is inconclusive. Second, it appears that the concept of self awareness does not provide adequate and coherent explanation for the feedback seeking process. Thus the two studies do not adequately address the research question of finding an adequate and coherent explanation for the managers’ feedback seeking behaviour in a real organisational setting. Therefore this
warranted further research into managerial feedback seeking tendencies, hence the
design of study 3 employing a qualitative study, using the repertory grid technique for
data gathering, and employing the grounded theory approach to data analysis
CHAPTER SEVEN
STUDY 3: INVESTIGATING MANAGER’S PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK SEEKING BEHAVIOUR USING REPERTORY GRID METHODOLOGY

7.1 Introduction
Feedback seeking is an ill-understood consideration from both managerial and psychological points of view. Several studies have investigated motives, situational and individual differences variables underlying feedback-seeking behaviour using quantitative methodology (see literature review and; studies 1 & 2). However, a noticeable feature about these studies is that not only have they yielded little insight into the processes involved in feedback seeking in real managerial and organisational settings, they have hardly produced any coherent theoretical approaches to explain feedback seeking.

This study investigates managers’ performance feedback seeking behaviour using repertory grid methodology. This chapter begins with the research question guiding this study and the rationale for using a qualitative methodology, specifically repertory grid (RG) in this study. It proceeds to examine the philosophical assumptions underlying RG and its evolution. The methodology is described focusing on the meaning and usage of the concepts: Elements, Constructs and Linking mechanisms on one hand and the two analytic routes, particularly the qualitative route which necessitates the use of grounded theory in the analysis on the other. Then the suitability of RG for the study is provided. Also, how it was applied in this study is described. Further, a preliminary analysis of the data is reported.

7.1.1 Research question for this study.
• Does qualitative methodology offer better explanation of managerial feedback seeking behaviour than quantitative methodology?
• What managerial instances are performance feedback seeking more or less likely in the feedback seeking process?
• Can qualitative methodology provide a basis for a coherent theoretical explanation of managers’ feedback seeking behaviour
7.1.2 Appropriate methodology: Quantitative or Qualitative?
The use of quantitative methodology in managerial research is a common phenomenon with some obvious advantages but at the same time major limitations. Commenting on the dominant use of quantitative approaches - survey - to researching managerial behaviours, Hamlin (2004: 192) notes:

In particular, the predominant focus on studying behavioural frequencies, and the time engaged in them is deemed unnecessarily narrow and the type of survey questionnaires typically used fail to help develop deeper understanding of the deeper structures of managerial behaviour. When using survey-based questionnaires (which are usually predetermined) for management research, the behavioural descriptions have to be generalised across a variety of contexts. Hence researchers have tended to employ broad terms that are relatively 'sterile' in the sense that a usefulness of detail is often missing.

It is against this background that Hamlin argues that using a quantitative methodology:

the researchers end up measuring the presence and frequency of static terms that have little perceived relevance to managers...in their specific organisational contexts. (Hamlin 2004: 192)

Because such studies do not provide the contextual details rich in insights about a phenomenon under study, they justify the need for a type of research which can provide such richer details and a deeper understanding beyond what quantitative studies offer. However, the use of qualitative studies to explain managerial behaviours is notably lacking (Alveson, 2002; Hamlin 2004). This makes Alveson’s observation more appropriate:


7.1.3 Why qualitative methodology?
Qualitative methods provide details and richer accounts of managerial behaviours beyond what are provided by quantitative approaches, and this approach could thereby enhance our understanding of managerial feedback seeking behaviours. Despite this, there is lack of use of qualitative methods for confirming results obtained from survey based research, or for examining a wider range of managerial behaviours
than those specified in survey questionnaires (Barker, 2000; Den Hartog et al., 1997). Nonetheless, in the social science context, Gilbert (1993) draws attention to the benefits of using both methodologies to complement one another. He notes that qualitative method is useful for confirming results obtained from survey based research. In the same light, qualitative methods can be used to examine a wider range of feedback seeking behaviours than those specified in survey questionnaires, which have been predominant in feedback research.

Further, there is a call for a new direction with different approaches to managerial and leadership research based on subjectivist and social process perspective and grounded theory (Alvesson, 2002; Parry, 1998), a research method most often associated with qualitative research in the social sciences. Also, the method helps the understanding of complex feedback seeking behaviours and their meanings through the exploration of the social processes that produce them in organisational settings. In addition, although much is known about this topic, as advocated by Hollway (1989), a new approach is required. Therefore the use of RG methodology and the qualitative analytic route, particularly grounded theory as a basis of analysis is overdue. This study seeks to use RG methodology to explore managers' feedback seeking.

7.1.4 Rationale for employing Repertory Grid Methodology

The repertory grid has been increasingly used in studies of managers and their development and occupational and work psychology context in the last thirty years. For example, to evaluate management training (Easterby-Smith & Ashton, 1975), managers' self-development (Fransella & Porter 1990), in management (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Holman 1996), to facilitate organisational change and development (Cassel et al., 2000) and identification and development of corporate values (Brophy, 2003). Commenting on the usefulness of RG in studies on managerial behaviours, Easterby-Smith et al. (1996) note:

When faced with questions about effective managerial and leadership behaviours, many managers respond with answers about what they think they should know rather than what they actually think. Repertory grids attempt to delve deeper and uncover 'managers theories in use'. While difficult, the process can be rewarding, with new and interesting insights being gained for both parties [researcher and managers]. (Easterby-Smith et al., 1996: 4)
The repertory grid is relatively simple in format, and as such it does allow both the interviewer and participant to be involved in its production thus making the process of data gathering more engaging.

It is relatively simple ... in that it is small and amenable to unsophisticated analysis; yet it is still quite rich in material. (Easterby-Smith et al., 1996: 4)

With the researcher’s assistance, the participant is also able to understand the meanings reflected in the grid, emphasising participation and fostering a sense of inclusion in the production of knowledge. Engaging participants in this way is thought to encourage fuller and more in depth narratives. The grid technique is commonly used to supplement or replace the interview, and is recommended for its comparative flexibility and ability to engender reflexivity, that is the ability to think about one’s own thinking (Bordieu, 1990; Fromm, 2004).

7.1.5 Philosophical assumptions underlying Grid Methodology

The repertory grid method is derived from Kelly’s (1955) theory of personal construct psychology (PCP). Underlying the PCP is the idea that ‘everyman is his own scientist’ that is the individual is an enquiring person (Fransella, Bell, & Bannister 2004). This suggests that the unique principle governing human behaviour is the need to make sense of, or give meaning to, our world and the situations that we encounter ourselves. To achieve this, individuals create and recreate an implicit theoretical framework, which is our personal construct system. An individual’s construct system is made up, not only of these cognitive structures, but also of value systems, scripts and life themes (Fransella, Bell & Bannister, 2004).

These constructs change as events are experienced and they do confirm or disconfirm previous predictions based on the existing construct system. This is based upon the philosophical assumption of ‘constructive alternativism’, which states that ‘all our present interpretations of the universe are subject to revision or replacement’ (Kelly, 1955: 15). The interpretative construction of knowledge is viewed as a process meaningful to the person involved in producing it, and is not concerned with the objective sense of ‘truth’. Kelly therefore adopts an explicitly ontological and epistemological stance, and implies that for the repertory grid to be meaningfully
employed, it should be done within a constructivist framework. Salmon (2003) suggests that Kelly’s psychology is all about the sense making process, about how we come to know what we know, and how we live out that knowledge. She suggests that the central feature is the ‘absence of any single version of reality’. However, in seeking to understand the processes of personal sense making, PCP recognizes that constructs develop in a context and through negotiation with others. Kelly also stresses that our construct system is often unarticulated or implicit, and the exploration and elaboration of these systems is therefore a key theme.

Kelly devised the repertory grid technique as a method for exploring personal construct systems. He invites us to turn:

‘...to a personal construct system made up of a whole lot of constructs. [And suggests that] Such a system is a complex, or if you don’t mind the term, a conceptual grid within which events can be seen in depth or in their psychological dimensions.’ (Kelly, 1959, cited in Fransella, Bell and Bannister, 2004: 6)

Easterby-Smith et al. (1996: 3) argue that:

If [we accept that] people’s actions are determined largely by how they understand situations and other people, then the grid [repertory grid methodology] provides an excellent means of uncovering and representing that understanding. It offers a powerful way of quantifying people’s attitudes, feeling and perceptions. Others see it more as a method enabling them to examine their own ideas and values in greater depth than other psychological techniques.

In our every day lives we continually attempt to understand how we and others view the world in order to make meaningful decisions and undertake sensible actions. Often we are unaware of this process, and the repertory grid is a tool through which we can attempt to uncover and formally represent how individuals construct their world. A grid can, at one level, be thought of as cognitive ‘map’ charting a particular aspect of a person’s world. (Easterby-Smith et al., 1996: 4)

The repertory grid technique provides a way of accessing an individual’s unique set of constructs, and therefore enables the researcher to gain insight into an individual’s view of reality (Gammack & Stephens, 1994).

It is an attempt to stand in others’ shoes, to see their world as they see it, and to understand their situation and their concerns. (Fransella et al., 2004)
In this sense, the grid ‘provides a representation of the individual’s own world; it is not a model imposed by an outsider’ (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Holman, 1996). The value of the repertory grid is that it offers a structure in which the inquiry can proceed in the participant’s own terms. Essentially, in practice, individuals generate their ‘own questionnaires and complete them’. The fact that the structure is not imposed on the subject, but represents the subject’s own construction, makes the data more credible since it reflects an authentic representation of the participants’ thoughts.

Easterby-Smith et al., provide a much quoted succinct description of the value and quality of the repertory grid; it reads:

The fact that perceptions of nebulous relationships can be written down rigorously by someone who is not a trained psychologist, is itself significant. The visual representation of perceptions helps to focus the analysis and makes communication about them easier. It also involves verbalizing constructs which would otherwise remain hidden. By elaborating (or focusing) a grid it is possible to probe into areas of which the subject may not have been aware; and, at a personal level, it may be a creative way of generating self insights. Most importantly, the grid provides a representation of the individuals’ own world; it is not a model imposed by an outsider. As such the individual can explore this world for him/herself. (Cassell et al., 2000: 564; Easterby-Smith et al., 1996: 6)

Grids are about constructs. Kelly offers several definitions of a construct. For example, a construct is ‘a way in which two or more things are alike and thereby different from a third or more things’. This definition manifests itself directly in one of the procedures for eliciting constructs for grids. In all of his definitions, according to Fransella, Bell & Bannister (2004), Kelly retains the essential notion that constructs are bipolar, as stated in his Dichotomy Corollary of the PCP. According to Fransella et al. (2004) Kelly’s argument is that ‘we never affirm something without simultaneously denying something’. This makes the notion of construct quite different from the notion of a concept. It is often the opposite pole of a personal construct that gives us a clear meaning of that construct. According to Fransella et al. (2004), we do not always, or even very often, specify our contrast pole, but Kelly’s argument is that we make sense of the world by simultaneously noting likeness and difference. It is in the contrast that the usefulness of the construct subsists. It is this bipolarity that makes the designing of grid possible. Fransella et al. note:
When creating a grid, we may use a simple bipolar grid where we allot each of our elements to one pole of the construct or the other, or we rank our elements from ‘most like’ to ‘most opposite’ or we rate them on, say, a seven – point scale. In each case, it is the dimensionality- the bipolarity of the construct which enables us to arrive at some kind of matrix of some kind of relationships between constructs. (Fransella et al., 2004: 8)

The development of a system of bi-polar personal constructs, Kelly believed is the central component of the construing or sense making process. The bi-polar nature of each one of an individual’s construct is thought to present a ‘pathway of movement’ (Kelly, 1955: 128), the choice in direction being influenced by movement away from anxiety associated with the inability to anticipate events. This important aspect of PCP highlights the essentially anticipatory nature of human functioning, as emphasised in Kelly’s (1955: 4) Fundamental Postulate ‘a person’s processes are psychologically channelized by the ways in which he anticipates events’. This provides a useful temporal perspective on the construing process. Bi-polarity of constructs is the main basis of a theme that emerges in a repertory grid (Fransella et al., 2004).

Kelly did not employ the concept of the unconscious, but acknowledged that an individual’s constructions are at different levels of cognitive awareness, consequently they may not always be aware of the basis for their choices. Dependent on the cognitive awareness of a particular construct is its position within a hierarchical system. The position of the construct will affect the influence it has in the construing process and will therefore influence the predictions made about the world. Kelly termed the higher, or super ordinate constructs ‘core constructs’ and believed them to be central to an individual’s identity. He also considered them to be particularly resistant to change since ‘threat is the awareness of imminent comprehensive change in one’s core structures’ (Kelly, 1955: 489). This suggests that protective processes ensure a sense of continuity in the way the world is interpreted and therefore viewed.

One of the key assumptions underlying the repertory grid technique from the PCP is that persons differ from one another in their construction of events (individuality corollary). That is two people in exactly the same situation may perceive that situation and react to it in totally different ways. Knowledge held cannot be objectively considered as true or false, but only as meaningful to the person who holds it
(Fransella et al., 2004). However, if a person employs a construction of experience which is similar to that employed by another, his psychological processes are similar to those of the other person (communality corollary). This suggests that people can construe the world in very similar ways, and that individuals are not entirely unique (Easterby-Smith et al., 1996).

On the basis of the Individuality and Communality notions, the grid technique combines aspects of both idiographic assessment, which thrives to reveal unique dimensions of an individual’s lower-order case-specific construct and nomothetic research, which seeks general patterns across people, that is higher-order cross-case constructs. Thus, the format of the grid essentially guides the respondent in constructing their own questionnaire by eliciting the individual’s own constructs and relevant elements, while allowing comparisons across different people or groups (Fransella et al., 2004). This makes the grid technique a useful tool to employ in order to understand managers feedback seeking behaviours.

In terms of methodology, the basic canons of personal construct psychology provide the rationale for the repertory grid technique. The principle concerns of the repertory grid technique, based on the canons of personal construct psychology, are to elicit participant’s view of the world, and to explore this world in their own terms rather than in terms imposed by the researcher.

At this juncture it will be helpful to describe the essential features and key stages involved in the use of repertory grid methodology, starting with the essential features. There are three essential features of a repertory grid plus its two analytic routes. These are the concepts of Elements, Constructs and the Linking mechanisms on one hand and the quantitative and qualitative - grounded theory - analytic routes on the other. Elements are objects of individuals’ thoughts to which they relate their values or concepts. This can be people, ideas, places or inanimate things. Constructs are the ‘qualities’ which a person uses to describe and differentiate between the elements. The constructs are viewed as bi-polar in that they have both positive and negative ends. Linking mechanisms are the various ways which show how elements and constructs are linked.
Another important feature of RG methodology is the stages involved in its practical application. Although there are variations to repertory techniques, they all contain three basic stages (Gammack & Stephens, 1994; Fransella, et al., 2004). The first stage involves the generation of elements, which is the identification of entities in the area of construing to be investigated. The second stage is the elicitation of constructs, identifying the distinctions that can be applied amongst these elements. The final stage involves the construction of a matrix (grid) of elements and constructs. A fourth stage could be added, where the researcher considers which analytic route to take—qualitative or quantitative, or both. The RG methodology offers the benefit of both quantitative and qualitative—two—analytic approaches. The qualitative analytic approach uses grounded theory analytic techniques and it is described later (see section 7.1.7).

7.1.6. Analytical Technique
RG methodology has the benefit of both quantitative and qualitative analytic approaches. The qualitative analytic route leads to the application of grounded theory in RG analysis. The two analytic routes are discussed and the rationale for the use of grounded theory is provided.

Grid data are potentially rich in that they may throw light on the underlying structure and manifest content of the construing which underlies the person’s grid responses (Fransella et al., 2004). The extent to which the data will achieve this objective and be psychologically meaningful will depend on the data analysis technique. In terms of analysing repertory grid data, there is a choice between using various quantitative means to elicit common constructs, or alternatively a more qualitative interpretative approach may be adopted. (Brewerton & Millward 2001). Quantitative means, that is statistical analysis of repertory grid data usually cluster analysis, spatial/principal component analysis and multidimensional scaling offer only structure of constructs from which interpretations can be made. However, while the pattern of associations within responses/constructs and elements may be statistically meaningful, it may be difficult to interpret its psychological meaning (Bell, 1997; Fromm, 2004).

Easter-by and Thorpe (1996) express scepticism about the practical value of quantitative methods in analysing repertory grid data. They note:
A schematic representation of grid does not impute any meaning itself. The correlations and relationships still have to be interpreted and given meaning and validated, if possible, by the respondent. There remains also, a need to establish whether the themes and distinctions elicited are of practical consequence in the organisational context. (Easter-by and Thorpe, 1996: 25)

As a result the value and appropriateness of statistical analysis has been questioned and criticised as irrelevant to and inconsistent with Kelly’s PCP and the general philosophy underlying repertory grid technique. Further, Easter-by and Thorpe note:

The emphasis on statistical analysis has produced grid-induced riddles which move concern away from the central task, which is understanding. Greater sophistication may also increase the distance between the researcher and the researched, the opposite of what Kelly originally intended. The emphasis on quantitative analysis poses a number of problems for repertory grid techniques as it has a qualitative root that is a focus on language and the interview. (1996: 24)

Thus Gammack and Stephen (1994) warn that:

Any [quantitative] analysis must be referenced against a qualitative appreciation of the data’s meaning and the repertory grid technique is compromised if merely applied as a cook book recipe for obtaining a data matrix which is then subject to a disembodied analysis... Although quantitative analysis of the grid may provide useful insights into domain relationships, we recommend that the matrix be used primarily as a conversation focus for complementary qualitative analysis involving in-depth interviews, exploration of definitions, relating elicited constructs to events and work practices and more specifically identifying their range and foci of convenience. Such an analysis should aim to elaborate the semantic and organisational properties of the grid. (Gammack and Stephen, 1994, cited in Easter-by and Thorpe, 1996: 25)


This last result [of the statistical analysis] suggests that the dominant characteristic of this data is provided by the configuration of elements rather than the constructs... the dominance of the element configuration in the solution is interesting. Personal Construct Theory traditionally emphasizes the role of constructs, leaving elements as a way of evaluating constructs. Yet here, the analysis suggests that the constructs were of substantially lesser importance. (Bell 1997: 66)
Bell (1997: 67) concludes:

Many of the results obtained [from statistical analysis] are conflicting in some ways. This is not necessarily a problem with SPSS ... grid data; rather it reflects a more general problem with grids being small data sets and susceptible to numeric or artefactual problems.

The above discussion and reasons show that quantitative analysis is not suitable for repertory grid data. Qualitative analysis on the other hand is more in accordance with Kelly's (1955) original intentions for its use. Several qualitative approaches are available to researchers wishing to examine people’s accounts of particular phenomenon (Bannister & Fransella, 2003; Henwood, 1996; Henwood & Pidgeon, 2003), and the method of analysis chosen was consonant with the aims of the study. In this analysis, themes of common constructs are produced using a qualitative approach. Initially, the scores are calculated across all of the grids. For each grid the six constructs with the highest scores are noted. These are then analysed in line with the processes of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Henwood & Pidgeon 1992). In this analytic approach the theory that emerges from the analysis is grounded in the data themselves and not from pre-existing theoretical concerns (Henwood & Pidgeon 1992).

7.1.7 The Grounded Theory Approach

Henwood and Pidgeon (1992) highlight the importance of grounded theory in qualitative research:

Grounded theory is one useful approach to the systematic generation of theory from qualitative data, and alternative criteria can be advanced for judging the adequacy of research where qualitative methods have been used. An advantage of qualitative research is that theory is generated which is contextually sensitive, persuasive and relevant. (Henwood and Pidgeon, 1992: 97)

This unique strength of grounded theory approach to analysis justifies why according to Charmaz (2006):
Grounded theory served at the front of the qualitative revolution. (Charmaz 2000:509)

Thus grounded theory is consistent with the theoretical underpinnings of Kelly's PCP and the general philosophy underlying repertory grid technique (Cassel et al., 2000). Glasser and Strauss (1967) are accredited with the development of grounded theory. They derived the philosophical and theoretical underpinnings of the theory from pragmatism and 'symbolic interactionism' (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 1990).

Grounded theory approach involves systematic and sequential analysis of data through three main processes. The basic elements of the processes are building of concepts, categorisation of the concepts, and making propositions from the data to form a coherent theoretical framework to explain the phenomenon under study.

Concepts are the basic units of analysis in that it is from the conceptualisation of data, not the actual data per se that theory is generated and developed. Grounding concepts in the reality of data is compatible with, and fundamental to the approach:

Theories can't be built with actual incidents or activities as observed or reported; that is from "raw data." The incidents, events and happenings are taken as, or analysed as potential indicators of phenomena, which are thereby given conceptual labels. Only by comparing incidents and naming like phenomena with the same term [label] can a theorist accumulate the basic units for theory. In the grounded theory approach, such concepts become more numerous and more abstract as the analysis continues. (Corbin and Strauss, 1990: 7)

Concepts that are related to the same phenomenon are grouped to form categories:

Categories are higher in level and more abstract than the concepts they represent. They are generated through the same analytic process of making comparisons to highlight similarities and differences that is used to produce lower level concepts. Categories are the cornerstones of a developing theory. They provide the means by which a theory can be integrated.... Merely grouping concepts under a more abstract heading does not constitute a category, however. To achieve that status, a more abstract concept must be developed in terms of its properties and dimensions of the phenomenon it represents, conditions which give rise to it, the action/interaction by which it is expressed, and the consequences it produces. Through such specifications, categories are defined and given explanatory power. (Corbin and Strauss, 1990: 7, 8)

The third element involves integration of the categories that is relating all the concepts to build a theoretical framework and a proposition that underlies and
explains the phenomenon under investigation. The generation and development of concepts, categories and propositions or theoretical framework is an iterative process. Grounded theory is not generated a priori and then subsequently tested. Rather, it is:

derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents. That is, discovered, developed and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of the data pertaining to that phenomenon. One does not begin with a theory, then prove it. Rather one begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge. (Strauss and Corbin, 1990: 23)

However, while grounded theory involves generating theory from data, this does not occur in a vacuum, rather it occurs within a theoretical framework established by the methodological orientation selected by the researcher. Without the orientation provided by such a framework no sense could be made from the data. This is based on the philosophical proposition that logical and justifiable data are necessarily defined through a theoretical framework (Byryman, 2004; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Punch, 2005). Accordingly, Glasser and Strauss (1967: 3) acknowledged that ‘the researcher does not approach reality as a tabular rasa.’ A later ‘social constructivists’ revision and development of the grounded theory suggests that theory is generated as a result of a constant interplay between data and the researcher’s developing conceptualisations (Charmaz 1990, 2006). Charmaz describes social constructivism as:

A social scientific perspective that addresses how realities are made. This perspective assumes that people, including researchers construct realities in which they participate. Constructivist inquiry starts with the experience and asks how members construct it. To the best of their ability, constructivists enter the phenomenon, gain multiple views of it, and locate it in it’s web connections and constraints. Constructivists acknowledge that their interpretation of the studied phenomenon is itself a construction. (Charmaz 2006: 187)

The researcher in this study employs a grounded theory approach within the framework of social constructivism.
7.1.8 Suitability of Repertory Grid and Grounded Theory in feedback seeking study

From this discussion, it is evident that the repertory grid is a valuable tool and suitable for providing significant cues and clues in the respondent's own language about their performance feedback seeking propensities in their own working world. The constructs generated are considered to provide insight into factors associated with their feedback seeking behaviours. The feelings associated with these factors, identified by their position on the bipolar continuum of the grid, and the influence on anticipations and the possible behaviour may be interpreted. The aim of using this technique is to probe and encourage participants to generate insights into their performance feedback seeking process. The grounded theory approach was considered appropriate and suitable for the data analysis because the research was concerned with exploring further the process/factors underlying managers' feedback seeking tendencies. Specifically, with the aim of exploring specific psychological constructs underlying managers' feedback seeking tendencies in order to further explain their feedback seeking tendencies and thus to find theoretical explanations of why managers are more or less likely to seek feedback about their performance.
7.2 Study 3 Report

7.2.1 Introduction
As it was shown earlier, study 3 aimed to provide theoretical insight beyond the extant literature on the feedback seeking process in a managerial domain in an organisational context. A qualitative method was thus employed. (See chapter 5 section 5.4.4; chapter 7 section 1). This section provides the report on the study. It details how the repertory grid interview technique was conducted with managers for data gathering, and how the data was analysed within a grounded theory framework. Findings and discussions are provided in accordance with grounded theory reporting technique.

7.2.2 Procedure
The repertory grid technique was employed as a means of data collection. Justification for the use of this technique is provided in section 7.1.4. This section describes the study design, piloting, sampling, data collection (especially interviews, duration per interview), ethical considerations (confidentiality, avoiding inconvenience to participants, how participants were encouraged to continue interviews) and preliminary analysis.

The study was piloted on two participants to enable the researcher to familiarise himself with the technique and make any necessary amendments to the procedure. During the pilot study it was found out that the procedure could be time consuming, and was a hard thinking exercise for both researcher and interviewee. Following these observations it was decided that interviewees would be briefed about the study methodology, regarding what would be expected of them, how they might make advance preparation and the duration of the interview session. (See appendix 5 for advance briefing of interview session).

Ten participants were purposively selected as a sample for this study. All the participants were through personal contacts. The main criterion used for selecting participants was whether or not a preferred prospective participant held a managerial
position. Participants were seven male managers and three female managers from across both private and public organisations in Guildford and London in the UK.

The interviews were conducted in October - November 2006. Interviews lasted between 90-120 minutes and were conducted in the participants' workplaces in a private setting, either during lunch-breaks or after close of work. The researcher introduced himself and outlined the research objectives. Ethical consideration included the researcher offering assurance of confidentiality to participants and asking for permission to tape-record the session. The participants were informed that the tapes would be destroyed on completion of the research. The researcher explained the repertory grid technique and emphasised that participants should be candid in their answers in discussing feedback seeking about their performance.

There were three stages in each interview session. The first stage of the interview session was the generation of elements for the grid. The second stage was the generation of constructs to complete the grid, which required most care and skill as it involved a lot of thinking. The final stage of the interview process was the linking of the constructs to the elements by interviewees. Each interview session lasted about two hours. At the end of the session, participants were asked to give evaluative feedback of the process. They found the process/session to be a hard thinking exercise. It was intellectually challenging and fascinating. It enabled them to think about things they had never thought of about their own work. Participants were interested to know the findings in the study.

During the initial stages of the interview, respondents were asked questions about their managerial functions and the extent to which they will ask for feedback about their performance on such functions. This allowed data to be gathered on the specific area of interest. They were required to think of three tangible, that is, clearly defined functions in their managerial domain on which they seek or tend to seek feedback about their performance. They were also asked to think of three functions where they do not or would not need feedback, and three functions where sometimes they do and sometimes do not seek feedback about their performance. Interviewees gave reasons for seeking or not seeking or sometimes seeking feedback about their performance on such functions respectively. Thus each participant gave nine functions, three under
each category of feedback seeking tendencies; to seek; sometimes seeking and sometimes not seeking; and not to seek. These functions formed the elements of their grid. Each element was listed on a card and labelled 1 to 9 for each participant. In all, 10 participants provided 90 managerial functions in repertory grid interviews (see appendix 6 for the list of functions).

The second stage of the interview involved elicitation of constructs from respondents using the method of ‘triading’ (Easterby-Smith et al., 1996). The participants were presented with three elements (triad) at a time and asked to consider how two were similar but different or opposite to the third and to explain why (with respect of the functions and feedback seeking tendencies). Through probing, prompting, and clarification during the conversational interview, interviewees were encouraged to describe the similarity or differences between the pair and the single using a word or a phrase. This word or phrase describes their ‘constructs.’ This process was difficult and time consuming as many participants felt uncomfortable and sometimes there were long periods of silence. The triads were presented in varying combinations 18 times to each interviewee. Thus each participant generated a set of at least 18 constructs. This process of comparing and contrasting generated plentiful data and allowed the researcher the opportunity at a later stage to make individual case-specific comparison of constructs. The constructs that the interviewees generated were then written onto the grid. The word or phrase that described the ‘pair’ in the triad was written on the ‘left pole’ whilst the opposite which described the ‘single’ was written on the right pole on the grid. The bi-polar constructs produced were charted on the grid until it was complete. Any comments the interviewee made during the elicitation process were tape recorded, with their permission. In all, the interviews with the 10 participant’s generated 180 constructs (see appendix 8 for managers’ case specific constructs).

After the elicitation of the constructs, the next process was linking constructs to elements in order to complete the grid. Interviewees were asked to rate the relatedness of each construct with each element on a 5-point Likert scale anchored by the poles of each construct, with one indicating the least related and five indicating the most related. For each participant, the intersection of the 18 construct rows with 9
element columns formed the grid and the matrix of 162 specific ratings it contains is amenable to manual or computer analysis.

To enable the researcher to score and analyse the grids using the prototype manual method (Brewerton & Millward, 2001) and identify the most important constructs (lower order constructs) for each participant’s feedback seeking behaviour, they were further asked to give an overarching score of the elements on their grid using the same scale of 1 to 5 on the extent to which they would seek feedback on each element (managerial function) thus, 5 = more likely to seek, to 1 = less likely to seek. This overarching rating was used to score participants’ grid ratings by comparing them to their grid ratings to find consistencies and inconsistencies in their grid ratings (see appendix 7 for manual scoring and analysis of the grid). Constructs identified for each case (participant) are referred to as lower-order case-specific constructs (see appendix 8).

7.2.2.1 Data Analysis
Consistent with Kelly’s PCP and the general philosophy underlying repertory grid technique, analysis was carried out within grounded theory framework (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) outlined in section 7.1.7. This section presents the analysis of the grid data according to the principles of grounded theory.

The repertory grid provided a very structured form, both for eliciting and presenting the data. The relatively simple format of the grid embodies and displays meaning, therefore each repertory grid produced is a rich source of data in itself (Fransella et al., 2004). Initially, the researcher computed the grid scores according to the calculations outlined in appendix 7 as recommended by Brewerton and Millward (2001). The scores identified those constructs that the individual considered most significant in relation to each element. The six highest scores from each grid were noted. These were then analysed and clustered to form named categories using a grounded theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; 1998). The categories that emerged directly from the data are referred to as themes. In the early stages of the analysis, maximum flexibility was exercised in generating new categories from the data. Also, it was ensured that the descriptions of the categories fitted, that is related the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This is because ‘success in generating good
grounded theory which is faithful to the data depends upon maintaining a balance between full use of the researcher's own intellect and this requirement of fit' (Henwood & Pidgeon, 1992: 105).

Initially, individual grids were analysed to generate the main constructs underlying their feedback seeking behaviours. Constructs generated by participants were termed 'lower order constructs'. Secondly, the lower order constructs were distilled to generate 'higher order constructs.' In this process, the constructs were examined in turn and compared with one another, to determine their similarities or differences in terms of their themes. The process went on progressively and enabled the researcher to generate three main categories or higher order constructs. Following Cassel et al., (2000), a construct which could fit into more than one category was dual categorised. The next stage was a further higher order psychological analysis often described as meta interpretation of the higher order constructs. This involved further refinement of the higher order constructs into a single concept, considered to underlie their performance feedback seeking behaviour. These closely fit the data as they were derived from the inquiry. Comments by participants were tape recorded during the interview sessions, later accessed and used as textual quotes to support the generation of the constructs as well as enhancing their meaning and interpretations. Next, the constructs elicited from the rep grid are analysed in stages.

Data was analysed within the grounded theory framework, using the constant comparative process, a procedure common to many core modes of qualitative analysis (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1990):

It is a method of analysis that generate successively more abstract concepts and theories through inductive processes of comparing data with data, category with category and category with concept. Comparisons then constitute each stage of analytic development. (Charmaz 2006: 187)

By employing the comparative method, three steps were used in the analysis of the constructs. In the first step open coding was used to develop concepts, categories and properties to generate lower order constructs. In the second step axial coding was used to identify and develop connections between categories and sub-categories to generate higher order constructs. In the third step selective coding was used to integrate
categories and build core categories or core constructs and a theoretical framework. These three steps are described in more detail in turn below.

The first stage of the analysis was the identification of lower order constructs or open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998) or substantive coding (Glaser, 1992). This involved a systematic process of identification, naming, categorisation and description of the constructs found in the repertory grid data. All the constructs generated by participants were compared and contrasted in terms of their themes to find out their interrelationships and differences in order to categorise them. Constructs identified are described as ‘lower order constructs’. Lower order constructs provide puzzle pieces of information or causal relationships underlying a phenomenon, that is feedback seeking behaviour, but do not provide a clear picture of the underlying variables or factors to enhance understanding of the process. Therefore, there was the need to further distil the lower order constructs to look for types, sequences, patterns and relationships among them. The next stage of the analysis which served this purpose was further refinement of the lower order constructs into major categories or higher order constructs.

The second stage of the analysis was to generate the higher order constructs. The categories, that is, the lower order constructs are refined and reduced through axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998). This process involved analytic examination of the lower order constructs or categories to discover linkages, relationships and new patterns, relating them to each other through comparison, deductive and inductive thinking. The researcher achieved greater insight of the categorisation, bearing in mind a ‘higher order process’ and a conceptual abstraction that was emerging from the analysis. This enabled the researcher to refine them into major categories or axial codes or higher order constructs which reflect the propositions that have been induced through the systematic examination and interrogation of the data. The analysis of the lower order constructs identified three higher order constructs as underlying participants’ performance feedback seeking process. Higher order constructs were tested against the data in order to confirm or refute them. The researcher returned to the tapes recorded during the interview sessions for relevant textual quotes.
The final stage of the analysis involved a careful examination of the higher order constructs or categories in order to identify a core category or construct which has major explanatory power. The final stage was a higher order psychological analysis or meta interpretation (selective coding) which aimed to draw together the higher order constructs or categories to create an overarching theory or explanation that could be applied to all accounts and also explain the data. Strauss and Corbin (1990) describe this process as selective coding while Glaser (1992) refers to it as theoretical coding. This involved the identification or generation of, the core category or concept which relates to all the other higher order constructs and presents and explains the ideas that have been presented as significant by participants as underlying the phenomenon under investigation, i.e., their feedback seeking propensity. According to the grounded theory approach this core category or concept is the theoretical construct underwriting the findings, that is, it potentially explains participants' feedback seeking propensities. It offers a deeper ground up account of managerial performance feedback seeking behaviour in the organisational setting.

Aggregating participant responses into themes with the aim of suggesting shared meanings calls into question the epistemological position of the research. Cassel et al. (2000) however argued that aggregating common constructs is not necessarily a deviation from Kelly's constructivist approach in that the main focus remains on how the participants construct and make sense of their world. A key advantage of the grid is the presentation of individual constructs, yet in order to provide clarity from large amounts of data, the researcher will inevitably want to claim some patterns in the analytic process. Thomas and Harri-Augustein (1985) have criticised the process by which the description of meaning from a grid is achieved as tending to be reductionist, with constructs categorised together in convenient ways to make a whole. While this criticism may be offset by reference to the underlying epistemological basis of the technique, awareness of this issue is important for the researcher analysing repertory grids.

In addition to aggregating responses from the repertory grid into themes, the findings are presented with quotes from participants detailing their individual feedback seeking experiences. The findings of this study therefore benefit from the scores derived from
the repertory grid and the support of textual quotes from their narratives. The next section presents the findings of the analysis.

7.2.3 Findings

7.2.3.1 Introduction

The findings are reported in three parts. Part one provides the number of categories/constructs and the core variable, their titles and a figure that shows their configuration. Part two describes the categories interwoven with explanatory literature in accordance with grounded theory reporting technique. Illustrative quotations from the interview are included as a substantive part of the findings, acting as confirmation of the researcher’s interpretation of events. Part three focuses on theory development and the literature that lends support to its development. It starts with the definition of the theory and the core variable. Then the literature integrated into the discussion that support feedback seeking tendencies is explained. A diagrammatic representation of the analytical version of the feedback seeking process derived from the analysis is presented.

7.2.3.2 Number of categories/constructs and the core variable

The analysis of the data produced three main categories that arguably underwrite participants’ performance feedback seeking behaviours. These are: perceived uncertainties; perceived difficulties; and skill development. These categories were arranged around the central theme of the research ‘managerial feedback seeking propensities’ to form an analytical version of the process. Findings show that managers tend to seek feedback about their performance when they perceive uncertainties and difficulties in their managerial functions and need to develop their skills in order to achieve organisational goals. The categories are used as tools to build the argument in context.

7.2.3.3 Description of categories/ higher order constructs

This section describes the categories, each with a definition and examples which are used as sub categories. Participants’ comments and statements are commented on, interpreted and given meanings given to them, which form the basis of a core
argument in the analytic process. The main argument being advanced is that managers are more likely to seek performance feedback when they perceive uncertainties and difficulties in their functions and need to develop their skills in order to improve their performance to achieve organisational goals. On the other hand they are less likely to seek feedback when they are certain and confident about their performance, when they do not perceive any difficulties in their functions, and as a result they see no need to develop their skills for performance improvement because they are well equipped for their jobs. Participants' textual quotes are provided to substantiate the argument, and also the extant literature is drawn on.

7.2.3.3.1 Perceived Uncertainties

...It is an ambiguous task. It is an ambiguous task.... There are no clear objectives or guidelines. It needs a lot of discretion. You can never be sure of what you are doing. (Participant)

Managers said that they tended to seek feedback about their performance as a result of perceived uncertainties about their functions. 'Perceived uncertainties' may be defined in this context as: 'when managers are not sure of the appropriate knowledge and skills, the right approach to deliver their functions and hence the outcome or output of their solutions to achieving an organisational goal'. Managerial work situations where there are perceived uncertainties are: their knowledge and skills and understanding of their functions; the approach, and delivery of their functions; their solutions to organisational problems; their performance and its outcome in relation to achieving organisational goals. The following excerpts illustrate the significance of perceived uncertainty as crucial to whether feedback will be sought.

I will seek feedback on these roles because they don't have clear objectives. They don't have clear cut objectives (counselling & motivation) which make it difficult to assess so you will seek feedback. It is more difficult to assess and evaluate so you will seek feedback on them....Because there are no clear cut objectives, guidelines and criteria for even going about it, which shows how difficult it is to deal with the role.

It is an ambiguous task. It is an ambiguous task, so you will need feedback to help clarify what it is that you are supposed to do and to ascertain whether you have actually done it. There are no clear objectives or
guidelines. It needs a lot of discretion. You can never be sure of what you are doing.

Somebody comes to work, as a manager, as a group of people’s manager, I assign duties to them, I supervise them, as a manager I must see to it, I must know at the end of the day that the work has been done. I must get feedback to assess that my duty as a manager to ensure that the work is done, has been completed. If I don’t get feedback, in terms of job completion or the quality of work done, my job can not be assessed. I will need feedback to evaluate and ascertain if the work has been done.

....Yes, with communication, I must know whether the message has gone through. If I say something, say communicate standard, I must know whether the standards I communicated have been understood, implemented and applied. With counselling I need to know whether the problem has been resolved or still persists. How is it affecting my staff? With regards to feedback, in order to be sure that objectives have been met, I will need feedback. For communication, to be sure the message has gone through. For counselling to find out whether the problem has been resolved.

Conversely managers said that they would be less likely to seek feedback when they are certain of their performance.

....I will not need feedback to know whether or not the workers are motivated. I can see for myself. I can see for myself. Immediately whether it is working or not. In motivating, I will be trying to ... In the first place, what is the reason for, what necessitates motivation? Is it that the job they were doing was below them? They were tired, you can motivate them. Motivation will be an interaction with the people. You can see immediate change in their disposition as to whether it has been effective or not. Result is obvious. I will least seek feedback on it.

The results are more obvious. The results are more tangible. I will less likely seek feedback on it.

....I don’t think I will need feedback on my leadership skills. Because I know, I am sure that I am good leader. If I am not sure of my performance, I would need feedback …But this one I am sure.

Four subcategories express participants’ uncertainties. These are uncertainties in the cognitive domain (i.e., personal knowledge, perception, understanding and decision making); managerial functions and expected performance; managerial approach and delivery; solutions to problems and outcomes.
Uncertainties in Knowledge, Perceptions, Understanding and Decision making—
(cognitive)

Participants expressed uncertainties in knowledge of their functions, perceptions and understanding, and making the right judgements and decision as important determinants of their likelihood of performance feedback seeking. For example,

I want to seek feedback on client interaction and supervision of support. Because in these functions I am dealing with people and individuals and my perception of their understanding may be different from what others may see. So I would want to verify my perception, verify my assessment with other professionals or colleagues for their assessments as well for confirmation of my views. Time keeping doesn’t require any body to confirm that it is 9 o’clock or 10 o’clock.

Team playing function depends on individuals views. I may need feedback on it. It depends on individual differences. I might think I would be doing very well, but others might perceive it as not good enough. Interaction they all deal with communicating or working with others, as clients or team members. My perspectives and viewpoints could be different. It is about appreciating other peoples view point. I will need feedback on them. The functions depend on perceptions, and might be different for different people.

I think I will be more likely to seek feedback (on delegation of duties and duty assignments) because in these two tasks, I will be conferring responsibility on people. And I want to make sure that I have chosen the right people for the right tasks. It calls for my judgement ability. Have I made the right judgement? The success of these functions depends on my judgement ability.

...To make sure that I have done the right thing. If I delegate my duties to someone, and if the person fails, I have failed... and if there is a problem, I am accountable. So I will have to make sure, .I will have to get feedback to ensure that what I wanted to be done has been done. No matter how confidence I have in that person I will still need feedback to confirm it. No matter how confidence I am, I must make sure that the expected and the observed outcomes are not different.... You can have a misplaced confidence.
Managers are on the other hand are less likely to seek feedback about their performance when they are certain and confident in the knowledge required for their functions, understand them, and are certain about their judgements and decisions made. For example,

For documentation, so far, it is an area I have received several feedbacks on it for the past seven, eight or ten years. Technically, I have come to a point where even I educate people on documentation. I do not need feedback now, at this point in my career. I have got to a level where my need for feedback compared to ten years ago is less. Although I will need some feedback on editing, not the technical aspect. The need for feedback at this time has reduced compared to some time in my career. So at this stage the need for feedback is neither here nor there. Earlier on in my career seeking feedback on documentation was paramount for me to develop that confidence in my written documentation. Earlier on I needed feedback but now I understand it. I understand what I am supposed to do. I don’t need feedback.

I don’t require feedback on my forward planning strategies because over the years, I have got the experience in planning ahead. I have got to a level where I can do it without feedback.

**Uncertainties in Functions / Performance**

Managers are more likely to seek feedback when they are not certain about their performance. For example,

By supervising employees, you guide them where to go and when they go in that direction, you reward them for their performance. Or when they don’t go in that direction, or do what is expected of them ... You reward them or punish them depending on their performance, and you would not let the person go without any supervision, without any guidance, and then reward or punish them. That will not be fair. I want to seek feedback because I want to see if I am being fair to them. To be certain of my performance as to how well I supervise them, whether it is related to the rewards and punishments I give.

It is a routine but then you are not dealing with inanimate objects. It is a routine but you are dealing with human beings. So you expect them to do it every day but then because they are human beings ..... You are working with human beings, so you will need feedback to ensure that what you are doing or what is expected to be done is being done. If you are working
with inanimate things, you will definitely know that one plus one is always equals to two, but because they are human beings one plus one will not be always two.

You do it everyday based on the resources you have for that day. Resources are not the same everyday; resources change by day. So based on the resources you have on that particular day, you do duty delegation; you delegate duties; but it might not work out as you expect. For example our place, if you consider people who would call in sick or what, you would need to every day reassess and delegate tasks based on the number of people available at work. So even though you are doing delegation of duties, you are changing the work load, you are changing or moving people from place to place so... I am not certain of their performance and output... If I have made the right delegation [assignment] of duty.

Uncertainties in Approach and Delivery
Managers are more likely to seek feedback about their performance when they are not certain of the right approach and delivery of their functions.

I am more likely to seek feedback to confirm that my intentions, ideas and proposals are the best that can be put forward. It is likely to be a consideration... If I do seek feedback it is more of a check on the work I am doing at that point in time. I will seek it as a second opinion. I would be looking for the confirmation that my ideas were the best. Because I will seek other people's opinions as to whether I have taken the right approach to the job in hand, and whether the solutions I was proposing were the best. Under such situations and circumstances very positive feedback will be quite welcome, and would be likely to influence my performance on the job; on that particular job.

I will need feedback to know how I am delivering my functions; how I am performing, regarding the methods I use in staff performance management.

Uncertainties in Solutions and Outcomes
Managers are more likely to seek feedback as a result of uncertainties of their solutions and outcomes of their functions. For example,

I may possibly get feedback. I think it will be where, I think I would seek a second opinion if I did lack 100% certainty in a particular solution, I would seek feedback from colleagues if it would positively influence the outcome. In this I would likely seek feedback because I will value the
input to improve the solutions. I would feel that reliable sources could add to what I am doing.

I am more likely to get feedback where I think the impact will be positive. If I think feedback will be helpful I don’t mind whether it is positive or negative. The important thing is its usefulness.

On the other hand managers are less likely to seek feedback about their performance when they are certain and confident about the solutions and outcomes of their functions. For example,

I would be unlikely to seek feedback; I would be confident in the solutions. I would not want to invite feedback to interfere with the execution of the work… I don’t think feedback will improve the outcome.

I am less likely to seek feedback again. Feedback can be positive for me or it can have a negative effect. I think if it is going to encourage criticism or undermining the decisions I have already taken I am not really wanting to change my opinion. I would be more authoritative in that situation. What I have decided is the way it is going to happen. So any feedback which didn’t conform to my view on the situation can be counterproductive. I don’t mind negative feedback in situations where I think it will help the overall objective. But negative feedback which will not help do the job will have a destructive influence. I wouldn’t say I would seek feedback because it is positive or negative.

I would only avoid the risk of negative feedback if I think it will not be constructive and it won’t influence the outcome. In a situations where I am not comfortable that I have got the best solutions I would be happy to have negative feedback, I would welcome negative feedback in a situation when I wasn’t sure of my solutions.

Again, I think I’m very confident in what I suggest there and I will not seek feedback on (project management and control) because invitation for feedback will not alter what I am going to do. And so it is going to be a negative influence and invite criticism. At the end of the day I want the job done as well as possible. Sometimes feedback will help whether positive or negative and sometimes feedback, negative or positive won’t have any effect at all.

Here again if I delegate duties I will have to see whether or not it has been complied with. If I offer training, I expect the training will meet some deficiency. Has it been solved? Has output increased? Has efficiency increased? So I will get feedback on that. Something has gone in, I expect something to come out of it. So in both cases, I will need feedback to evaluate output. Without feedback, I am unlikely to know the output.

202
For these functions, you can’t be sure of the output. You can’t be sure. So you need some feedback to know how effective you are.... Yes, I want to be sure of my effectiveness.

You know, training involves costs and recruitment itself also involves costs. So that if you are recruiting the wrong people and you always have to train them and putting in so much money, then you are obviously not doing the right recruitment. So I would like to know whether the people I recruit are the right people. How much do we have to spend on them in terms of training. Every organisation needs to train and develop its people but you want to know to what extent you are spending. Is your entire budget going into training? So my feedback in this situation, I want to know whether we are recruiting well, whether we are recruiting the right people. My focus here is the outcome of the functions.'

Overall, participants’ comments and statements as presented at length to illustrate the richness and depth of insight afforded by the repertory grid technique, show that managers are more likely to seek feedback about their performance as a result of perceived uncertainties. They perceive uncertainties in knowledge and understanding of their functions, the approach and delivery, and hence their solutions and outcomes to achieve organisational goals. They will seek feedback for useful information that will reduce their uncertainties by having the right knowledge, clear understanding of their functions, increase their confidence in their approaches and delivery, and in their solutions and outcomes. Thus, by contrast, they are less likely to seek feedback about their performance when they are certain about their functions. That is they will be certain about the knowledge and clearly understand their functions, the approach and delivery and hence their solutions and outcomes to achieve organisational goals.

7.2.3.3.2 Perceived Difficulties

Appraisals and assessments require curiosity and creative ideas, and you need to see the uniqueness of the situation for novel solutions. (Participant)

Managers are more likely to seek feedback about their performance when they perceive difficulties about their functions. 'Perceived difficulty' may be defined in this context as a situation in the managerial domain where a function is seen, among others, as being complex, exploratory, dynamic and novel, involving problem solution and decision making, which requires new ideas and experiences, and it is crucial to achieving organisational goals.
Managerial work situations where they perceive difficulties include where the function is complex (i.e., when it involves various processes and requires many skills, but is less procedural, without fixed criteria for execution). They are exploratory, in that the outcomes are not obvious. They require curiosity and creative ideas in order to see the uniqueness of the situation for novel solutions. Such functions require understanding of the complexities involved, the use of crucial information, new ideas and others’ opinions, and experiences for execution. The functions are considered as critical or crucial for organisational goals.

The core argument is that when managers perceive difficulties in their functions, they will tend to seek feedback about their performance. On the other hand, they are less likely to seek feedback when they don’t perceive any difficulties about their functions.

The reasoning is that first, managers perceive difficult functions as being complex with no fixed criteria and less procedural, which requires the demonstration of various skills. Second, such functions require clear understanding, curiosity and creative ideas and the need to see the uniqueness of the situation for novel solutions. Third, the functions are perceived as critical and crucial for organisational goals, and successful performance may have implications for their own career advancement.

As a result, of the complexities of the tasks and the corresponding capabilities required, and their crucial nature, managers perceive the need for others’ opinions, new ideas and experiences in order to perform well. Therefore, they will seek feedback from other sources to enhance their capability as a result of perceived difficulty about their functions.

This argument is substantiated by comments and statements made by participants about their feedback seeking propensities. For example,

I think I will need feedback.... because ...they are more difficult to assess, to evaluate. They are more difficult to evaluate. For training, there are set objectives, so you can easily tell how well it is done.
Evaluation of output; evaluation of my effectiveness that is my output. Evaluation of my role, that is difficult. This one (task) is easier to evaluate so I will not seek feedback on it. Effectiveness of role is easier to evaluate. Compared to this I will seek feedback on because it is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of this function.

Five sub categories show the components of participants’ perceived difficulties. These are: complex functions; unique dynamic and novel functions; judgemental and decision making functions; functions which require new ideas and experiences; crucial functions. On the basis of these subcategories, sub arguments are made and integrated into the core argument. The sub categories are presented.

Complex Functions
Managers are more likely to seek feedback about their performance when they perceive a function as difficult. A difficult function in this context is one which is perceived as being complex and exploratory with no obvious outcome. They are multi skilled based, and dynamic which may involve judgements and decision making. They require a lot of experience and ability to perform, and such functions may have implications for career advancement. Because of these complexities managers will tend to have feedback on them for the appropriate information that would guide them to improve their performance. In contrast, they are less likely to seek feedback when the functions are perceived as straightforward but not complex. For example,

These are both straightforward tasks that do not need feedback... But this is a qualitative task which you don't have fixed criteria. It is a complex task which needs feedback. This requires feedback; it’s exploratory; whilsts positive reporting is concrete; it is black and white it does not require feedback. The outcome is obvious. It is clear.

If you forecast and communicate well you will be able to achieve organisational goals. It is a broad function which requires the interplay and demonstration of many skills. It requires inputs from various angles. It is less procedural. It is complex and dynamic and difficult. Results are difficult to determine. The functions involve judgements and decision making. It is multi skilled and dynamic; needs a lot of skills and experience in order to perform well.

When you are coaching staff, first of all, you need more experience than the people you are going to help. If the people are dissatisfied with the, organisation, they want to leave. If they have not got enough support from you. It is a big responsibility. It is more difficult. In my company you
have to be in higher hierarchy to be able to do the job. People have to trust you and believe in you that you can do it. It is difficult. I will definitely seek feedback on it.

**Unique, Dynamic and Novel Functions**

Managers also perceive functions as difficult when they require curiosity and creative ideas and novel situations. Such functions are perceived as unique, dynamic and exotic in that they involve various experiences and circumstances. On the other hand, they are less likely to seek feedback when the function is perceived as not difficult. Non-difficult functions, which may not require feedback in this context, are considered as regular routines, mundane and stale. For example,

Appraisals and assessments require curiosity and creative ideas, and you need to see the uniqueness of the situation for novel solutions. Whereas performance indicators is concrete. This is regular routine, so you don’t need feedback it is not skilled based, it is bureaucratic.

I don’t want feedback on these (tasks); they are mundane. Whereas these tasks (complaints) are exotic I would want feedback, I think. By exotic, I mean every complaint is different, it involves different combinations of stuff, in what situations they are what issues involved. Duty senior and assessments, I would like to seek feedback on both of them- Every day you are on duty will be different, every assessment will be different. It involves different experiences. Performance indicators are always the same. It is routine. It is stale. Feedback is not needed.

**Decision making/Judgemental/Problem Solution Functions**

Functions which are judgemental and qualitative or which require decision making, are perceived as difficult. Such functions are experiential and require clear understanding. As such managers are more likely to seek feedback on them. In contrast, they are less likely to seek feedback on those considered as non-judgemental and objective, as they are perceived as non-difficult functions. For example,

These are judgemental and qualitative (duty senior and supervision). I am going to judge all the time, and make decisions. I will need feedback, on my assessment of clients, on my duty senior role. That is non-judgemental and objective. I will not need feedback.
I will wish to have feedback on supervision and appraisal. It requires understanding, sympathetic understanding if you like. This is understanding based activity. I am trying to understand. It is experiential.

New ideas, Others Opinions and Experiences
Functions are perceived as being difficult when they require others’ knowledge, ideas and experiences in order to perform them. Managers are more likely to seek feedback on such functions as they would value the ideas of others. They think such ideas would be valuable inputs that could contribute to their knowledge and improve the outcome of their performance. On the other hand, functions which are perceived as not being difficult would not require others opinion and ideas. For example,

Feedback will have a positive influence and a positive effect on the job in hand. It is an area where I would value, the sort of people I would be talking to I would value their ideas as adding to, and in supplementing my own knowledge with the knowledge of other people. Creativity is such a big black box so no matter how competent I am, and the particular ideas I have for a particular job; it is worth to seek feedback because it is likely to bring something positive to the outcome. It is likely to be useful input. Feedback will refine and potentially improve the outcome.

Functions Critical/Crucial to organisational goals
Functions which are crucial to achieving organisational goals are perceived as being difficult. They are considered as the core aspects of managerial functions. Such functions may involve the making and implementation of important decisions which could be crucial for the success or otherwise of the organisation. Managers are more likely to seek feedback on such crucial functions. They are less likely to seek feedback on functions which are considered as not very important for achieving organisational goals. For example,

These two functions are essential or crucial for the success or otherwise of the organisation. They (training and performance evaluation) involve a lot more of work and quite difficult (meetings are routine). They are the core aspects of managerial functions because they involve developing your people. They are people focused. Staffing is very critical for the success of the organisation. The performance of employees depends on the training they have had. These are crucial functions. I would seek feedback on them.
For this one, you will always need a feedback; you will always need a feedback for these reasons. Certain decisions have been taken, and you work with it; you need feedback to confirm that the outcome fits the decisions taken. Feedback is required. The outcome must be known. It is a decision taken type of task. It is the outcome of a decision that you are implementing. It is a solution to specific problem. You are dealing with the implementation of important decisions.

Overall, participants' textual quotes clearly substantiate the argument that managers are more likely to seek feedback about their performance as a result of perceived difficulties. Perceived difficulties arise when the functions are considered as complex, dynamic and unique, requiring novel solutions. Such functions are crucial for organisational goals and would require new ideas and knowledge, others' opinions and experiences. Therefore, managers are more likely to seek feedback from sources that will give them such useful ideas to enable them perform well.

7.2.3.3 Self/Skill Development

This is an area you can develop your skills with feedback from your clients, colleagues and superiors. For complaints, I will seek feedback because you develop your skills as you deal with them. (Participant)

Managers are more likely to seek feedback for useful information that will help them to develop their skills and enhance their capability for performance improvement.

'Self/Skill Development' in this context, is concerned with the tendency for managers to perceive that feedback about their performance will provide them with useful and accurate information that will enhance their capability to improve their performance to achieving organisational goals, by increasing their understanding of the complexities of their functions, expertise and their output.

Areas where managers are likely to perceive improvement in their skills and capabilities are: understanding of complexities of functions; required knowledge, accurate judgements, decision making and problem solution; expertise, and personal development.

The core argument is that managers are more likely to seek feedback if they perceive that it will enhance their self/skill development and capability to improve their
performance. On the other hand, they will be less likely to seek feedback if they perceive that they are well equipped for their jobs, and it will not provide them with any useful information in order to develop their skills and improve their performance.

The reasoning is that managers will need feedback information in order to evaluate and assess their performance. This will enable them to know whether or not what they are doing is correct and the best. If their performance is below expectation and they feel ill equipped, they will need to develop their skills by learning and making use of information that will positively influence the outcome of their performance. More ideas, second opinions, more knowledge and others experiences are useful information which could enhance their managerial skills and, possibly, improve their performance. Such useful information could be obtained through feedback seeking. Thus, they would be more likely to seek feedback if they need to develop their skills and expertise for performance improvement. By contrast, they would be less likely to seek feedback if they are highly skilled for their jobs.

This argument is substantiated by the following comments and statements made by participants about their feedback seeking propensities, and supported by the extant literature.

This is an area you can develop your skills with feedback from your clients, colleagues and superiors. For complaints, I will seek feedback because you develop your skills as you deal with them. Zoning clients and ordering stock are both practical activities, - I will not need feedback. I would want feedback on appraisals and supervision because I need to develop my skills and constantly be aware of the need to develop my skills. Assessment of clients, I will less seek feedback on it because I am highly skilled in that.

For time sheets, certain information has to be sent to the pay roll, and that is all. The one I will need feedback is appraisals. The feedback from this [time sheet] is not going to affect me, in my functions, it is going to affect other peoples pay. The only feedback I get is when one is not paid correctly, and I will check the time books. It is not going to affect me in any way. With appraisals, however, the information I get from it will show how I am doing in terms of management; this covers a wide range of functions. This task [appraisals]has to with my own development. The other one is not going to affect me in any way.
Probably because I feel feedback [on logistical planning and document preparation] will improve, increase the possibility of doing a better job. That will improve my performance, whereas I don’t think feedback on management of subcontractors will do the same. Also depending on where I will seek feedback from. If I would seek feedback about subcontractors from my peers, then that will be more valuable than seeking feedback from the subcontractors themselves.

Three sub categories which show the dimensions of participants’ skills development on which sub arguments are made and integrated into the core argument are; development in knowledge, perceptions and understanding; judgements, decision making and solutions; personal development and expertise.

**Knowledge, Perceptions and Understanding**

Managers are more likely to seek feedback for knowledge and experiences that will help them to develop their skills by enhancing their understanding of their functions. They are likely to learn other peoples’ experiences that will help them to improve their performance. For example,

Again, I will feel that feedback will help me to know whether what I was doing was correct and the best solution. And give me second opinion and more ideas and to help me to improve the next time I do the same task. So it is performance improvement I will be looking for from feedback. Making sure that what I am doing works and secondly, getting further information of knowledge and opinion which will improve my performance in the future. Checking what I have done is good. A good solution whatever the situation is and also learning from other peoples experience to refine my performance in the future.

**Judgements /Decision making/ Problem solving**

Again, here, I will be looking for an assessment of the appropriateness of what I have done as I seek feedback in terms of whether it is a good solution, and also to get opinions about better ideas for better solutions which can be used to improve the job in hand, or can be used to modify my performance in the future. To be sure that the solutions I am proposing are the best ones for that particular job. So it is possible that as a result of feedback, I might modify the job in hand, or I might just learn from that to effect future work that I might undertake.

**Personal Development and Expertise**

210
Managers are more likely to seek feedback when they perceive that it will enable them to develop their skills by improving their approach, delivery and work strategies for improvement in performance. They will use feedback for self evaluation and personal development and performance improvement. For example,

I will need feedback to know how I am delivering my functions- how I am performing, regarding the methods I use in staff performance management. Feedback will enable me to know whether my team development and change management strategies are working. Without feedback I will presume I am using the right methods in team development or in managing change, and that there is no need to improve myself. But if I get feedback from my staff it will enable me to know if I need to change my strategies in order to improve myself.

The common theme will be how important it is to managing the people you are working with. Depending on how important it is then you want feedback or not. And you see for these two (functions) it is most likely to some extent, I as the manager will be or is being assessed. My ability to communicate, my ability to lead, will be assessed. For this function [discipline], it is the employee who will be or being assessed. So for me, I will need the feedback for my personal assessment and development. On the other hand this function is not related to my personal development. I will not need feedback on it. It is not important for my personal development.

I will seek feedback (on communication of standards and training) to evaluate myself and for personal improvement and development. I will seek feedback on it because it will help me to develop and improve myself and performance, whereas this task has nothing to do with my personal development.

Overall, participants’ textual quotes substantiate the argument that managers are more likely to seek feedback if they perceive that it will provide them with information that will be useful for their skills and personal development. Such information will enrich their knowledge, enhance their understanding of the complexities of their functions, their work strategies and expertise for performance improvement.
7.2.3.4 Feedback Sources
A feedback source is an important factor that would influence their likelihood of feedback seeking. Particularly, source expertise; they are more likely to seek it from a reputable source, where they think they would get useful information, ideas, opinion, knowledge, skills and expertise to enhance their capability for performance improvement. For example,

I am unlikely or less likely to seek feedback in these two (project management and control). I suppose it does reflect the confidence I expect to have to get the right solutions. I would not think that any feedback I will get would improve what I am doing'.

I would not particularly think about getting feedback, because I think it is outside the interest and expertise of the people I am working with. It is unlikely that the clients or colleagues or suppliers would be able to offer me any thing useful in determining strategic decisions. Should I see a mentor, or a counsellor? I don’t think any one else could add any thing useful to my judgements.

.....I would be looking for other peoples’ contributions as to how they can influence the job in hand (management of client relationships and creative ideas). Again, I don’t think the people will be in a position to give me any useful information. I don’t think colleagues and other people at work will be able to offer any useful information.

I would probably get it from people outside my working environment. More likely to be friends... Credibility of the source matters. Feedback from the appropriate people is obviously important. You will get from different people, different levels of feedback. It depends on the nature of the feedback and the management areas you are seeking feedback about.

Overall, participants’ textual quotes clearly show that managers are more likely to seek feedback from sources that will give them useful information to enhance their capability and performance.

7.2.3.5 Summary of main findings/argument
The literature lends support to the findings, the interpretation and the argument suggesting that managers are more likely to seek feedback about their performance as a result of perceived uncertainties and difficulties in their functions, and the need to develop their skills for performance improvement.
Managerial work is essentially, inherently complex and ambiguous (Katz & Kahn, 1978) as a result of the variety of roles relevant to their jobs (Mintzberg, 1975), the presence of multiple constituencies and the organisations' dependence on the subjective judgements of their members when assessing managerial performance (Ashford & Tsui, 1991). The complexity makes it difficult to specify precisely what managers should do at any point in time (Ashford & Tsui, 1991), suggesting role complexity and uncertainty link.

The complexity and ambiguity of managerial roles that make it difficult to understand and specify precisely what to do was expressed by participants. Therefore, they will seek feedback for information to reduce uncertainties for performance improvement. This is consistent with the suggestion that perceived low performance leads to higher feedback seeking (Fedor et al., 1992). When managers actively seek feedback from sources such as superiors, peers and subordinates about their performance they can get accurate information about how these sources evaluate their work; it also can provide guidance about strategies that can enhance their effectiveness. In order to improve their performance, they need to develop their skills to enhance their capability. In the next section, a theoretical construct underwriting the managerial feedback seeking propensities is proposed.
7.2.4 Theoretical construct underlying the feedback seeking propensities - A model of managerial performance feedback seeking propensities

This section focuses on theory development and the literature that lends support to its development. It starts by defining the theory and the core variables. Then the literature that supports the way feedback seeking tendencies are explained is integrated into the discussion. A model which shows the feedback seeking process/tendencies in terms of the core variable is presented. It is proposed that the theoretical construct underwriting these findings is 'self-efficacy': if managers feel ill-equipped (low self efficacy) to deal with a particular management situation, they will be more likely to seek performance feedback (see Figure 7.1).

Figure 7.1 A model of managerial feedback seeking propensities

The model (fig 7.1) shows an analytical version of the feedback seeking process. It indicates a sequential relationship of the commonly constructed feedback seeking tendencies: perceived uncertainties; perceived difficulties; skills development and
their corresponding components; and the core variable underwriting the findings—self efficacy. Managers tend to seek feedback about their performance when they perceive uncertainties and difficulties in their managerial functions and need to develop their skills in order to achieve organisational goals.

First, managers tend to seek feedback about their performance when they perceive uncertainties about their knowledge and skills and understanding their functions. As a result they feel uncertain about the approach, and delivery of their functions. Consequently, they feel uncertain about their solutions to organisational problems, their performance and outcome/results in achieving organisational goals.

Second, perceived difficulties of functions underlie managerial performance feedback seeking propensities. This arises when the function is complex exploratory, unique, novel and dynamic, involves problem solution and is critical to organisational goals. Such functions require understanding of the complexities involved, the use of crucial information, new ideas and experience.

Managerial functions may be perceived as difficult in that they involve a substantial amount of uncertainty. It is also likely that a substantial amount of perceived difficulty could result in perceived uncertainty. However, in order to improve their performance, managers will seek feedback to develop their skills. Skills development will improve their understanding of complexities of functions, knowledge, perceptions, accurate judgements, decision making, problem solving, expertise, and personal development.

It is proposed that the theoretical construct underwriting these findings is ‘self-efficacy’: if managers feel ill-equipped (low self efficacy) to deal with a particular management situation, they will be more likely to seek performance feedback. Self efficacy, which is concerned with one’s belief in one’s capability to perform a specific task, a key element in Bandura’s social cognitive/learning theory, is an important concept in the explanation of human behaviour, and behavioural change. Also, it can be utilised to explain and improve work behaviours and subsequent performance (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1997; Gist, 1987; Gist & Mitchell, 1992; Staples, Hulland, & Higgins, 1999).
Further, theoretical and empirical evidence suggest links between *managerial* self efficacy, feedback seeking, and performance. These relationships which explain managerial increased performance and effectiveness can be grounded in the self regulation framework (Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Carver & Scheier, 1981, 1982; Tsui & Ashford, 1994).

Bandura (1997: 3) defined self-efficacy as the ‘belief in one’s capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments.’ The higher one’s self efficacy, the more likely one is to engage and persist in task related behaviour (Chen & Bliese, 2002). Self efficacy positively predicts job attitudes (Saks, 1995), job performance (Locke, 1991; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998; Staples, Hulland & Higgins, 1999), and managerial work performance (Robertson & Sadri, 1993). A previous performance accomplishment, which is ‘enactive mastery’, acts as inputs to an individual’s efficacy assessments, which in turn affects subsequent behaviour and performance (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1997; Higgins, 1987). Mastery is facilitated when gradual accomplishment builds the skills, coping abilities and exposure needed for task performance (Bandura, 1977, 1982; Bandura et al., 1980).

In this study, when managers are highly efficacious, they are well equipped for their functions, and are unlikely to perceive uncertainties and difficulties as they have the necessary skills to produce the required outcomes to achieve organisational goals. On the other hand when they perceive uncertainties and difficulties in combination with a lack of confidence about personal skills, they will be lowly efficacious and unable to produce the required outcomes to achieve organisational goals. However, in order to improve their performance, they will seek feedback for useful information to develop their skills and capabilities and reduce uncertainties and difficulties. Thus managerial performance improvement can be explained in terms of self efficacy within a self-regulatory performance management process.

Self efficacy arises from the cognitive appraisal of one’s capabilities. It arises from the gradual acquisition of complex cognitive, social, linguistic and/or physical skills through experience (Bandura, 1982). Individuals appear to weigh, integrate and
evaluate information about their capabilities; they then regulate their choices and efforts accordingly (Bandura et al., 1980).

The proposal that self efficacy underlies feedback seeking behaviour, in terms of perceived uncertainties, difficulties and the need for skill development has some support in the literature. According to Thompson (1967), managerial jobs are ambiguous to some degree; ambiguity about what they should producing in their jobs (output standards/ends) and how they should go about it (transformational technology/means). In this study ambiguity is expressed in terms of perceived uncertainties which could result in perceived difficulties and the need for skills development for performance improvement. On the basis of the proposed theoretical construct underlying feedback seeking, the underlying factor here is low self efficacy. Role clarity involves the extent to which employees clearly understand what is expected of them at work (King & King, 1990). There are positive relationships between works related experience, role clarity / understanding, and self efficacy. Employees who have gained more work-related experience, who have a clear understanding of the task(s) they are required to perform are more likely to be more efficacious (Chen & Bliese, 2002; Chen, et al., 2000; Jex & Bliese, 1999; Jones, 1986). This suggests that those with no clear understanding of their jobs are less likely to be efficacious. Accordingly they are more likely to seek feedback.

Studies have found significant relationships between self efficacy and subsequent task performance (Bandura, 1977, 1982; Bandura et al., 1980; Gist, 1987; Robertson & Sadri, 1993). In studies where efficacy perceptions have been altered by various treatments, the resulting efficacy perceptions still predict subsequent performance (Gist, 1987). These studies also found self efficacy to be a better predictor of performance than past experience. However, in other studies, this was not found. Fetz (1982) provided some evidence that as experience with a task increases, past performance may become more predictive than self efficacy. Fetz's study involved a task in which subjects were unable to observe their performance and were not provided with feedback. It suggests that if subjects were provided with feedback, performance could improve through the use of useful information that would enhance their capability and self efficacy. This suggests relationships between feedback, self
efficacy and subsequent task performance. Feedback could provide useful information to enhance performance and efficacy.

Evidence in fact suggests inextricable relationships between feedback, efficacy, and performance (Bandura & Cervone 1983, 1986; Gist, 1987; Ivancevich & McMahon, 1982). Bandura and Cervone (1983) noted that feedback could be useful in formulating efficacy perceptions to enhance performance motivation. Bandura and Cervone (1986) found positive relationships between feedback, motivation and subsequent performance. The feedback appears to be equivalent to guided enactive mastery, which should lead to high efficacy and hence to high performance (Ivancevich & McMahon, 1982). In this study, the findings suggest that managers will seek feedback because it will reduce their perceived uncertainties and difficulties and provide them with useful knowledge and expertise that will enhance their capability and efficacy to enable them to improve their performance. Within the framework of the proposed model, managers with low self efficacy are likely to seek feedback to improve their capability and subsequent performance. This suggests that managers with high self efficacy are less likely to seek feedback because they will not need it for performance improvement.

Gist (1987) has argued that a reciprocal relationship exists whereby performance feedback affects self efficacy, and self efficacy is also likely to affect feedback seeking. Gist (1987) proposed the need for further research to describe the causal relationships between efficacy perceptions, feedback and subsequent performance. This study proposes that self efficacy underlies feedback seeking behaviour, and that it is in fact a potential moderator of the feedback seeking process.

In short, the evidence from the current study in combination with the extant literature on self-efficacy, points to self efficacy as a potential explanation of the psychological process underlying managerial feedback seeking propensity in the organisational setting. In this context, efficacy can be defined in terms of perceived uncertainty or difficulty in dealing with a particular management situation and the need to seek feedback for self development. The higher the efficacy, the more they will be certain about their functions and will perceive fewer difficulties, the less likely they will be to seek feedback for skills development. The lower the efficacy, the less equipped
managers will feel to deal with any situation and thus the more likely they are to seek feedback about their performance.

7.2.5 Are managers likely to seek feedback?

Considering their reputation, sources and usefulness of information, the question that arises is: will managers actually seek feedback about their performance? In an organisational context, serious question can be raised about whether managers feel able to seek performance feedback within the organisation without feeling threatened in their capability as managers. For example, in the study, a participant commented:

I would not risk seeking feedback if I knew it would undermine my authority. If I seek feedback about my performance, the implication is that I am not sure of what I am doing.

The literature also suggests people will avoid seeking feedback that will potentially have any social costs. For example, people will avoid negative feedback to preserve their self-esteem (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). In organisational settings, individuals may realize that there are costs to both holding an inaccurate self-view and exposing weakness (Ashford & Tsui, 1994).

Consistent with Ashford and Cummings (1983), in the study the findings show that although participants would seek feedback for performance improvement, they are less likely to seek it if they think it will undermine their authority. Managers are leaders and team leaders in their organisations. They are expected to inspire their employees and to be seen by their colleagues and superiors as competent. Seeking feedback will mean that they are not competent and do not know what they are doing. Therefore, they are less likely to seek feedback if it risks exposing their weaknesses.

For example, one participant cited six possible reasons why he would seek feedback:

To invite support and approval for approach and proposals;
To improve their approach to a situation or problem solving;
To obtain opinions, ideas and knowledge from respected sources;
To obtain second opinion when unsure of the best approach/tactics;
To seek informed opinions and knowledge from colleagues with greater experience; and
To seek useful information for future development.
However, he would NOT seek feedback if it risked encouraging unhelpful criticism, if it risked encouraging resistance to his proposals, ideas and, plans and more importantly, if it risked undermining his authority because of the implication that he was not sure of what he was doing.

Previous studies on feedback seeking have found motives and situational variables such as role ambiguity, uncertainty reduction, useful information, performance and learning goal orientations which are related to the findings in this study. However, these findings do not offer any coherent theoretical approach to explain feedback seeking in real managerial and organisational settings. On the basis of the current data, the proposed model is justified as it is grounded in the data. It offers preliminary explanations for understanding performance feedback seeking behaviour in the managerial context. However, there are important caveats to whether in fact managers do or will seek feedback because of the risks this might incur to their perceived status and capability.

7.3 Chapter summary

The process of data collection using RG interviews methodology was described. The description began with the pilot of the study. It proceeded to describe the sample selection where it was indicated that ten managers were purposefully selected for the interviews. How the interviews were conducted, their duration and ethical considerations were reported. Further, how the analysis was carried out was reported showing what was done at each stage. Finally, the findings were reported in accordance with grounded theory reporting technique. The findings showed that managers tend to seek feedback about their performance as a result of perceived uncertainties and difficulties in their functions, and the need to develop their skills for performance improvement to achieve organisational goals. A model was proposed that brings into relief the concept of self-efficacy in the feedback seeking process. In short, if managers feel ill equipped (low self-efficacy) to deal with a particular management situation, they say they will be more likely to seek feedback about their performance.
CHAPTER 8 DISCUSSION

8.1 Introduction
The current research set out to investigate managers' feedback seeking, with the aim of finding explanations that could enhance our understanding of the feedback seeking process in an organisational setting. The objective was to address this goal by 1) investigating the relationship between feedback and performance, and 2) investigating the role of self awareness in the feedback seeking process, in particular, the extent to which self-awareness might mediate the relationship between feedback seeking and performance, and 3) exploring ways of enhancing understanding of the feedback seeking process within a managerial domain in an organisational context.

This final chapter presents how these aims were achieved. The chapter begins with a summary of the main findings of the research, and discusses in particular the practical and theoretical significance of the findings. Following that, it evaluates the contributions of the research, including the theoretical, methodological and organisational implications of the findings. It then provides reflection on the research process, the limitations, direction for future research, and conclusion of the thesis.

8.2 Brief overview: The thesis
The focus of this thesis arises from the argument that feedback seeking is an ill-understood consideration both from a managerial and a psychological point of view. As discussed in the introduction, feedback research has focused on investigating the relationship between feedback and performance, and/or factors and motives which underlie the feedback seeking process. However, findings to date have yielded little insight into the feedback seeking process. First, research findings on the feedback-performance association are inconsistent, as feedback may have a positive, impact, no impact, or even a negative impact on performance. Second, studies have investigated factors which have been considered likely to underlie the feedback seeking process. But these findings do not appear to provide an adequate or coherent explanation of the feedback seeking process particularly in the managerial domain in real organisational settings. Firstly, most of the studies are conducted in laboratory settings, but such findings might not be applicable in real organisational settings. Secondly, there are methodological limitations. Most of the studies in this area are predominantly
quantitative and predominantly descriptive, with little attempt to produce explanations for the managerial feedback seeking process. There is thus no theoretical account of the feedback seeking process, limiting our understanding of the feedback seeking process. Nonetheless, one major theoretical contender in the literature is that feedback seeking is a managerial self regulation process (see chapter 3), and as such the concept of self awareness might be pivotal as an explanatory concept. However, this proposition has yet to be fully investigated among real managers in an organizational context. This situation leaves a glaring gap in the feedback seeking literature which this thesis sought to address. Drawing on both quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches, this thesis sought to examine feedback seeking with the view to investigating some key propositions about the link between feedback seeking and performance in a real organizational setting, as well as seeking to derive a viable explanation of the feedback seeking process.

8.3 Summary of findings
The current research started with investigating the relationships between feedback, self awareness and performance. This investigation required the testing of specific hypotheses based on available propositions on feedback and self awareness. To address the feedback-performance association, a positive relationship between feedback and performance was predicted. The performance criteria were five competency dimensions: managerial communication, trust, transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and career skills. To explore how the concept of self awareness could be employed to explain the feedback seeking, three hypotheses were tested. First, it was hypothesised that there would be a positive relationship between feedback seeking and self awareness. Second, a positive association between self awareness and performance was expected. Third, it was expected that self awareness would mediate the feedback-performance association. This investigation would provide further insight into how feedback might impact performance and managerial competence. Also, it would indicate the extent to which the concept of self awareness could be used to explain the feedback seeking process. The findings from both Studies 1 and 2 are reported in the order of: relationship between feedback and performance; explaining feedback seeking using the concept of self awareness and; adequacy of self awareness in explaining feedback seeking.
Overall, the propositions that feedback seeking would predict managerial performance/competence, and that the concept of self awareness could adequately explain the feedback seeking process was not fully supported by the findings of the present thesis.

8.3.1 Relationship between feedback and performance/managerial competence

First, the hypothesis of a positive association between feedback and performance was not fully supported by the findings in study 1. Feedback seeking predicted only trust and career satisfaction, i.e. only two out of the five competency dimensions, and notably, trust was negatively predicted by feedback seeking. On the other hand, feedback perception predicted three competency dimensions: communication, transformational leadership and job satisfaction. Additionally, the findings in study 2 showed that managers say they seek very little feedback about their performance, and they would least seek feedback from their subordinates. These findings corroborate those obtained in other research suggesting that feedback might have little or no impact on performance (Atwater et al., 2000; Kluger & De Nisi, 1996). This may in part be due to the finding that managers do not naturally incline to seek feedback on their performance, least of all from their subordinates. Clearly, one has to seek feedback in order for it to have an effect on performance. However whether feedback is sought may depend fundamentally on whether it will be perceived as useful (i.e., feedback perception). In turn the perceived usefulness of feedback may be a function of specific competence domains. In this research it was perceived more useful in relation to communication, leadership style and job satisfaction, than in relation to trust or career satisfaction. Theoretically, then, feedback perception may play a more important role in managerial feedback seeking than previously recognised (see section 8.3.4 for further discussion).

8.3.2 Explaining feedback seeking process—role of self awareness

As hypothesised, there was a positive relationship between feedback seeking and self-awareness. This supports the proposition that self awareness could lead to greater feedback desire and feedback seeking behaviour (Fletcher, Taylor & Glanfield, 1996; Levy et al., 1995; Scheier & Carver, 1983). This suggests that the more feedback a manager seeks, the more likely it is that the manager will become self-aware of his or
her performance. However, it is equally likely that the more self-aware a manager is, the more likely it is that the manager would actively seek feedback.

In order to explore further the extent to which the concept of self awareness can be used to explain the feedback seeking process, it was hypothesised that self awareness would predict managerial performance/competence. However, contrary to expectation, the hypothesis of a positive association between self awareness and performance was not supported by the findings in this study. These findings were therefore not consistent with the propositions which suggested that self awareness might be positively related to performance (Bass & Yammarino, 1991; Fletcher & Baldry, 2000; Wohlers and London, 1989). Self awareness did not significantly predict any of the managerial competencies, although it was related specifically – albeit weakly, to career skill. If the association had been stronger, it could have lent support to the proposition that self awareness has a potential for managerial career development (Fletcher & Baldry, 2000).

The absence of any significant relationship between self-awareness and performance, meant that the potentially mediating role of self awareness could not be tested (Baldry, 2000). This situation did not meet the requirements for self awareness to mediate a relationship between feedback seeking and performance. For self awareness to mediate the feedback –performance association, it should firstly relate positively with performance (Kenny & Baron, 1986; MacKinnon et al., 2002).

However, notably self awareness did mediate a positive relationship between feedback perception and feedback seeking behaviour, an unexpected but interesting finding in the study. The finding suggests that self awareness can potentially play an important role in the feedback seeking process. According to the mediating hypothesis (Kenny & Baron, 1986; MacKinnon et al., 2002; Tharenou, 2001), there is no feedback perception without self awareness, and both predict feedback seeking.

8.3.3 Adequacy of self awareness in explaining the feedback seeking process

The findings in this study suggest a positive relationship between feedback seeking and self awareness and as such provide further insight into how the two concepts can be considered as integral to the idea that an effective manager is good at self
regulation (Ashford & Tsui, 1991). However, it appears that the concept of self awareness only partly explains the feedback seeking process. To provide a full explanation of feedback seeking, both feedback seeking and self awareness should impact independently rated performance.

There is a possibility however that self awareness is related to feedback seeking, but perhaps in a more distal fashion – i.e., earlier in the causal chain linking feedback perception and feedback seeking. For feedback seeking, the ‘content’ of the feedback must be perceived useful which, based on the current findings, we pre-suppose some degree of self-awareness.

8.3.4 A model of manager's feedback seeking propensities

The thesis then set out to further examine in detail the feedback seeking process, particularly managerial feedback seeking tendencies, by using a qualitative methodology. This is because the aim was to find an explanation that will enhance our understanding of the feedback process. Qualitative work has been notably lacking in feedback research, but is especially well suited to understanding processes (Alveson, 2002; Barker, 2000; Cassell & Symon, 1994; Hollway, 1987). For current purposes the repertory grid technique was used to facilitate managers in reflecting on their own feedback seeing tendencies across typical management situations. A regular interview was deemed less penetrating than the repertory grid interview. A grounded theory analytic approach was used to derive higher order interpretations.

The research furnished the creation of an interpretative model of managerial feedback seeking propensities in an organisational setting. This model suggests that there are three key variables that are associated with managerial feedback tendencies. The variables are perceived uncertainties, and perceived difficulties, and the need to develop skills for performance improvement. These three key variables are arguably coherently linked and explain the managerial feedback seeking propensities identified in the repertory grid study.

These findings are consistent with other findings which show that feedback seeking increases with new uncertain situations (Ashford, 1986; Ashford & Cummings, 1983). Ashford (1986) found that a person would tend to increase his or her feedback seeking
as a result of increased uncertainty about their work performance. As such a person would seek feedback for useful information in order to reduce uncertainties about role ambiguity, with the aim of enhancing his or her goal relevant and performance behaviours. However, Ashford (1986) did not elaborate uncertain situations about work performance, role ambiguity, and goal relevant behaviour more particularly, in a managerial context, but his definition of uncertainty is most appropriate in this context. Ashford defined uncertainty as a state where a person has little, no, or inconsistent information about a situation he or she is interested in.

In this study it was found that managers are likely to seek feedback when they have little, or no, or inconsistent information about their knowledge and skills, and understanding of their functions, the right approach to deliver their functions and hence the potential outcome of their solutions to achieving organisational goals. Managers would be less likely to seek feedback if they are certain about the appropriate knowledge and skills, the right approach to deliver their function, and clear about the potential outcome of their solutions to organisational goals. Thus, the finding in this study also elaborates Ashford's (1986) 'uncertainty situation', and is consonant with the feedback seeking - uncertainty reduction findings. Further, the findings are consistent with Berlyne's (1960) theory of uncertainty and choice which suggests a positive relationship between feelings of uncertainty and the propensity to seek information. Thus the more a manager feels uncertain about dealing with a particular work situation, the more likely it is that he or she would seek information through feedback to reduce the uncertainty.

The findings suggest that managers are more likely to seek feedback about their performance as a result of perceived difficulties in the delivery of their functions. These findings corroborate laboratory studies which have shown that people are more likely to seek feedback about more difficult tasks (Trope, 1975; Zukerman et al., 1979). As the study showed, perceived difficulty is a situation in the managerial domain where a function is seen as complex, dynamic, unique, and novel. Such functions involve problem solutions, judgements and decision making, and require new ideas and experiences for effective delivery. Functions considered critical to achieving organisational goals, which could have implications for a person's career advancement are also perceived to be difficult. As a result of the complexities
associated with difficult functions, managers are likely to seek feedback on such tasks for the appropriate information that would enhance their performance. Managers are likely to seek feedback from sources that will give them useful ideas and knowledge to enable them to perform their functions effectively. By contrast, managers are less likely to seek feedback about their performance when they perceive their functions as straightforward and less complex. Thus, feedback seeking is likely to increase with perceived difficulty of a managerial function.

The findings suggest that perceived uncertainties could lead to perceived difficulties in managerial functions. On the other hand, perceived uncertainties could result from perceived difficulties. In either of these situations, managers are more likely to seek feedback for information that will help them to improve their performance by developing their skills. Skill or self-development is concerned with the acquisition of knowledge that will enhance the understanding of the complexities of managerial functions, delivery of the functions including good judgements and decision making, and performance improvement. The findings suggest that managers are more likely to seek feedback if they perceive that by doing so, they will get useful information that can be used to enhance or develop their skills and capability for performance improvement. On the other hand, they are unlikely to seek feedback if they feel that they are well equipped for their jobs, and perceive that feedback would not provide them with any useful information for skill development and performance improvement. Thus, managers are more likely to seek feedback if they need to develop their skills for performance improvement. By contrast, they are unlikely to seek feedback for skills development if they are highly skilled for their jobs.

The findings also provide evidence which supports other studies which suggest that feedback source characteristics are likely to affect the likelihood of feedback seeking. The findings suggest that managers are more likely to seek feedback from sources they think would provide them with useful information, ideas and expertise that will enhance their performance capability. This is consistent with research findings on feedback source characteristics which suggest that feedback seeking would increase if the source had expertise (Vancouver & Morrison, 1995). Also, for this purpose, managers might seek feedback from more distal sources for useful information, and ideas (Ashford & Tsui, 1994). In this study, it was found that managers are less likely
to seek feedback from their subordinates. Managers would not seek feedback from their subordinates probably because they perceived that they would not get useful information, ideas and expertise from their subordinates. Also, a manager would not seek feedback from his or her subordinates if the manager thinks doing so would undermine his or her authority. This suggests that managers are likely to avoid feedback that might hurt their self-esteem (Ashford & Cummings 1983; Miller, 1976).

In all, the findings suggest that managers are more likely to seek feedback about their performance when they perceive uncertainties and difficulties in their managerial functions, and need to develop their skills in order to improve their performance. By contrast, they are unlikely to seek feedback if they do not perceive any uncertainties or difficulties in their managerial functions, and therefore, they do not need feedback information for skill development and performance improvement.

The model proposes that the theoretical construct underwriting these findings is 'self efficacy'. If managers feel ill-equipped (low self efficacy) to deal with a particular management situation, they will be more likely to seek performance feedback. By contrast, if managers feel well equipped (high self efficacy) in performing their managerial functions, they will be unlikely to seek feedback about their performance. When they are well equipped for their managerial functions, that is, highly efficacious, managers are unlikely to perceive uncertainties and difficulties, as they have the required skills and capability to perform their functions. In that situation, they will be unlikely to seek feedback as they would not need it to develop their skills. On the other hand, when they are ill equipped, that is feel less efficacious in dealing with their functions, they would perceive uncertainties and difficulties in their performance. However, in order to improve their performance they would be more likely to seek feedback for useful information which could be used to develop their skills and improve their capabilities, and reduce perceived uncertainties and difficulties.

The importance of feedback perception, i.e., perceiving the usefulness of feedback is noteworthy. The discussion above suggests a relationship between feedback perception and self efficacy. The usefulness of feedback may be perceived more by a manager's low in efficacy. Given the positive relationship between feedback
perception and feedback seeking, it can be argued that managers with low self efficacy are more likely to perceive feedback to be useful and to seek it. Further, linking the concept of self awareness, it can be argued that someone with low self efficacy and high self awareness of this low efficacy is more likely to perceive feedback to be useful and to seek it. This suggests that self awareness does have a role to play in the concept of feedback perception as a potential for explaining feedback seeking behaviour.

The findings provide support for the theoretical and empirical evidence which suggests relationships between feedback, self efficacy and performance (Bailey & Austin, 2006; London & Smither, 1995; Maurer et al., 2002; Robertson & Sadri, 1993; Yammarino & Atwater, 1997). According to the theories on performance outcomes, for example goal setting theory, (Latham & Locke 1991; Locke 1996; Locke & Latham 1984, 1990) self efficacy facilitates the self regulation process because of its effect on performance. Latham and Locke (1991) argued that in the context of goal setting, performance improvement in the self regulation process is related to feedback and self efficacy. In this perspective, according to the model proposed in this study, it could be likely that when managers perceive uncertainties and difficulties in their functions those who would be motivated to set difficult goals would see the need to develop their skills, and seek feedback for information on skills development and performance improvement.

In this study the findings in the model propose that self efficacy, which underwrites the feedback seeking propensities, is a source of motivation which facilitates the self regulation process (Bandura, 1986). When managers feel ill-equipped to deal with their functions as a result of uncertainties and difficulties, and they need to develop their skills for performance improvement, they are likely to seek feedback for the useful information for that purpose. This is consistent with the theoretical proposition that self efficacy facilitates the self regulation process (Bandura, 1988) through skill development (Maurer et al., 2002), and performance improvement (Robertson & Sadri, 1993). According to this explanation, managers who believe that they can improve their skills and abilities would be more likely to be motivated to reduce discrepancies, that is perceived uncertainties and difficulties, by seeking feedback for information for the development of their skills, and for performance improvement.
8.4 Contribution of thesis to Managers' Feedback research

This thesis has made three main contributions to the subject area of feedback seeking. The first is a theoretical advancement in the effort to understand managerial feedback seeking. The second is the unique application of qualitative and quantitative methodologies to the research in feedback seeking. The third is the general contribution which is the combination of the theoretical, methodological and practical significance for organisations derived from the empirical findings of the study. These contributions are discussed in more detail below.

8.4.1 Theoretical significance of the study

In terms of theory, this research contributes to the explanation and understanding of the feedback seeking process, particularly, in a managerial domain in an organisational setting. Feedback seeking research has focused on explaining the feedback seeking process, as feedback seeking is an ill-understood consideration both from a managerial and psychological point of view. Within a managerial self regulation framework, the concept of self awareness has been considered as potential explanation in the feedback seeking process, but this has not been fully researched. Also, none of the theoretical approaches appear to offer coherent and adequate explanation of the feedback seeking process.

This research shows how the concept of self awareness can be integrated into the managerial self regulation process, and the extent to which it offers explanation of the feedback seeking process. It shows that active feedback seeking and self awareness are both integral to the idea that the effective manager is good at self regulation. However, it appears the concept of self awareness does not adequately offer an explanation of the feedback seeking process, in that it does not relate to performance as feedback does.

The study proposed a theoretical model which offers a more coherent explanation of managers' feedback seeking propensities in an organisational setting. It showed that managers are more likely to seek feedback about their performance when they...
perceive uncertainties and difficulties in their managerial functions, and see the need to develop their skills for performance improvement. It has shown that the theoretical construct underwriting these findings is self efficacy. This leads to the proposition that if managers feel ill-equipped (low self efficacy) to deal with a particular management situation, they are more likely to perceive feedback as useful and consequently are more likely to seek feedback about their performance.

The importance of the concept of feedback perception as a means of explaining performance feedback seeking behaviour in this theoretical proposition is important. It can be argued that managers with low self efficacy and high self awareness of this low efficacy are more likely to perceive feedback to be useful and to seek it. The role of self awareness in this context is also crucial. The findings provide empirical evidence to support the theoretical proposition that there are relationships between feedback perception, feedback seeking, self efficacy and performance.

Another important theoretical contribution of this research is the extension of Hogan and Warrenfetz's (2003) domain model of managerial competencies. Since the study aimed at investigating the feedback-performance link, and exploring explanations for the feedback seeking process, there was the need to use specific performance criteria. Shown in chapter 4, after reviewing the relevant competency models, the domain model was considered the most appropriate performance criteria to be used in this study to assess managerial competence. The domain model posited that all managerial competencies can be categorised into four main skills: intra- personal, interpersonal, leadership and business skills. Career skills were not considered in their model. Although Hogan and Warrenfetz (2003) argued that intrapersonal skills laid the foundation for career success, they did not explicitly consider career as a skill, thereby creating a competency gap. The concept of career skills was included in the model for the purpose of this study as it is associated with managerial performance and effectiveness (Tharenou, 1997). Also, there are conceptual, and theoretical reasons to link career skills to the other skills in the model (Judge et al, 1999; Hogan & Warrenfetz 2003; Tharenou, 1997; Thomas et al, 2005) Therefore, the concept of career skill was integrated into the domain model to increase its explanatory reach and power.
8.4.2 Methodological significance of the study

The methodological significance of the study is intimately linked to its theoretical
significance. The study shows the importance of qualitative methodology in feedback
research which has been dominated by the use of quantitative surveys. The use of the
repertory grid interview technique for data gathering, and grounded theory analytical
framework for the analysis, is a novel methodology in feedback seeking studies. The
application of the repertory grid methodology and the grounded theory analytic
approach is unique for one main reason, ie., following the extensive literature search,
no study that has applied this technique was located in the literature. Using this
approach, the research did not only complement the quantitative with a qualitative
approach, but enabled a theoretical improvement to offer a better explanation of
managers' feedback seeking in an organisational setting.

Another important methodological contribution of this research is the use of
MSMR/upward feedback technique in a survey conducted in a developing country.
This methodology, which was consistent with the research design and suitable for the
study, has been mainly used in the western developed countries especially in the US,
where it originated and in the UK, in research for the development of managers.
Therefore, the successful implementation of this methodology in research in a
developing country where it is least known and popular, was a challenging endeavour
as it required adequate consideration of many practical and ethical issues.

8.5 Organisational implications of the findings

The research provides an explanation that can enhance our understanding of
managers' feedback seeking propensities in an organisational context. The proposed
model which explains managers' feedback seeking tendencies proposes that if
managers feel ill equipped (low self- efficacy) to deal with a particular management
situation, they will be more likely to seek feedback for useful ideas that will enhance
their capability and performance. It shows the importance of self efficacy perceptions
in the development of skills and performance improvement within managerial self
regulation framework in organisations. However, in an organisational context
serious questions can be raised about whether managers feel able to seek
performance feedback within the organisation without feeling threatened in their
capability as managers.
8.6 Limitations of the research

The limitation of the research is concerned with some methodological issues. The methodological limitation of the research is that the studies were conducted in a different national culture. Studies 1 and 2 which employed the quantitative methodology and MSMR and Upward feedback technique was conducted in Ghana, a developing country, whereas study 3 which used the repertory grid interviews technique, a qualitative methodology, was conducted in UK, a major developed country. This could reduce both the internal and external validity of the research findings. Ideally, all studies would have been conducted in the UK, or in Ghana. However, due to difficulty in securing access to a UK organisation for the pursuit of the investigation, which required a serious level of commitment and cooperation from a company on a potentially sensitive issue (management development) which was not forthcoming, the first two studies were conducted in Ghana. Also, due to logistical problems, the researcher could not return to Ghana for the third study.

As noted by Bulmer (1983) logistical problems are an issue which can limit the conducting of surveys. However, the potential problems encountered in conducting surveys in both developed and developing countries might not be significantly different if they are identified and well addressed (Bulmer & Warwick, 1983). Since the researcher explored, identified and adequately addressed the practical problems in the implantation of the studies, conducting the studies in different cultures might not affect the internal/external validity of the research/findings. But for cultural differences, the qualitative study which yielded a model which can be used to explain managers' feedback seeking could be 'tested' more formally in a developing country to ascertain its empirical applicability and also theoretical boundaries.

Another methodological limitation of the study is that the samples were obtained from the general working population both in the UK and in Ghana. The findings might not be applicable to specific organisations. However, since the study was concerned with generic managerial competencies common to most occupations which span across most organisations (Cheetham & Chivers, 1996), the choice of these samples was considered appropriate.
8.7 Reflection on the research

Researching the area of feedback seeking in an managerial domain in organisational setting was found to offer some particular challenges particularly, securing access to organisations in the UK for studies 1 and 2 on a potentially sensitive issue (performance management) was very difficult, a situation which compelled the researcher to conduct the study in Ghana where organisational access was far less difficult. Implementing MSMR and upward feedback survey in a developing country where the technique is new and not popular was very challenging. The positive comments made by some participants, for example that the outcome of the study would be useful for administrators, managers, heads of department and those involved with performance appraisals, indicates the perceived value participants saw in the study.

Although sourcing participants for study 3 was difficult, it was not as difficult as for studies 1 and 2, perhaps because of the small sample size. A small sample size might also affect the empirical generalisability of the findings. However in repertory grid in-depth interviews, a sample size of 10 is considered adequate and acceptable for theoretical conclusions to be drawn.

Conducting the repertory grid in-depth interviews was considered a hard thinking exercise, intellectually challenging and fascinating for both researcher and interviewees. From their comments after the interview, it enabled the participating managers to think about things they had never thought of about their work. The study enabled the researcher to produce a theoretical model that offers coherent explanation of managers feedback seeking and achieved the aim of the study.

Conducting all the studies in either the UK or Ghana could have enhanced the internal/external validity of the findings. However, as indicated earlier, this could not be done for practical and logistical reasons. Notwithstanding this, the unique methodology of the study, has provided a coherent and better theoretical explanation that enhances our understanding of managers feedback seeking process. Upon reflection of the research process, the researcher learnt how to deal with challenging situations in order to achieve the aim of the study.
8.8 Directions for future research
The present study provides a coherent model with implications for further hypothesis testing to help understand managers’ feedback seeking propensities in organisational settings. It proposes that the theoretical construct underlying managers’ feedback seeking is self efficacy. It suggests that if managers feel ill-equipped (low self-efficacy) to deal with a particular management situation, they will be more likely to seek feedback. This suggests that the concept of self efficacy is important in explaining managerial feedback seeking tendencies. However, how it explains the feedback seeking process needs elaboration, in order to further enhance explanation and understanding of the feedback seeking process. This is because although the model is justified as it is grounded in the data, within a grounded theory framework, the findings can be considered as preliminary as the model needs to be tested for its empirical generalisability. Also, in the framework of the model, knowledge of how feedback is sought, and the preferred sources, would enhance understanding of the feedback seeking process. Future work should not only explore the concept of self efficacy as a moderator of feedback seeking tendencies but also how feedback is sought and from whom.

8.9 Conclusion
The present research revealed the theoretical potential of qualitative investigation in the study of feedback seeking among managers in real organizational settings. Using the repertory grid technique to gather data, which was analysed using grounded theory procedures, the research showed that the concept of self efficacy does have a role to play in explaining and understanding managers’ performance feedback seeking. It is proposed that when managers feel ill-equipped, that is low in performance efficacy for a particular situation (e.g., due to perceived uncertainties and difficulties) in dealing with a particular management situation and/or a need to develop their skills for performance improvement, they will be more likely to seek feedback about their performance. However, how self efficacy facilitates or moderates feedback seeking in this context needs to be addressed to enhance understanding of the feedback seeking process. Moreover, the role played by self-awareness, feedback perception and links with performance warrant further investigation. Also, in the organisational context, serious questions can be raised about whether managers feel able to seek performance
feedback within the organisation without feeling threatened in their capability as managers. A suggested way for future research to address this gap of understanding is to explore how the concept of self efficacy moderates the feedback seeking tendencies, and also how feedback is sought and from whom.
REFERENCES


Scullen, S. (1997). When ratings from one source have been averaged, but ratings from another source have not: problems and solutions. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 82, 880-888.


Dear Academic,

We are hoping you might be able to spare 15 minutes to help us pilot the attached questionnaire. We are assessing the practicality of a study involving managers/leaders and up to three of their staff. The study proposes to invite managers/leaders to complete a self-report questionnaire on the way they perceive themselves, and to ask up to three of their staff to complete a much briefer (one page) questionnaire on their managerial perceptions. Please note that questionnaire responses will be anonymous but it is critical that the staff responses can be matched to the manager/leader in question otherwise the exercise will be pointless. Also, in this particular exercise we are not so much interested in the content of your own or your staff's replies, but the viability of the procedure. We have selected you not only because of your managerial responsibilities but also because of your ability to provide us with some constructive feedback on the research process. The plan is to conduct the research with MBA students as part of a management development/feedback exercise.

Many thanks in anticipation of your time and support.

Yours sincerely,

Maxwell Asumeng

Supervised by:-

Professor Nick Emler
Dr Lynne Millward
Appendix 2:
Letter to organisations for studies 1&2

Maxwell A. Asumeng
Psychology Department
School of Human Sciences
University of Surrey
Guildford, Surrey, GU2 7XH
Phone: 01483 68 2884
E-mail: m.asumeng@surrey.ac.uk

Survey: Manager’s Feedback seeking

Dear sir/madam,
My name is Maxwell Asumeng and I am sponsored by the Government of Ghana under the Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFUND) to pursue a PhD in Occupational Psychology at the University of Surrey in the UK.

As part of my doctoral study, I am conducting a research into the way managers perceive themselves, how their employees perceive them, the tendency for managers to seek performance feedback from their staff, and how managers use feedback information for their development.

The study invites managers to complete a self-report questionnaire (approximately 20 minutes) on the way managers perceive themselves, and to ask three of their staff to complete a much briefer questionnaire (approximately 10 minutes) on their managerial perceptions. Please note that questionnaire responses will be anonymous but is critical that staff responses can be matched to the leader in question otherwise the exercise will be pointless. Every effort will be taken to ensure that the strictest confidentiality is maintained.

I would be very grateful if you would be interested to participate in this study and facilitate the collection of my data. The results obtained in the research could be of use for management development in organisations.

I am hoping you might be able to participate in this study. Thank you in advance for your help. If you have any questions about my study, please do not hesitate to contact me in the detail given above.

Yours sincerely,
Maxwell Asumeng.

Supervised by:-

Professor Nick Emler
Dr Lynne Millward
Appendix 3: Studies 1&2 Measures

Maxwell Amoah Asumeng
[Research student]

School of Human Sciences, University of Surrey, Guildford. GU2 7XH.
UK.

MANAGERS FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

ID Code [ ]
MANAGERS FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

ID Code [ ]

INTRODUCTION [PART 1]
This questionnaire forms part of a research study of the way managers perceive themselves, how their employees perceive them, the tendency to seek performance feedback from them and how they use feedback information for management development. For the purposes of the study, responses are being sought from you [part 1] and any three of your staff who report to you and know you well at the workplace [part2] We are hoping you might be able to spare about 20 minutes to help complete this questionnaire on the way you perceive yourself and to ask your chosen staff to complete their managerial perceptions.

If the answers in this questionnaire are to be of value in this study it is very important that every question is answered. It is also important that you feel comfortable about answering frankly about yourself because every effort will be taken to ensure that the strictest confidentiality is maintained. Please note that questionnaire responses will be anonymous but it is critical that the staff responses can be matched to the leader/manager in question otherwise the exercise will be pointless. It will not be possible for anyone who knows you, including the person who approached you to complete this questionnaire, to identify you with the answers you give. Responses will be used for research purpose only.

Please complete the questionnaire and seal it in the envelope provided.

Many thanks for your time in completing this questionnaire
MANAGERS FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A

Please provide the information required below [Tick the appropriate box]
1. Gender: Male [ ] Female [ ]
2. Marital status; Married [ ] Single [ ] separated / divorced [ ] widowed [ ]

3. Please state your age ---- 4. Years of full-time work ........

5. Do you hold any managerial position in your organization? Yes [ ] No [ ]

6. How many years have you held this position in this and/or other organization(s)?......

7. How many years have you been working for this organization? ------.----------------

8. Which of the following best describes your organization? Academia/Educational [ ]
Financial services [ ] Hotel services [ ] Retail [ ] Manufacturing [ ]
Non- governmental [ ] Others [ ] please specify..............................

9. Please indicate your highest level of educational qualification.
G. C. E. / SSCE [ ] G. C. E. A. Levels [ ] Post-Secondary [ ]
Diploma [ ] Bachelor’s degree [ ] Postgraduate/Master’s [ ]
Doctorate [ ] Others [ ] please specify..............................
SECTION B  [ABOUT YOURSELF AND HOW OTHERS THINK OF YOU]
Please read each item carefully, and then indicate how well each statement describes you.
Use the 1 to 7 response scale, explained as follows, for your answers.
Response Scale: For each item, choose the number from 1 to 7 which best indicates how well the item characterizes you.
The choices are:
1 = not at all like me
2 = not like me
3 = somewhat unlike me
4 = neither like me nor unlike me
5 = somewhat like me
6 = like me
7 = very much like me

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rate 1-7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10. I’m concerned about my style of doing things</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I care a lot about how I present myself to others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I think a lot about the way I look</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I usually worry about making a good impression</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I’m concerned about what other people think of me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SECTION C  [ABOUT HOW YOU SEEK FEEDBACK ON YOUR PERFORMANCE ]

Please indicate how likely you have been in the past to seek feedback on your work performance.

Please indicate on a 7-point scale (1 = extremely unlikely to ask; 2 = very unlikely to ask; 3 = unlikely to ask; 4 = neither likely nor unlikely to ask; 5 = likely to ask; 6 = very likely to ask; 7 = extremely likely to ask) how likely it was that you would ask for feedback in each of the situations below.

Circle the number that best indicates how likely you have been to ask your immediate boss/supervisor for feedback about your performance.
17. When you have been performing above average [1 2 3 4 5 6 7]
18. When you have been performing below average [1 2 3 4 5 6 7]
19. If you thought the feedback would be positive [1 2 3 4 5 6 7]
20. If you thought the feedback would be negative [1 2 3 4 5 6 7]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate 1-7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21. How likely it is that you would ask others to be honest when they gave you feedback?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. How likely it is that you would prefer detailed, critical appraisals even though they might hurt?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. How likely it is that you would tend to seek good news about yourself?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. How likely it is that you would ask for feedback if you knew it would be positive rather than negative?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How likely it is that you would seek feedback on your performance from the following sources; your immediate boss/ supervisor, peer (colleague) or any of your staff who reports to you?
Please indicate on a seven point scale (1 = extremely unlikely to ask; 2 = very unlikely to ask; 3 = unlikely to ask; 4 = neither likely nor unlikely to ask; 5 likely to ask; very likely to ask; 7 = extremely likely to ask)

25. Your immediate boss /supervisor [1 2 3 4 5 6 7]
26. Your peer /colleague [1 2 3 4 5 6 7]
27. An employee who reports to you (your subordinate). [1 2 3 4 5 6 7]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate 1 - 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28. How likely it is that you will seek feedback on your working / interpersonal relationship with your staff?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. How likely it is that you will seek feedback on your emotional stability and self control?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. How likely it is that you will seek feedback on your leadership skills?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. How likely it is that you will seek feedback on your technical competency?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please choose a number for each of the following statements to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.

[ 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = slightly disagree; 4 = neither disagree nor agree; 5 = slightly agree; 6 = agree; 7 = strongly agree ]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Rate 1-7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32. If I received negative feedback, I would have a negative attitude towards myself.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Negative feedback doesn’t really lower my self worth.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Receiving negative feedback wouldn’t really change the way I feel about myself.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. It is hard to feel good about myself when I receive negative feedback.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. I try to avoid negative feedback because It makes me feel bad about myself.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. I worry about receiving feedback that is likely to be negative because it hurts to be criticized.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Negative feedback doesn’t really worry me because I still have a positive attitude towards myself.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please choose a number for each of the following statements to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.

[ 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = slightly disagree; 4 = neither disagree nor agree; 5 = slightly agree; 6 = agree; 7 = strongly agree ]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Rate 1-7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>39. Obtaining feedback will enable me to understand my strengths and weaknesses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Receiving feedback will enable me to see myself as others see me.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Feedback will give me more accurate insight into my leadership behavior.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Feedback is not really useful to enable me know myself well.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. If I knew better how others see me, I will change my behavior.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. I don’t really require feedback to let me know my reputation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**SECTION D [ABOUT YOURSELF]**

Here are a number of descriptions that may or may not apply to you. For example, do you agree that you are someone ‘who likes to spend time with others?’

Please choose a number for each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I see myself as someone who.....</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....45. is talkative</td>
<td>67. tends to be lazy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....46. tends to find fault with others</td>
<td>68. is emotionally stable, not easily upset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....47. does a thorough job.</td>
<td>69. is inventive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....48. is depressed, blue</td>
<td>70. has an assertive personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....49. is original, comes up with new ideas</td>
<td>71. can be cold and aloof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....50. is reserved</td>
<td>72. perseveres until the task is finished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....51. is helpful and unselfish with others</td>
<td>73. can be moody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....52. can be some what careless</td>
<td>74. values artistic, aesthetic experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....53. is relaxed, handles stress well</td>
<td>75. is sometimes shy, inhibited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....54. is curious about many different things</td>
<td>76. is considerate and kind to almost everyone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....55. is full of energy</td>
<td>77. does things efficiently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....56. starts quarrels with others</td>
<td>78. remains calm in tense situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....57. is reliable worker</td>
<td>79. prefers work that is routine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....58. can be tense</td>
<td>80. is outgoing, sociable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....59. is ingenious, a deep thinker</td>
<td>81. is sometimes rude to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....60. generates a lot of enthusiasm</td>
<td>82. makes plans and follows through with them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....61. has a forgiving nature</td>
<td>83. gets nervous quickly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....62. tends to be disorganized</td>
<td>84. likes to reflect, play with ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....63. worries a lot</td>
<td>85. has few artistic interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....64. has an active imagination</td>
<td>86. likes to co-operate with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....65. tends to be quiet</td>
<td>87. is easily distracted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.....66. is generally trusting</td>
<td>88. is sophisticated in art, music or literature</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please choose a number for each of the following statements to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.
[ 1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3=slightly disagree; 4=neither agree nor disagree; 5=slightly agree; 6= agree; 7= strongly agree ]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate 1-7</th>
<th>89. I am usually able to protect my personal interests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90 When I make plans, I am almost certain to make them work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>91 I can pretty much determine what will happen in my life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>92 When I get what I want it is usually because I worked hard for it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>93. My life is determined by my actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>94. How many friends I have depends on how nice a person I am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>95. Whether or not I get involved in an accident depends mostly on my behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>96. Whether or not I get to be a leader depends mostly on my ability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please choose a number for each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.
[ 1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3=slightly disagree; 4=neither agree nor disagree; 5=slightly agree; 6= agree; 7= strongly agree ]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate 1-7</th>
<th>97. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>98. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>99. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100. I am able to do things as well as most other people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>101. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>102. I take a positive attitude toward my self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>103. On the whole, I am satisfied with my self.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>104. I wish I could have more respect for my self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>105. I certainly feel useless at times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>106. At times I think I am no good at all.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please choose a number for each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.
[ 1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3=slightly disagree; 4=neither agree nor disagree; 5=slightly agree; 6= agree; 7= strongly agree ]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Rate 1-7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>107. I can handle a more challenging job than the one I’m doing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108. I feel confident that my skills and abilities equal or exceed those</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of my colleagues.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109. My job is well within the scope of my abilities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110. Personal qualities that distinguish me favourably from others are</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>easy to display</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111. I believe that I’m fully qualified for the job that I’m doing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SECTION E [ABOUT YOUR JOB AND CAREER SATISFACTION]**

In this section there are questions about several aspects of your job and career. Please express your satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the various aspects of your job indicated below using the following scale.
[ 1= extremely dissatisfied; 2=very dissatisfied; 3= moderately dissatisfied; 4 = not sure 5=moderately satisfied; 6= very satisfied; 7=extremely satisfied ]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Rate 1-7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>112. How satisfied are you with your work?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113. How satisfied are you with your fellow workers?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>114. How satisfied are you with your boss/immediate supervisor?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115. How satisfied are you with your prospects of promotion?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116. How satisfied are you with your overall remuneration package [pay,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pension, and other benefits] ?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117. Taking everything into consideration, how satisfied are you with</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>your job in general?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please choose a number for each of the following statements about your career to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.  
[ 1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3=slightly disagree; 4=neither agree nor disagree; 5=slightly agree; 6= agree; 7= strongly agree ]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Rate 1-7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>118. I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for income.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for advancement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for the development of new skills.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>123. I am satisfied that I have a prestigious job and attained a high status.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**
If you have any further comments to make, please write them below.

**THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY**
MANAGERS FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE  [PART 2]

ID Code [  ]

This questionnaire forms part of a research study of the way individual employees perceive their managers at the workplace. Also, how accurate feedback from staff can be used for their managers development. For the purposes of the study responses are being sought from you as you have known your manager/supervisor to some extent. If the answers provided in this questionnaire are to be of value in this study it is very important that every question is answered. It is also important that the answers are as honest and candid as possible.

So that you feel comfortable about answering frankly about your manager/supervisor every effort is being taken to ensure that the strictest confidentiality is maintained. It will not be possible for anyone, including the person who approached you to complete this questionnaire or your manager, to identify you with the answers you give. The questionnaire will take no longer than 10 minutes to complete.

Please complete the questionnaire and return it directly to researcher.

Many thanks for your time in completing this questionnaire.

SECTION F

Please provide the information required below [ Tick the appropriate box ]

1. Gender: Male [ ] Female [ ]  
2. Age .........

3. Years of full-time work. .....................

4. Do you hold any managerial position in your organization? Yes [ ] No [ ]

5. How many years have you been working for this organization? .....................

6. How many years have you worked with your current manager/supervisor? ..........

7. Which of the following best describes your level education?

- Primary [ ]
- Middle/ JSS [ ]
- SSCE/ O-Level/ A-Level [ ]
- Post sec. /Diploma [ ]
- Bachelors degree [ ]
- Postgraduate degree [ ]
- Doctorate degree [ ]
- Others [ ] Please specify ..............................................
SECTION G
Please choose the number that most closely describes your opinion toward your supervisor/manager. [1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=slightly disagree; 4=neither agree nor disagree; 5=slightly agree; 6=agree; 7=strongly agree]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate 1-7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>124. I think my manager tells the truth in negotiations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125. I think that my manager meets his negotiated obligations to our department or organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126. In my opinion, my manager is reliable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>127. I think that my manager succeeds by stepping on other people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>128. I feel that my manager tries to get the upper hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>129. I think that my manager takes advantage of my departmental problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130. I feel that my manager negotiates with me/my department honestly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>131. I feel that my manager will keep his/her word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>132. I feel that my manager does not mislead the department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>133. I feel that my manager tries to get out of his/her commitments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134. I feel that my manager negotiates joint expectations fairly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135. I feel that my manager takes advantage of people who are vulnerable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding communication with your supervisor/manager. Use the response scale as above. [1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree]  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate 1-7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>136. My manager/supervisor gives recognition for good work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>137. My manager/supervisor lets me know why changes are made in work assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>138. My supervisor keeps me informed about rules and policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>139. My supervisor gives clear instructions to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>140. My supervisor lets me know when I’ve done a good job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>141. My supervisor tells me the reasons for work schedules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>142. My supervisor informs me about future plans for my work group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>143. My supervisor sets useful goals for me to meet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>144. My supervisor praises good work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>145. My supervisor tells me the reasons for rules and policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>146. My supervisor keeps me informed about what is happening in the organization.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION II:
Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your supervisor/manager’s leadership style. Choose the number that most closely describes your opinion. [1=strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = slightly disagree; 4 = neither agree nor disagree; 5 = slightly agree; 6=agree;7=strongly agree]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Rate 1-7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>147. My manager/supervisor makes me feel good to be around him/her</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>148. My manager/supervisor expresses with a few simple words what I could and should do.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>149. I have complete faith in my manager/supervisor.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150. My manager/supervisor lets me feel my work is important.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>151. I am proud to be associated with my manager/supervisor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>152. My manager/supervisor helps find meaning in my work.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>153. My manager/supervisor enables me to think about old problems in new ways</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>154. My manager/supervisor helps me develop myself</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>155. My manager/supervisor provides me with new ways of looking at puzzling things.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>156. My manager/supervisor lets me know how they think I am doing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>157. My manager/supervisor gets me to rethink ideas that I have never questioned before.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>158. My manager/supervisor give personal attention to me when I seem rejected.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SECTION I
Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your supervisor/manager’s feedback seeking on their performance. Use the scale as above. [1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree ]

| 159. My manager/supervisor asks me for feedback about their emotional stability and self control. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 160. My manager/supervisor asks me for feedback about their working / interpersonal relationship with workers in the organization. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |

| 161. My supervisor asks me for feedback about their leadership skills in the organization. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 162. In all, I expect my manager/supervisor to ask me for feedback about their performance in the organization. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY
Appendix 4: Principal Component analysis on studies 1&2 variables

1) Self awareness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aware of appearance</td>
<td>.756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think about the way I look</td>
<td>.704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self presentation to others</td>
<td>.695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I check how I look</td>
<td>.689</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style of doing things</td>
<td>.584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What others think of me</td>
<td>.559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worry about good impression</td>
<td>.416</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

2) Feedback seeking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feedback above performance</td>
<td>.785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking positive feedback</td>
<td>.764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefers positive feedback</td>
<td>.756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking good news</td>
<td>.731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback below performance</td>
<td>.615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honest feedback</td>
<td>.361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking negative feedback</td>
<td>.291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed critical appraisal</td>
<td>.287</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
3) Feedback perception (usefulness of feedback)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feedback not useful for self knowledge</td>
<td>.728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback helps see myself</td>
<td>.727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I knew myself better, I will change behaviour</td>
<td>.644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback not required for my reputation</td>
<td>.625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insight into leadership behaviour</td>
<td>.546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding strengths and weaknesses</td>
<td>.507</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

4) Self Esteem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I think I'm no good at all</td>
<td>.818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel a failure</td>
<td>.736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive self attitude</td>
<td>.671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel useless at times</td>
<td>.654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not much to be proud of</td>
<td>.638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self satisfaction</td>
<td>.600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wish more self respect</td>
<td>.415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to do things well</td>
<td>.411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A person of worth</td>
<td>.372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have good qualities</td>
<td>.331</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
5) Self efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in skills, abilities</td>
<td>0.797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully qualified for job</td>
<td>0.715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinguished personal qualities</td>
<td>0.665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handle challenging job</td>
<td>0.575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job within abilities</td>
<td>0.554</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

6) Locus of control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Works hard for wants</td>
<td>0.689</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans certainly work</td>
<td>0.689</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be a leader depends on ability</td>
<td>0.661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Can determine my life</td>
<td>0.593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice person has many friends</td>
<td>0.585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life determined by actions</td>
<td>0.538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accident depends on behaviour</td>
<td>0.528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to protect personal interests</td>
<td>0.481</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
7) Job satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Component 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work satisfaction</td>
<td>.775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction in general</td>
<td>.751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with promotion</td>
<td>.729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with colleagues</td>
<td>.626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with boss</td>
<td>.612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with remuneration</td>
<td>.240</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

8) Career satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Component 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career goals progress</td>
<td>.810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career success</td>
<td>.752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advancement goals progress</td>
<td>.674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestigious job and high status</td>
<td>.662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New skills development</td>
<td>.635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income goals progress</td>
<td>.604</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
9) Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good job feedback</td>
<td>.659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tells reasons for rules and policies</td>
<td>.633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives recognition for good work</td>
<td>.625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work schedules reasons</td>
<td>.624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives clear instructions</td>
<td>.622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules and policies information</td>
<td>.589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for assignment changes</td>
<td>.585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful goals setting</td>
<td>.579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides organisational information</td>
<td>.578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praises good work</td>
<td>.574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future plans information</td>
<td>.561</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
## 10) Trust

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tells truth in negotiations</td>
<td>.746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial reliability</td>
<td>.735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeps word.</td>
<td>.706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meets department obligations</td>
<td>.684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honest negotiations</td>
<td>.683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair negotiations</td>
<td>.644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not mislead department</td>
<td>.551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager succeeds by stepping on other people</td>
<td>.516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager takes advantage of departmental problems</td>
<td>.492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager takes advantage of vulnerable people</td>
<td>.482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager tries to get upper hand</td>
<td>.370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager gets out of commitments</td>
<td>.319</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
11) Transformational leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Component 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides new ways of looking at things</td>
<td>0.694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith in leader</td>
<td>0.671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps self development</td>
<td>0.670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proud to be associated with</td>
<td>0.660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps solve problems in new ways</td>
<td>0.642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feels good to be around</td>
<td>0.642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finds meaning in my work</td>
<td>0.630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gets me to rethink new ideas</td>
<td>0.610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lets me feel work is important</td>
<td>0.575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives personal attention</td>
<td>0.575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives instructions in simple expressions</td>
<td>0.571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides feedback about my performance</td>
<td>0.437</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Appendix 5: 
Briefing of Repertory Grid Interview Session

Dear Participant,

Thank you for your interest to help on my research project with your rich managerial experience.

The interview will involve three exercises/stages and last about one hour thirty minutes. This is the outline of the session.

1. Think of the following: three main/key tangible (clear & definite) managerial functions that you would tend to seek feedback about your performance on; three functions you would not seek feedback about your performance; and three functions you would sometimes seek and sometimes not seek feedback about your performance.

2. Think of as many reasons as possible why you would seek, or not seek, and sometimes seek feedback about those functions thought of or listed in (1) above.

3. Completion of a grid/matrix will be explained to you before the interview session.

Thank you.

Maxwell A. Asumeng

Supervised by

Dr Lynne Millward
Professor Nick Emler.
Appendix 6:
Repertory grid interview elements: Managerial functions

Participant 1. Duty assignment, Communicating standards, Delegating, Training, Leadership- Team, Staff motivating, Supervision, Disciplining, Counselling.


Participant 5. Client interaction, Team interaction, Case management, Team formation/playing, Supervision, Forward planning, Time keeping, Policies/procedures.


Participant 7. Recruitment, Forecasting, Supervision, Training, Staffing, Communications, Meetings, Rewards/ Punishments, Performance evaluation.

Participant 8. Staff and Team development. Staff performance management, Facilitating meetings, Managing work, Monitoring standards, Financial management, Promoting individual rights, Managing change.


Appendix 7:  
Manual computation and analysis of grid scores

1. The overarching score for an element was compared with the specific rating in the intersection of the construct row and the element column in the grid.

2. The specific rating in the grid is subtracted from the overarching score for an element. The absolute difference is written on top of the rating in the grid, to get the 'top difference'.

3. The reverse of the overarching score for the element (as in 1 above) is compared with the specific rating.

4. The specific rating in the grid is subtracted from the reverse overarching score for the element. The absolute difference is written below the rating in the grid, to get the 'bottom difference'.

5. This procedure is repeated for all the 162 specific matrix ratings in a grid for one case (manager).

6. There would be 9 'top differences' and 9 'bottom differences' for each bi-polar construct since there are 9 specific ratings for each bipolar construct.

7. Sum up the 9 top differences and write the total (T1) at the left side ('pair side') of the bi-polar construct.

8. Sum up the 9 bottom differences (as in 7) and write the total (T2) at the right side ('single side') of the grid. Find the absolute difference between T1 and T2, and write the answer beside T2.

9. The absolute difference between T1 and T2 (as obtained in step 8 above) is the final score for the bipolar construct.

10. For each case, the constructs with the highest scores are considered to be the most important constructs underlying the particular manager's feedback seeking tendency. Such constructs are referred to as lower order or case specific constructs. Lower order constructs were analysed to yield higher order constructs within a grounded theory framework.
Appendix 8:
Manager's feedback case specific constructs / lower order constructs.

Constructs underlying each manager's feedback seeking propensity is referred to as case specific construct/ lower order constructs. First, 18 initial constructs were generated by each participant (case). Second, constructs with the highest scores which were considered to be the most important for each manager's feedback are presented below. These constructs were further analysed within the framework of grounded theory to generate a proposed theoretical model for the explanation of managers' feedback seeking propensities.


Case 2. More understanding, exploratory, curiosity, developmental, qualitative, complex, no fixed criteria, skill development.

Case 3. Uncertainty of performance, confirmation of approach, uncertainty of solution, beneficial information, new ideas.

Case 4. Decision making, uncertainty of outcome, unique functions, unpredictable outcome/results, problem solving, new ideas.

Case 5. Function involves uncertainties, dynamic function, complex, difficult, crucial to organisational goals, others views matter.

Case 6. Fundamental to organisational goals, unpredictable outcome, decision making, non-procedural, critical function, personal development.

Case 7. Uncertainty of function, confirmation of results, interpersonal related, others opinion, dynamic, perceptions.

Case 8. Uncertainty of delivery, uncertainty of methods, useful information, organisational goals.

Case 9. Uncertainty of function, judgements, unpredictable outcome, new skills

Case 10. Difficult task, expertise, experience, novel ideas, exploratory.