IMPLEMENTING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE: A CASE OF THE OFFICE OF PREMIER: MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

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DECLARATION

STUDENT NUMBER ████████

I declare that **IMPLEMENTING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE: A CASE OF THE OFFICE OF PREMIER: MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used and quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

_____

MS LINDIWE JEANNETH MATHE

DATE: _____

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to Xolani and my adorable granddaughters, Nala and Sicebile who missed me during the time I was attending classes, during extended office and research hours. May this work be a source of inspiration to them? **I LOVE YOU VERY MUCH GUYS.**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the implementation of skills development programmes in the public service. The study was conducted in the Office of the Premier. The aim of the study was to determine the effectiveness of the implementation of skills development programmes in the Office of the Premier in the Mpumalanga Provincial Government. This was done to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges that unit managers face during the implementation of skills development programmes in the area of study.

The relevant data was obtained through empirical investigation and interviews. This data was obtained from the seventy (70) respondents who participated in the study. To achieve this process, the researcher obtained quantitative data from fifty (50) officials and qualitative data from twenty (20) managers.

The study revealed that there were challenges that hamper the implementation of skills development in the Office of the Premier. Problems related to Acts of Parliament, inadequate feedback, lack of impact assessment, clarity on policy guidelines and a lack alternative strategies were regarded as the main challenges faced by the stakeholders on the implementation of skills development in the area of the study.

However, there were also benefits that were derived from Human Resource Development indicated by the respondent related to enhancement of good performance and career advancement in the Office of the Premier.

The study has suggested and recommended the empowerment of officials on issues related to legislation and clarity of policies. The study also recommended that the senior managers should also conduct impact assessments and develop alternative strategies that may enhance skills development in the area of the study.
The implementation of the recommendations and the findings may assist the stakeholders to enhance the implementation of skills development in the Office of the Premier.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

OTP   :   Office of the Premier

HRD   :   Human Resource Development

DPSA   :   Department of Public Service & Administration

QC   :   Quality Council

NQF   :   National Qualification Framework

SAQA   :   South African Qualification Authority

SDF   :   Skills Development Facilitator

NDP   :   National Development Plan

PMDS   :   Performance Management & Development Programme

CIP   :   Compulsory Induction Programme

AsgiSA   :   Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiatives for South Africa

JIPSA   :   Joint Initiative on Skills Acquisition

REC   :   Research Ethics Committee

SDA   :   Skills Development Act

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Government spends millions of rands every year on the development and training of the workforce. This is in line with the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998), and the Skills Development Levies Act, 1999 (Act 9 of 1999), which stipulates that employers should budget 1% of the total payroll for the development of their employees. Through these Acts, government aims to address, among others, the need to improve skills and increase productivity in order to compete successfully in the global economy. This means that employees should be afforded the opportunity to develop themselves through education and training, and the employer should support them by availing time and funds through learnerships, internships, scholarships, bursaries and skills programmes.

However, government is still to see the return on the investment in education and training of employees. It is yet to be established whether the training given to the employees does enhance their employability, their performance in the workplace, and therefore their ability to compete globally. It is often argued that employees do not always show commitment to their studies, do not complete the programmes and thus defeat the whole purpose of the skills development programme. To emphasise the above point, Mawila (2014:06) states that skills development in the third world follows the models of their colonial masters. Some of the countries in West Africa have adopted their skills training and education from France and Belgium. These countries believed that the model of training from France is the best in the world.

To support the above statement, (Nyathi 2014:2) attests that most of the education systems in the commonwealth resemble the structure and the format of the British systems, e.g. the Cambridge University's O level and A levels are used as entrance requirement into some of the African Universities. Countries such as Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Botswana and other are still using the above mentioned levels. This system is regarded as one of the best to allow individuals

into various skills development programmes. To enhance skills development, countries need to transform their models of training and their education systems, so as to improve the quality of the Public Service in developing countries. The South African Public Service is not excluded from the above process.

The transformation of the South African Public Service into a world-class service provider should be the goal of the South African government and this can be achieved by providing the necessary skills and knowledge though training and development which in turn will improve the performance of staff. This, therefore, implies that skills development and acquisition requires that public institutions should have employees that possess the essential skills, knowledge and expertise to execute their functions and duties competently. Mello, Pencelian, Phago, Maserumule, Wessels, Ndevu, Mahlangu, Mzini, Lues and Dorasamy (2014:148-149) argue that public institutions constantly change and improve, based on the needs of the environment and it becomes necessary for a workforce to be willing to acquire new skills and knowledge.

In the context of the public service in South Africa, a Skills Development Programme was introduced through the Skills Development Act ,1998 (Act 97 of 1998). The purpose of the Act was to develop the skills of the South African workforce and to encourage workers to participate in learning programmes. According to Mello, et al. (2014:147), training programmes are an important component of an institution and if they are implemented properly, will have a positive impact on the performance of the organisation. Training and development must be measurable in terms of the institution's requirements and tasks, and must be results-orientated, focusing on improving the specific skills and abilities required to perform a task, and must contribute to the accomplishment of the institutional goals. As stated by Nkuna (2012:06), training is increasingly used as a tool for change and a vehicle for increasing quality standards. It is further used to support change initiatives. Training is believed to be a major factor in employee commitment.

The Office of the Premier has an obligation to develop the human resources capacity by creating a favourable learning environment in which all employees

shall develop their full potential through continuous access to education and training opportunities. These opportunities should be consistent and related to employees' field of work and their personal development needs and priorities. Since 2004, the Office of the Premier (OTP) in the Mpumalanga Provincial Government has undertaken a number of Skills Development interventions in order to improve the performance of employees. A large number of employees participate in short courses every financial year. This formed the basis for the researcher's interest in undertaking this study to determine if the skills development programmes are effective in bringing about better performance in the Mpumalanga Office of the Premier.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

According to the Annual Training Reports of the OTP from 2004 to 2014 the performance of the staff has not improved to the expected standards. Secondly , the Skills Audit conducted by the Mpumalanga Provincial Government in 2004 on Senior Managers, Middle Managers and Junior Managers revealed that the majority of these managers lacked the requisite skills to enhance service delivery, thus the introduction of the Executive Management Programmes (Mawila, 2014:5)

These reports suggest that there are challenges faced by the Mpumalanga OTP with the implementation of the skills development interventions put in place. Challenges such as lack of clarity on Skills Development Acts, lack of expertise to determine training needs, irrelevant training methods, and no alignment between skills development training and departmental objectives. Furthermore, the Human Resource Development (HRD) unit should develop or come up with a strategy to monitor the impact of training and be in a position to provide feedback with regards to the outcome of the evaluation.

Apart from the above challenges experienced by the employees, unit managers also seem to encounter problems such as how to gear their skills development towards employees' advancement and future path; inadequate provision of resources; lack of clarity on policy guidelines; and failing to develop alternative strategies that will support the implementation of skills development, hence this study within the OTP.

As stated by Mawila (2014:6) it seems as if there is a challenge that hinders the implementation of the skills development interventions in the area of the study. This has necessitated the study of the implementation of skills development programmes in the OTP.

1.3 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of the implementation of skills development programmes in the OTP in the Mpumalanga Provincial Government. The purpose of researching this topic is to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges that unit managers face during the implementation of skills development in the area of study. This issue has been left unattended for a long of time, hence this study. To achieve the above, the aim will be specified and be supported by various objectives.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Shange (2007:11) defines the objective of a research as the researcher specifying who or what they want to draw conclusions about. For the purpose of this study the researcher will focus on the following objectives:
- To examine the procedure for implementing a skills development programme in the Office of the Premier in the Mpumalanga Province, and
- To determine the necessary skills required for enhancing performance in the Office of the Premier in the Mpumalanga Province.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Given the aim of the study and objectives mentioned above, the research questions of the study are as follows:
- What is the procedure for implementing a skills development programme in the Office of the Premier in the Mpumalanga Province?
- What are the necessary skills required for enhancing performance in the Office of the Premier in the Mpumalanga Province?

1.6 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Werner and DeSimone (2009:198) define **Human Resource Development Evaluation** as the systematic collection of descriptive and judgmental information necessary to make effective training decisions related to the selection, adoption, evaluation and modification of various instructional activities.

Rees and French (2010) in Botha, Kiley, Truman and Tshilongamulendze (2013:202) define **Development** as the process of growing employees and preparing them or equipping them for different, better, or bigger things.

Erasmus, Leadoff, Mda and Nel (2009:2) defines **Training** as the way in which an organisation uses a systematic process to modify the knowledge, skills and behaviour of employees that will enable it to achieve its objectives. Training is task-oriented because it focuses on the work performed in an organisation based on the job task description.

Robbins (1995:15) in Chelechele (2009:14) defines **Skills** as the ability to demonstrate behaviour that is realistically related to the attainment of a performance goal.

Blanchard and Thacker (2007) in Werner and DeSimone (2009), and Botha*, et al.* (2013:203) define **Knowledge** as the accumulated information, facts, principles and procedures associated with a specific subject that individuals collect and store in their memories as time goes by.

Nadler and Nadler (1989) in Erasmus, Loedolff, Mda and Nel (2013:21) define **Human Resource Development (HRD)** as a learning experience organised by an employer, usually within a specific period of time, to bring about the possibility of performance improvement and/ or personal growth. The above concepts are discussed in full in chapter two.

Erasmus, *et al.* (2009:266) define **Individual Career Management** as a process whereby an individual assesses his or her own work strengths and weaknesses,

decides on a particular lifestyle and occupation, develops career goals and devises strategies to achieve the set goals.

1.7 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The chapters of the dissertation are organised as follows:

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The chapter will discuss literature from different scholars and authors that relates to the effectiveness of Skills Development Programmes. The information will be obtained from sources such as journals, books, the internet and other relevant sources.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section will specify the research design and the methods employed in the research study. Qualitative and quantitative approaches will be defined. Furthermore, the chapter will mention the sampling methods utilised and the analysis of the data collected.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The chapter will present the data collected and the analysis thereof. The integration of the research findings and literature review will be done in this chapter. Data will be analysed by organising facts, categorising data, interpreting it, identifying patterns and drawing conclusions. Data will be classified into different codes and categories. The findings and conclusions will be presented in bar charts.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions will be drawn from the study and recommendations will be made, based on the findings, after the data have been analysed.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to investigate the effectiveness in the implementation of skills development programmes in the public service with the view to enhance performance in the OTP in Mpumalanga Provincial Government. The OTP will benefit from this research in the sense that the study will appraise the situation to see if the skills development programmes have yielded the desired outcomes and whether anything needs to be changed or improved in the manner in which the skills development programmes are administered.

The changes that may be effected by the OTP because of the recommendations of this study may trickle down to other government departments in order to improve performance as far as service delivery is concerned. The study may also provide information that can be utilised by policy makers to identify gaps in the current skills development policies and therefore bring about necessary changes in the manner in which the policies are implemented. The study may also be useful to academics, scholars and researchers who may use it as the basis for their intended research in the same field, but on a broader scale.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter one of this study provided an introduction and background of the problem as well as the objectives of the study. This chapter provides a broader theoretical understanding on the effectiveness in implementing skills development programmes in the public service: A case of the Office of the Premier (OTP) in Mpumalanga Provincial Government.

To achieve the intended objective of this chapter, the researcher has structured the work as follows:

- Global Skills Development Programme in the Public Service
- Skills Development Programmes in the South African Public Service
- Challenges Associated with Skills Development in the Public Services
- Fundamental Methods of Improving Skills Development Programmes in the Public Sector

2.2 THE BACKGROUND OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Apart from the formal qualifications that people obtained from various institutions of higher learning, public servant officials are expected to acquire skills related to their day to day operations. For example, in Britain there is a Public Service college. The above mentioned college was created to offer relevant skills to enhance the quality of service delivery in the public sector. The skills development training from the above public service college involves ethics, professionalism customer relations management and other traits of leadership.

To support the above process Africa is not excluded from the establishment of Public Services Colleges, for example the Ugandian Government has established the

institute of Public Service to empower is Public Officials to provide quality service delivery in the country (Mabuza, (2015:4)

To support the above Colleges some of the Private Institution have been created to offer similar skills to empower Public Servants at various units. South Africa is not excluded from the above process. To re-enforce this process South African Government has established the National School of Government to empower its Officials.

Recent transformation in the South African Public Sector requires employees with relevant skills. These skills are intended to provide efficient and quality service. According to service standards, all the public servants are expected to acquire specific skills that will enhance quality service delivery in their sphere of operation (Mabuza, 2015:8). The officials in the OTP in Mpumalanga are not excluded from the above operational requirements. Thus, in order to accelerate service delivery in the OTP, the HRD unit has initiated the implementation of skills development programmes. To achieve the above process, the managers need to understand the concept of Human resource and skills development management in the public service.

2.3 BACKGROUND ON SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN SOUTH AFRICA

McGrath and Badroodien (2006), in Nkuna (2012:9) state that since the beginning of industrialisation in the second half of the nineteenth century, skills development in South Africa has always been profoundly shaped by international factors. Initially, higher skills were largely imported, for example, in the form of Lanarkshire miners and Nightingale nurses. According to Nkosi (2015:3) from the1880s, formal training for whites emerged in the country but it was always highly influenced by British working practices, although overlaid with colonial attitudes, especially regarding race. This perspective is relevant for the study in that in South Africa, in areas such as professional engineers, in that although they are regarded as a critical and scarce skill, they are still being imported from other countries.

For example, South Africa currently imports engineers from Cuba. The Country has engineers, who are qualified, but they are not registered with the applicable council to become professionals, hence the country has to import engineers. Nyathi (2014:5) attests that black trained engineers are often not regarded as qualified engineers because of the hostile attitude which emanates from the previously white dominated profession, hence more engineers are recruited from other countries. In the Health sector in South Africa, when there is a shortage of doctors, then Cuban doctors are imported. However, now that the South African Government has formed a partnership with the Cuban Government, learners are given bursaries to study in Cuba to become doctors. The South African health ministry is struggling to find enough doctors to work in the expanding public health system. Half of South Africa's medical graduates immigrate to countries like Canada or join the private sector. The programme has a massively significant impact on alleviating the shortage of doctors in the country.

To enhance the above statement, Allais (2012:633) states that the basic elements of skills development under apartheid are well established, namely: low skills production, voluntarism on behalf of employers, artisan training for white men through state-owned enterprises and a highly unequal public education system. The National Skills Development Strategy III, (2011-2016: 7) argued that ours is still a society that reflects huge disparities between men and women, including access to skills for effective participation in the labour market and society. This calls for the attention of the government to encourage women to have access to scarce skills, especially blacks, so that they can effectively participate in society as required by our constitution. In addition, all our skills development initiatives must contain within them specific programmes and strategies to promote gender equality in skills development. This should be done to promote employment equity and career development in our economy as a whole.

McGrath and Akoojee (2007:424) state that the evolution of attitudes towards skills in labour market structures and the economy in just over a century of South African industrialisation by 1994 resulted in a seriously dysfunctional skills development system. One of the major problem faced the incoming state in this area is that skills had been profoundly racialised and gendered. Black (especially female) South

Africans had been denied access to skills development or had received no certification or recognition for their real level of skills and knowledge learned on the job. Moreover, provider institutions and delivery systems were fragmented and dysfunctional.

To support the above view, Nyathi (2014:7) argues that, previously in South Africa, the Skills Development programmes were for particular individuals and were based on race and gender including black males, white males and white women. Black females were neither developed, nor attended school or employed, hence important skills were not given to black females by the apartheid regime. Thus the new democratic government has introduced the Skills Development Levies Act, 1999 (Act 9 of 1999).

Paterson, Pillay, Reddy, Juan, and Twalo, (2014:442) argue that, in South Africa as elsewhere, skills development is necessary for building and sustaining the required capabilities of government. The management, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of public service skills development is of central importance to the successful achievement of government objectives. To support the above statement it is important monitor and evaluate skills development programmes in the public sector because government has spent lots of money in developing personnel. To implement the above process, both public and private organisations need a relevant strategy.

According to Nkosi (2015:2) the new HRD strategy (2010 to 2030) is a call to action for all stakeholders in South Africa. To take the process forward, there should be accelerated development to ensure that there is a match between supply and demand for human resources in South Africa and to effect the optimal utilisation of resources. The primary purpose of the strategy is to identify and implement a set of actions that will create sufficient leverage for the full scope of HRD inputs and activities to promote outcomes that favour the country's development priorities as recorded in the HRD strategy. To implement the above strategy, the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) and SETA have developed training programmes that can enhance skills development in South Africa. (Mabunda, 2014:4).

2.4 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SERVICE

The Skills Development Facilitator (SDF) in the Public Sector is required to submit a report to the relevant SETAs, in terms of skills development for the institution, every quarter. To support the objectives of the Skills Development Act, Qhosola (2011:09) states that in order to ensure a well-capacitated and skilled workforce, employee developmental needs are to be evaluated and addressed. Providing public employees with training and developmental opportunities encourages good performance, strengthens job related skills and competencies and helps employees keep up with changes in the workplace, such as the introduction of new technology and restructuring exercises.

To support the above view, Nkosi (2015:5) argues that it is very important to evaluate the effectiveness of skills development because it will determine whether the correct type of training was presented and the efficiency of the training, which determines whether the correct methods and techniques were used to impart the course content to the officials or learners. To check whether the programme is good, one should ask a question, it is the programme value for money and/or is there a good return on investment? To reinforce the above process, government departments are expected to put aside 1% or more from the total personnel wage bill as per the Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999, in every financial year.

According to Bushney, Katz, Knoke, Ludike, Meyer, Meyer, Nel, Schenk, Smith, Van Niekerk and Wolfson (2012:218), for training to be relevant in the new learning dispensation, it is essential to ensure that all learning programmes meet the requirements of the National Qualification Framework (NQF) and specifically those of the quality council (QCs). This means that HRD practitioners and other employees involved in the training function should continuously study the NQF requirements with regard to the planning of learning programmes.

From the above view, it is clear that the South African Qualification Act, 1995 (Act 58 of 1995), which established the NQF is designed to improve the quality and relevance of all learning. In other words, all training programmes and materials

should be outcomes-based and aligned to the skills development framework; and the training design, materials and delivery methodology should be compliant with the National Qualifications authority's requirements, <u>South African Qualification Authority</u> (SAQA) compliant and should be delivered by accredited trainers, except for informal training sessions.

To reinforce the above idea, Bushney, et al. (2012: 6) attest that development occurs when on-going learning opportunities are created, so that employees can improve and maintain high levels of performance. The assumption is that when employees are developed, the organisation will respond to the needs of the public and deliver quality service. Employees will be proactive because they will know what is expected of them.

According to Mello, *et al.* (2014:146) staff training in South Africa has been neglected over the past few decades, which has resulted in low productivity, older staff members being redundant, higher staff turnover, and fear of technological advancement. Institutions that promote training and education of their employees are rewarded with improved performance and productivity. Furthermore, Mello, *et al.* (2014:148) emphasised that public institutions need to constantly change and improve based on the needs of the environment. This process develops a workforce that is flexible and willing to acquire new skills and knowledge.

The programme of skills development leads to employee transformation and has also accelerated change in human resource development planning in South Africa for public servants. For the OTP to succeed, it is important for the provincial government to invest in its employees in order to improve on the level and quality of service delivery. Training interventions should be implemented effectively to ensure success. For the above process to be realised, human resource practitioners need to be aware of the steps that are found in the training of employees in a training cycle.

The Training Cycle

To articulate the above process Mello, *et al.* (2014:159) outlined the following steps of the training cycle in five phases, namely:

Phase 1 – ETD Needs Analysis;

Phase 2 – Learning Programme Design;

Phase 3 – Training Delivery;

Phase 4 – Assessment and moderation of learning achievement; and

Phase 5 – Evaluation of programme effectiveness.

FIGURE 2.1: Showing training cycle of skills development programmes in South Africa.
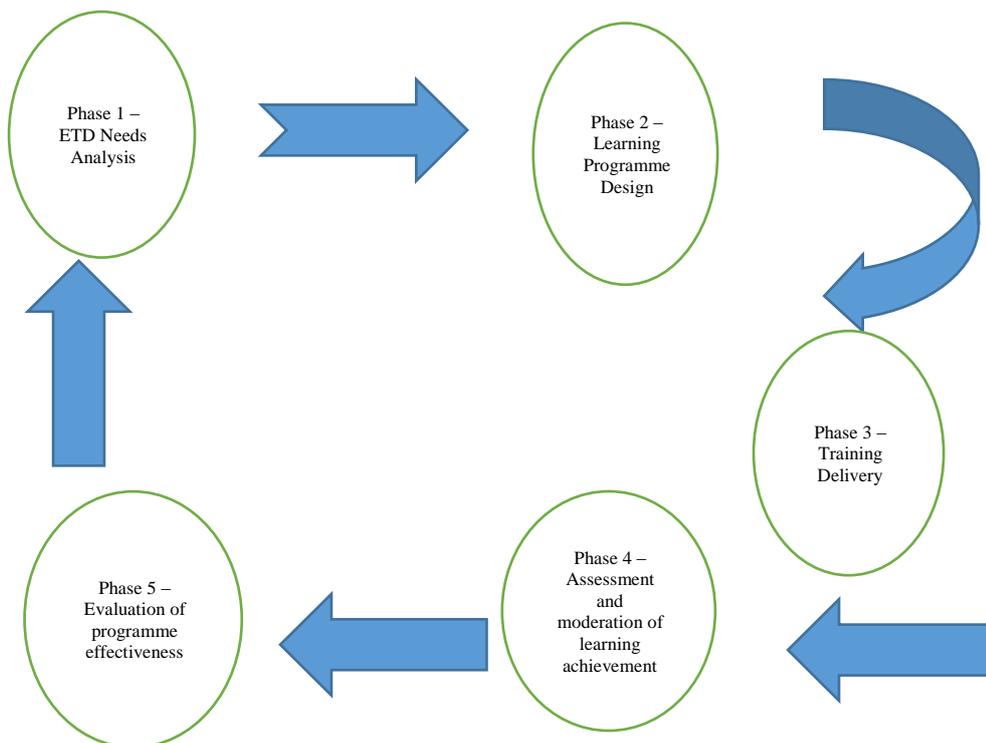
Source: Mello, et al. (2014:159)

From the above cycle, it evident that training and development officers are required to conduct a needs analysis before the other steps can be implemented in the process. For skills development to succeed human resources officers need to do a pre assessment before any training take place. To fulfil this process an audit need to be done, so as to understand the needs of the institution. To support the statement,

Mashele (2015:5) argues that, it is important for skills development to be implemented based on a skills audit or training needs analysis. Skills programmes must be implemented when there is a need to improve performance. For this process to be complete HRD practitioners must make employees aware of their performance measurement and training process.

From the above information, it is clear that if skills development is implemented properly, it can enhance the capacity and performance of employees and improve productivity in the workplace. This can only be done if both the Departments of Labour, and Monitoring and Evaluation can monitor and evaluate the skills development programmes in the work force in every sphere of operation. Apart from the quality of training that takes place in the South African public service, there are also challenges that hinder the proper implementation of skills development in various Provinces.

2.5 CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN THE PUBLIC SERVICES

The implementation of skills development in the different Provinces is fraught with various challenges, such as manpower, budgetary constraints, a shortage of training manuals, and inadequate equipment and other relevant tools. Apart from these scarce resources, lack of appropriate methods of training, minimal cooperation from the trainees and lack of feedback are also some of the processes that hamper the effectiveness of skills development training in the OTP.

According Nkosi (2015:7), the challenges that hamper the implementation of skills development are issues such as, a lack of appropriate methods of training, appropriate feedback, and relevant tools for impact assessment, as well as inadequate training equipment and a lack of clear policy guidelines. To support this definition, Mavuso (2015:8) states that a lack of resources and impact assessment tools are the main challenges facing the implementation of skills development programmes in South Africa. According to Zondo (2015:8) Statistics SA, reported that in 1994, low skilled workers made up 43% of the disadvantaged community's workforce. By 2014, this figure had declined by nine percentage points to 34%, with

semi-skilled workers as a percentage of the total workforce having increased by six percentage points to 48%. It is undoubtedly clear that skills development programmes and initiatives are an urgently necessary solution to this problem.

Some of the concerns regarding skills development are caused by challenges such as, a lack of qualified teachers, ineffective teaching and bad subject choices, weak administration, the unwillingness of business and the government to invest in employees training and skills development, and an underdeveloped education system – especially in disadvantaged areas where schools lack basic infrastructure. These are all pertinent factors that have contributed to unemployment and poverty in our country. To reinforce the above skills, the government has also included it the Constitution so as to make it mandatory to all managers in different sectors.

Given the importance of skills and capacity development, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, specifically Section 195(I) (h) and (i), set the foundation of the regulatory framework which enables mechanisms for the development of skills of employees in the Public Service (Nyathi, 2014:2).

To respond to the above challenges the South African Government introduced the Skills Development Act which compelled all industrial sectors to develop their employees within their spheres of operation. The success of the implementation of every programme depends on the way people implement it. From the above definitions it is clear that poor implementation of skills development is caused by various problems around the implementation of skills development programmes. The OTP is not excluded from the above challenges.

2.6 FUNDAMENTAL METHODS OF IMPROVING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

The effectiveness of skills development depends on various training strategies and methods that can be used to enhance human capacity and the capabilities of the government. To achieve these, Skills Development Facilitator must know and be conversant with relevant methods that will enhance human capacity and quality skills (Nkosi, 2014:2). Facilitators are expected to use experiential learning, problem-based learning, case studies and other methods related to adult education. These methods are all suitable and relevant to mature public servants.

Paterson, Pillay, Reddy, Juan and Twalo (2014:442) argue that in South Africa and elsewhere, skills development is necessary for building and sustaining the required capabilities of government. The management, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of public service skills development is of central importance to the successful achievement of governmental objectives. In this case, it is important to monitor and evaluate skills development programmes in the public sector because government spends a large amount of money on developing personnel. To implement the above process both public and private organisations need a relevant strategy

The National Development Plan (NDP) 2030, calls for the building of a 'capable state' underpinned by 'effectively coordinated state institutions with skilled public servants who are committed to the public good and capable of delivering consistently high, quality services, while prioritising the nation's developmental objectives'. The PSETA is tasked to play a pivotal role to achieve this NDP objective through; credible sector skills planning; the development of occupationally directed qualifications and learning programmes; the provision of quality assurance functions; and the allocation of discretionary grants.

Apart from the above strategies, every institution is required to evaluate its employees' skills and performance in the workplace. This is called a Performance Management and Development System (PMDS). To support this statement, Armstrong (2009:211) states that the performance management is expected to improve institutional performance generally by creating a performance culture in which the achievement of high performance is a way of life. The PMDS is aimed at assisting the institution in achieving its institutional objectives. As a result, all the different levels of employees in an institution must be contracted through performance management agreements.

To support the above view, Personal Development Plans for all employees should be drawn up, linked to PMDS, to ensure a needs-based approach to training and education. These should be designed to identify the needs of staff and the measures required to meet these needs, within the context of the individual's overall career

progression, as well as the context of the organisation's objectives and priorities. In this study, of the OTP the introduction of a personal development plan system will assist in insuring that the principles of meaningful training and development opportunities for all employees becomes a reality (Mashele, 2015:8).

The above needs are to be met in context and aligned to the performance management system. The development of personal development plans should be done at the first performance review discussion at the beginning of the year. This discussion needs to take place between the employee and the line manager with all objectives, including training mentoring and coaching, as agreed upon. To support this statement, Mabunda (2014:10) attests that good training ensures that individuals understand the link between individual performance, institutional performance and productivity and that punitive/disciplinary measures should be taken for noncompliance.

According to Masoga, (2007) in Munzhedzi, (2011:17). The implementation and management of human resource management development programmes is meant to promote the performance of public servants in the Department of Roads and Transport in the Limpopo Province. Since the focus of investigation is on the need for training and development of public servants, the study found that the newly appointed public service employees do not receive sufficient orientation or training. While the study further found that *ad hoc* or haphazard training is sometimes provided to the new employees, results are not always evaluated to determine whether the objectives of such training are achieved. In its conclusion, the study found that there is a need for a systematic orientation and training of newly appointed employees, if the overall performance is to be improved. Performance evaluations should be conducted to determine the training outcome and also link such to the institutional results.

To enhance the above findings, South African Government (Public Sector) has introduced the Compulsory Induction Programme (CIP), with the overall purpose to induct new entrants into the public service. The programme is aimed at building a public service cadre that demonstrates developmental values, zeal, knowledge, skills and commitment to serve the ordinary citizens of South Africa. The programme

challenges new entrants to embrace the values and mandate of our democratic state (Mashele, 2015:6). Furthermore the PSCBC Resolution of 2012 stipulates that all new entrants into the public service on salary levels 1-14 regardless of their differing backgrounds, skills and experience need to be oriented around a common programme to understand and implement the Government agenda.

Bushney, *et al.* (2012:4) states that although organisations worldwide neglect the importance of evaluating training programmes. Particular emphasis is placed on the feasibility analysis of training, as well as evaluating the return on investment from training. HRD practitioners are increasingly being called upon to make sure that training will have an impact on performance in the workplace and produce the required return on the training investment. Nel, Werner, Haasbroek, Poisant, Sona and Schults, (2008:462) emphasised that training and development can never be effective if it is not properly assessed. From the above information, it is clear that the impact made by skills development interventions needs to be assessed, evaluated and monitored as an ongoing process in order to check if there is a return on investment. This will also assist the organisation to determine whether the individual has benefited from the skills programme or not. It is important for HRD practitioners to conduct a post-evaluation after a training programme, which is why the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998), encourages workers to participate in learning programmes and invest in skills development programmes. To ensure that employees get proper training, its relevance needs to be checked before implementation.

Mashele (2015:9) argues that every organisation needs policies and procedures in order to operate efficiently, avoid employee confusion and to adhere to legal and regulatory guidelines. The purpose of the HRD policy, therefore, should be to regulate, direct and control the actions and conduct of the HRD activities in the organisation. Nel, *et al.* (2008:453) also emphasised that the policy should reflect, from a strategic, as well as an operational point of view, the reasons why an organisation is willing to invest in the development of its employees. It is therefore necessary for training and development policies to be based on a set of principles that are closely linked to an organisation's mission and values. The challenges in

public institutions are caused by various factors such as inadequate skills development programmes and other related needs.

To support the above statement, Chelechele' (2009:50) attests that a shortage of skills and/ or a lack of skills development have a major impact on the filling of positions in the national and provincial departments. This has also led to a high vacancy rate in public institutions. The high vacancy rate in provincial government departments is unacceptable because this causes inefficiency and ineffectiveness in the functioning of the departments and timely implementation of policies. This can also lead to poor public service delivery. The author further attests that poor skills development in the South African Public Service contributes to poor service delivery as a result of inefficiency and ineffectiveness in government departments. It is important that government, educational institutions and the private sector work together to ensure that skills development in the public service is given serious attention so that service delivery activities can be executed effectively and efficiently.

To alleviate the above mentioned problems, the government came up with legislation to resolve the challenge of lack of skills in the country. According to Mawila (2014:5) the solution for skills development challenges, besides the skills development legislation that the new democratic government has promulgated to address the problems of the skills shortage in the South African Public Service, there were also plans which were solely developed to assist in terms of addressing skills development. These initiatives include the introduction of *Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiatives for South Africa* (AsgiSA) which is aimed at addressing matters pertaining to skills development and the efficiency of the state system; the introduction of the *Joint Initiative on Skills Acquisition* (JIPSA).

Apart from skills development initiatives, new graduates also need experiential learning that is related to the day–to-day operations of the public service. This will enhance and augment their knowledge that they have received in their qualifications from various institutions. This process will help the government to improve the quality of service delivery in the country (Mawila, 2014:9).

From the above information, it is evident that if skills development can be implemented properly, it can enhance the capacity and performance of the employees, and improve productivity in the workplace. This can only be done if the Department of Labour is monitoring and evaluating the skills development programmes in the workplace.

2.7 SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter was to review the literature on the implementation of skills development programmes in the public sector. From the above information it is clear that human resource practitioners are faced with various challenges during the implementation of skills development in various countries. South Africa is not excluded from these challenges.

For HRD facilitators in the OTP to solve the above challenges, they need to take aspects such as training phases, performance management measurement and other facets of human development activities, into consideration. To enhance these processes the HRD practitioners must have the relevant resources, adequate equipment, use appropriate training methods, and give feedback to their trainees.

CHAPTER THREE

REASEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter the researcher reviewed relevant literature on the implementation of skills development programmes in the public sector. In this chapter, various research approaches, designs, methods and techniques are discussed in full. To achieve this process the researcher will discuss the rational of the research methods, the choice of research designs, and the importance of research philosophies related to the study. The population, the sample, administration and validity of research instruments, data collection, analysis and ethical considerations are also presented in this chapter.

3.2   RATIONALE FOR THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The challenge of skills development in the public sector cannot be resolved by one research design and methodology. These above problems need various research methods and techniques to resolve them. The researcher used a mixed research design to collect, analyse and interpret the data collected in the study.

3.3   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Brynard, Hanekom and Braynard (2014:38) research methodology, focuses on the process of research and the decisions that the researcher has to take to execute the research project. For example:
- Which decision(s) need to be taken as the research progresses?
- Which method(s), special forms of procedure for doing something and technique(s) (skills) for data collection and data analysis should be selected?
- Which factors play a role in the design of a research project?
- What influence does the particular purpose of the research project have on the selection of methods and techniques?

- Which factors play a role in the process of research and how do these factors influence the methodology of the researcher?

Mavuso (2015:2) attests that research methodology as 'a systematic process of collecting and logically analysing information for some purposes'. He further attested that there is no single research method that can be used as a panacea for all. All the research methods are relevant as long as they are used appropriately. The rationale of the research method can only be seen when the researcher chooses the appropriate research designs.

3.4   RESEARCH DESIGN

According Bertram and Christiansen, (2014:40) research design is defined as a plan of how the researcher will systematically collect and analyse the data that is needed to answer the research question. Bless, Higson-Smith and Sithole (2013:130), attest that research design relates directly to the answering of a research question. Furthermore, the authors also regard the research as a project that takes place over an extended period of time, it is unthinkable to embark on such an exercise without a clear plan or design, a sort of blueprint. To achieve the above process the researcher has employed both quantitative and qualitative research designs to address the research questions stated in chapter one.

This study uses both qualitative and quantitative research methods because the researcher has used a mixed research design to achieve the intended objective of the study. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007:12) in de Vos, Strydom, Fouche, and Deport (2011:436), mixed methods refers to a separate methodology in which both qualitative and quantitative approaches, methods and procedures are combine or 'mixed' to come up with a more complete picture of the research problem.

The researcher decided to use a mixed methods approach in order to collect valuable information from both questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to determine the in-depth data for the study from the 50 selected management team members and by collecting data from 50 other officials so as to determine whether

the skills development programmes are effective in the OTP in Mpumalanga Province.

3.4.1 Quantitative and qualitative research design

Due to the nature of the study, the researcher has described both quantitative and qualitative research approaches to achieve the intended objectives of the research. Creswell, *et al.* (2008:145) defines quantitative research as a process that is systematic and objective in its way of using numerical data from only a selected subgroup of a universe (or population) to generalise the findings to the universe that is being studied. To achieve this process the researcher has employed questionnaires to collect data from selected sub-groups in the OTP. This will be done to generate the findings of this research study.

To support the above definition, a quantitative research approach involves the use of structured questions where the response options have been predetermined and a large number of respondents are involved. Simply put, quantitative research considers numbers, symbols, measurements and statistics in outlining key variables for the collection, analysis and interpretation of data. However, measurements applied must be objective, quantitative and statistically valid (Babooa, 2008:136). Hence, in relation to this study data in the form of numbers and measurements will be collected through using a Likert scale system integrated in the questionnaire. The statistical data collected will be analysed and presented using tables, graphs and other statistical data presentation techniques.

To supplement the above information, the researcher has also employed a qualitative research approach. Mouton (1983:128) in Brynard, *et al.* (2014:39), states that a **qualitative design is** referred to as research that produces descriptive data generally from participants' own writing or spoken words pertaining to their experiences or perceptions. The author further notes that it allows the researcher to know people personally, to see them as they are, and to experience their daily struggles when confronted with real-life situations. According Babooa, (2008:137) a qualitative research design approach involves an in-depth understanding of participants' behaviour and the reasons that govern participants' behaviour. Hence, in relation to this study, views and perspectives of junior, middle and senior

managers in relation to the implementation of skills development programmes in the Mpumalanga OTP will be collected and analysed.

From the above descriptions, it is clear that there are differences between quantitative and qualitative research designs. To show these differences, Nyathi (2014:3) outlined them as stated below:

Table 3.1: Illustration of differences between qualitative and quantitative research:

Criteria	Qualitative	Quantitative
Focus	One or a number of individuals probably not more than fifty	Large number of individual
Aim	Understand the individual in his or her life world	Discover laws and principles of general validity
Skills	Literary and narrative writing	Technical and scientific writing
Data	Words	Statistics
Approach	Inductive	Deductive
Time	Relatively long	Relatively short
Audience	Familiar with and supportive of qualitative research	Familiar with and supportive of quantitative research

Source: Nyathi (2014:3)

From the above differences it is clear that a mixed research design can assist the researcher to collect more data than a single research approach.

The above process helped the researcher to collect more data through a quantitative research design and to have a deeper understanding of the respondents through a qualitative research design. For researchers to use the above process, they need to base their research and understanding on the target populations and sampling.

3.5 POPULATION

Abramson and Abramson (2008:61) define the study population as a group that is studied, either in total or by selecting a sample of its members. The units in the group may be persons, families, medical records, certificates, house-files or dustbins.

To support the above view, Qhosola (2011:47), states that 'a population is thus the full group of potential participants to whom a researcher wants to generate the findings of the study'. According to the information provided by the OTP, the Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) (2014) indicates that there are 258 employees, 33 senior managers, 52 middle managers, 45 junior managers and 128 other officials. Thus the total population of the study is 516.

3.6.   SAMPLE SIZE AND SELECTION METHOD

A sample comprises of elements or a subset of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study, or it can be viewed as a subset of measurements drawn from a population in which the researcher is interested (Unrau, Gabor & Grinnel, 2007:279). Nyathi (2014:4) attests that there are two main sampling methods that can be used by the researchers, namely: probability and non-probability sampling. For this study the researcher will employ probability sampling. Probability sampling means that every person in the population has an equal chance of being selected to participate in the research (Gordon, 2016:10). In this study, the probability sampling procedure was used as all the Officials in the OTP had an opportunity to be involved in the study. In this sample there are also various research techniques that can be drawn from it. These techniques will be discussed in full in the next section.

To argument the above statement, the researcher will use stratified random sampling as one of the sampling methods under probability sampling, whereby officials will be grouped into strata. According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014:61), stratified sampling is used when the population consists of subgroups who may have different opinions or experiences of the world. Engel and Schutt, (2013:120–121) attest that stratified random sample uses information known about the total population prior to sampling to make the sampling process more efficient. To achieve the intended

objectives of the project, the researcher has employed stratified random sampling to collect and select the participants for both qualitative and quantitative data. This method was chosen to select the participants from different sub-groups (strata), so as to gain their understanding about the implementation of skills development in the area of study.

To achieve the above processes, the researcher used the above research techniques to collect data from 50 managers ,which are on junior, middle and senior management levels and 50 'other officials' or support staff (level 8-5) in the OTP.

3.7 DATA COLLECTIONS METHODS

The data was collected from 100 officials in the OTP, Mpumalanga Provincial Government. The researcher employed semi-structured interviews to collect qualitative data from fifty (50) managers. To augment this data the researcher also used questionnaires to collect quantitative data from fifty (50) other officials.

To illustrate the importance of the above research process, the researcher described the two research instruments, namely, structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews used in this study.

3.7.1 Structured questionnaires

Babbie (2007:246) defines a questionnaire as a document containing questions and/ or other types of items designed to solicit information appropriate for analysis. Structured questionnaires use closed-ended questions to make it possible to count how many answers are given in each category. With a sufficient quantity of data these can be analysed using statistical methods. (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014:74). To achieve the above process, the researcher used a five Likert Scale that is, Agree, Strongly Agree, Uncertain, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The researcher has used this scale to check the degree of understanding of the participants towards the implementation of skills development in the area of the study. This level of detail will assist the researcher to make an appropriate recommendation that will assist policy makers to enhance skills development in the OTP.

3.7.1.1 Administration of questionnaires

The questionnaires for this study were physically distributed to the respondents in the OTP. Before the respondents were given the questionnaire, the intention of the research was explained and the respondents were also assured that anonymity would be maintained. The respondents were given ample time to fill out the questionnaire though many preferred to fill it out on the same day as they envisioned that they would forget about it if it was with them for a long time. For the respondents who requested to be given more time, they were asked if it was in order to call them in order to do a follow-up. These respondents' telephone numbers were collected and then used for the follow-ups. All the questionnaires that were distributed were returned, completed.

3.7.2 Semi-structured interview

De Vos, *et al.* (2011:351) attests that researchers use semi-structured interviews in order to gain a detailed picture of a participant's beliefs about, or perceptions or accounts of, a particular topic. The method gives the researcher and participant much more flexibility. Semi–structured interviews were conducted to collect data from 50 managers in the area of the study. The process was done to collect a large amount of in-depth information from these experienced managers. To support the above statement Mabunda (2014:11) indicates that an in-depth interview is a data collection technique relied on extensively by qualitative researchers because it enables the researcher to obtain a large amount of data quickly and it allows immediate follow-up questions that are necessary for clarification.

In addition, interviews allow the researcher to check description with facts and therefore ensure more insight into the problem under investigation. To supplement this process, the researcher has employed semi-structured interviews to gain a deeper understanding of the managers who are involved in skills development. For the qualitative data, all the managers involved were interviewed by the researcher at their various offices. A formal request for the interview was made by the researcher before the process was undertaken.

3.8   DATA ANALYSIS

In order to analyse data in the research study, Mahlokoane (2012:29) stated that the key characteristic during data analysis in interpretative research is the production of high-quality, meaningful and relevant data that makes it possible for valuable insights to emerge within a social context. Therefore the researcher selected content analysis as a technique to analyse transcribed textual data to compare the text, action and/ or narrative through the process of interpreting the emergent themes.

According to Nyathi (2014:4), a research study is assumed complete when the set research questions are answered and that this can only be achieved if results are thoroughly analysed. It is recommended that, a general analytic strategy is needed in order to identify what to analyse, how to analyse it and why it should be analysed. Hence, this calls for systematic techniques that need to be applied so as to examine, group, tabulate and, where possible, recombine the facts in order to arrive at a meaningful conclusion. In this regard, it follows that this study employed two analytical approaches namely, quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques.

3.8.1   Quantitative data analysis

According to Rubin and Babbie (2005:552) in de Voss, *et al.* (2014:249), quantitative data analysis can be regarded as a technique by which researchers convert data to a numerical form and subject it to statistical analysis. Engel and Schutt, (2013:371) support the above view, stating that statistics play a key role in achieving valid research results in terms of measurement, causal validity, and generalisability. Some statistics are used to describe the results of measuring single variables. These statistics include frequency distributions, graphs, measures of central tendency, and variation.

The original Likert scale use a series of questions with five response alternatives: Agree, Strongly Agree, Uncertain, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. In order to produce the valid and reliable data from the questionnaires, the 5-Likert scale system was used for the analysis of the quantitative data to achieve the intended objective of the study. (Mavuso, 2015:7).

3.8.2 Qualitative data analysis

Qualitative data analysis is the interpretation and classification of linguistic (or visual) material with the following aim: to make statements about implicit and explicit dimensions and structures of meaning made in the material and what is represented in it. Meaning making can refer to subjective or social meanings. Often qualitative data analysis combines rough analysis of the material (overviews, condensation, summaries) with detailed analysis (development of categories or hermeneutic interpretations). Often the final aim is to arrive at statements that can be generalised in one way or the other by comparing various materials or various texts, or several cases (Denzine, Bryman & Gubrium, 2014:370).

Creswell (2007:150-155) attests to the above view, that the process of data analysis and interpretation can best be represented by a spiral image - a data analysis spiral. The researcher moves in analytic circles rather than using a fixed linear approach. One enters with data made up of text or images (for example, photographs and videotapes) and exits with an account or a narrative. In between, the researcher touches on several facets of analysis, circling around and upwards 'towards' completion of the process. To achieve this process the researcher will classify the data into themes, code, transcribe, translate and interpret qualitative data collected by means of the interview schedule.

3.9   VALIDITY AND RELIABILTY

The research data collection tool of this study must be valid and reliable.

3.9.1 Validity

The validity of the measure refers to the adequacy of the method of measurement - how well does it measure the characteristic that the investigator wants to measure? (Abramson & Abramson, 2008: 161). To support the above statement, for quantitative data the researcher will call the participants to one place where they will be given the questionnaire to complete, while the researcher will be monitoring and supervising the process, so as to make sure that the instrument is valid. For the qualitative data the researcher will make an appointment with the individuals where they will be interviewed while the researcher will be making sure that the information

that is received is valid. To achieve this process the researcher has explained the importance of the interview so as to get valid information.

3.9.2 Reliability

Abramson and Abramson (2008: 151) refer to the stability or consistency of information, i.e. the extent to which similar information is obtained when a measurement is performed more than once. We may be concerned either with the reliability of the information obtained about a particular variable, or with the reliability of a specific measurement procedure or a specific observer. To maintain the reliability of the instrument, the participants filled the questionnaire out in order to maintain the reliability of the instrument during the collection of the quantitative data. The researcher interviewed the participants with semi- structured questions. To maintain the reliability of the instrument during the interviewing process, all the questions that the researcher asked the managers of the OTP were the same so as to maintain the reliability of the instrument process.

3.10   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

De Vos, *et al.* (2011:113), state that the research should be based on mutual trust, acceptance, cooperation, promises and well-accepted conventions and expectations between all parties involved in a research project. To support this definition the researcher ensured that ethical standards were maintained throughout the study.

3.10.1 Ethical clearance

The researcher obtained ethical clearance from the University's Research Ethics Committee (REC) (in the case where the study involved human subjects).

3.10.2 Informed consent and voluntary participation

A consent form was completed by participants. Permission was obtained from each participant and they were also made aware of the fact that participation in the survey was not compulsory.

The right to anonymity by participants was guaranteed as the information gathered was not used further to possibly harm participants and the information gathered was used only for research and academic purposes.

3.10.3 Privacy, confidentiality and no harm

The researcher avoided emotional harm to participants during the interview. Confidential information was not divulged to other people since the information gathered was for research purposes only. The names of the individuals and companies were not divulged to people, this was done to maintain the confidentiality of the research.

3.10.4 Fair selection of participants

The researcher used stratified random sampling to select the participants for the study. This was done by selecting everyone who was experienced in skill development programmes.

3.10.5 Permission to conduct research

The researcher obtained permission from the Director-General of the OTP Mpumalanga, to conduct the study **(see Annexure**.

3.10.6 Data Integrity and Safe Storage

Results and findings of the study were treated as confidential as possible and were kept in a lockable safe that was only accessible to the researcher.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter three presented the research design and methodology which also included appropriate data collection methods. The primary focus of this chapter is to present the findings and to analyse the research data obtained. The analysis is based on the research data collected through imperial investigation and semi-structured interviews. This chapter presents the discussion of the results and interpretations of the findings. This process was done to achieve the intended objectives of the study. Data derived from 50 respondents who were asked to answer the questionnaires related to the implementation of skills development programmes. This data was also augmented by means of responses obtained from semi-structured interviews. This process was done to gain a deeper understanding of the respondents towards skills development programmes. This was done to achieve the objectives and to answer the research questions stated in chapter one. In the next section, the researcher discusses the processes used to collect and analyse the data.

4.2 DATA COLLECTION

According to Bless, *et al.* (2013:184) data can be classified according to the way in which it is collected in terms of its intrinsic properties. When a researcher collects their own data for the purpose of a particular study, that data is called primary study data. For this study the researcher used primary data, to collected data from the Officials within the Office of the Premier (OTP).

The data collection process took place during October 2017. The sample consisted of 70 employees within the OTP, which included Management and other lower levels. A total number of 50 employees were asked to complete questionnaires. This process was done to collect quantitative data. Qhosola (2011:54) contended that a questionnaire is a popular method for collecting data because it is cheaper and less time-consuming than other methods, and can be distributed to get information from a

very large sample. To supplement the above data, an interview was also done to collect qualitative data from 20 managers who are acquainted with skills development programmes in the OTP. The above research process assisted the researcher to analyse data in the next section.

4.3 DATA ANALYSIS

According to de Vos, *et al.* (2011:254) the simplest form of data analysis is univariate analysis, which means that one variable is analysed, mainly with a view to describing that variable. Basically this means that all the data gathered on that one variable needs to be summarised for easy comprehension and utilisation. To support the above definitions, Rubin and Babbie (2005:552) in in de Vos (2011:249), state that Quantitative Data Analysis can be regarded as a technique by which researchers convert data to a numerical form and subject it to statistical analysis.

To achieve the above process and analyse quantitative data, the researcher used tables, graphs, frequencies, percentages and other related statistical methods to analyse the data collected from 50 participants. For more information see the tables in the next section.

4.3.1 Data analysis through empirical investigation

In Table 4.1 the researcher has analysed and interpreted the data derived from the demographic statistics of the participants. The participants were distributed equally, so as, to avoid gender inequality and to maintain a balance of views in the study.

Table 4.1: Demographic characteristics of participants

Item	Frequency	%
Q.1. What is your gender?		
Female	25	50
Male	25	50
Total Frequency	FX= 50	100

The researcher obtained data from all the respondents requested to participate in the research project. The respondents consisted of fifty (50) officials that are familiar with skills development programmes, that is, twenty five (25) female and twenty five (25) male members. The equal distribution of respondents was done to ensure gender equality in line with the equity policy in South Africa. This policy requires organisations implement 50/50 gender roles within the organisation. This was done to avoid gender domination. Gender equity reduced prejudice and biasness throughout the study. Adherence to the gender policy also assisted the researcher to collect more data from both the male and female participants.

4.3.1.1 *Understanding relevance of the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998) (SDA) in the public service*

In the next table, the researcher checked the level of participants' understanding of the relevancy of the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998) in the Public Service. This process was done to check the effectiveness of the above Act towards the implementation of skills development.

Table 4.2: Showing relevancy of the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998)

Items	F	%
Q.2.Do you understand the relevance of Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998) (SDA) in the Public service?		
Agree	2	4
Strongly Agree	3	6
Disagree	20	40
Strongly Disagree	22	44
Uncertain	3	6
Total Frequency	FX= 50	100

In question two, forty two (84%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Five (10%) of the respondents agreed with the statement, while three (6%) were recorded as uncertain. To achieve the above process the researcher used the Likert scale to check the degree which respondents understood the relevance of the Skills Development Act. From the above analysis, it is evident that the majority of the respondents did not understand the relevance of the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998) (SDA) in the public service hence their disagreement of the statement. Lack of understanding of the Act, can make officials not to see the importance of the implementation skills development programmes in their sphere of operation.

4.3.1.2 *Familiarity with the <u>Skills Development Levies</u>, 1999 (Act 9 of 1999) in the context of the public service*

In figure 4.1, the researcher checked the level of participants' familiarity with the relevancy of the <u>Skill Development Levies Act</u>, 1999 (Act 9 of 1999) in the context of the public service. This process assisted the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of why the Act is not regarded as important during the implementation of skills development programmes.

Figure 4.1. Skills Development Levies Act
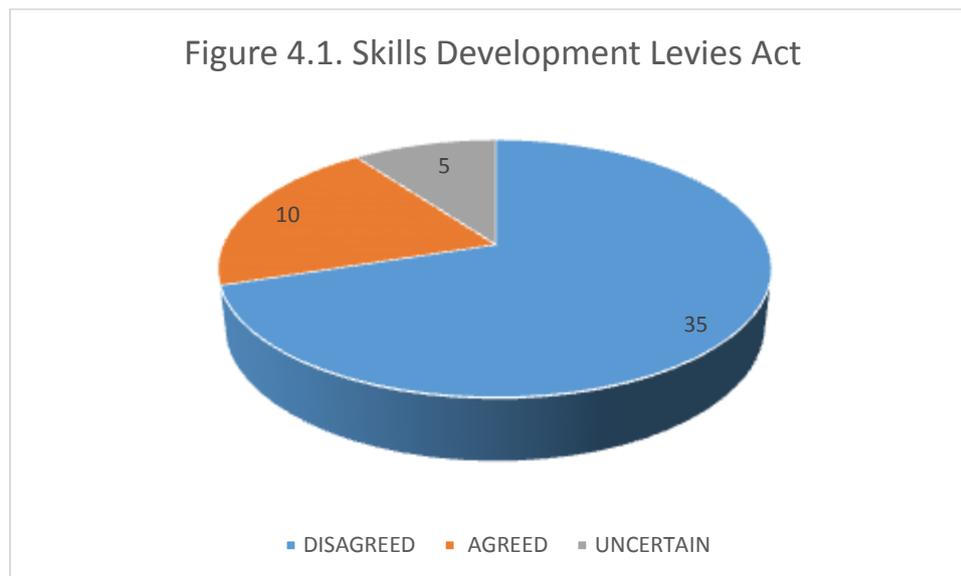
In question 3, thirty five (70%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Ten (20%) of the respondents agreed with the statement. Only five (10%) of the respondents were recorded as uncertain. This analysis assisted the researcher to gain an understanding of the participants' familiarity with the relevance of Skills Development Levies Act. From the above information, it is clear that most of the employees were not familiar with the relevance of the Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999 in the public service. Nkosi (2015:8) attest that most of the Skills Development Training are not successful because of lack of understanding of the Act related to training and development It is evident that a lack of empowerment on the Skills Development Act, discourages employees from attending courses related to their career advancement, hence most of the respondents were not aware of the benefits related to the above Act. A lack of understanding impacts negatively on the implementation of skills development in the area of the study.

4.4.1.3 *Skills development and training needs*

In figure 4.2 the researcher checked the participants' exposure to the manner in which training needs are recorded in the OTP. This was done to evaluate their awareness on how training needs are recorded and its effectiveness for the implementation of skills development in the area of the study.

Figure 4.2. Skills Development & Training Needs
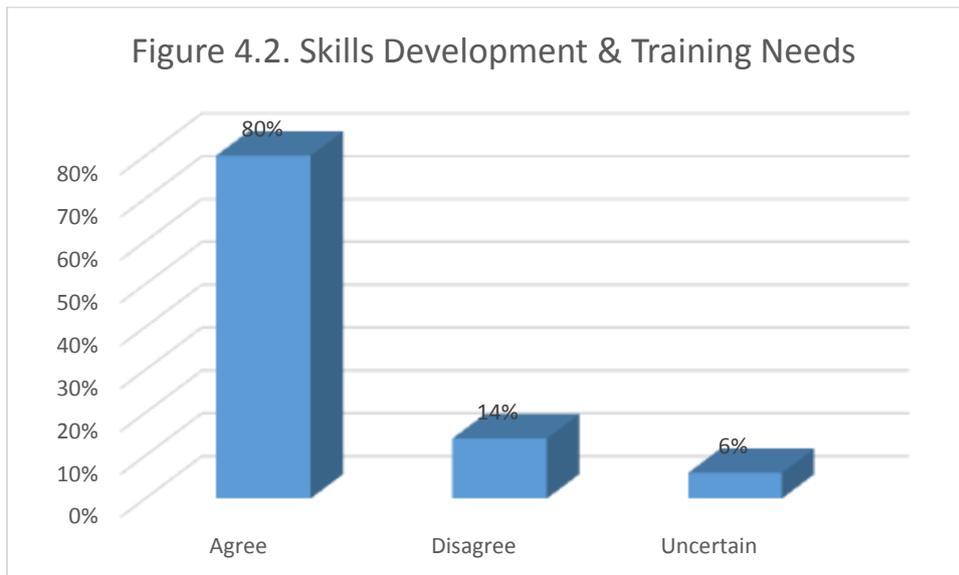
In question 4, forty (80%) of the respondents confirmed that they were exposed to how training needs are conducted in the Office. Seven (14%), of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Only three (6%) of respondents were recorded as uncertain. The above analysis highlighted the participants' understanding on their exposure to the training needs analysis before the implementation of skills development. From the above analysis, it is clear that most of the employees were exposed to the manner in which training needs are conducted in the OTP. The exposure allowed the participants to identify their training needs and their relevancy to day-to-day operations. This process assisted the managers to implement skills development in the OTP.

4.3.1.4 *Skills development and skills audit*

In the next table, the researcher checked whether the participants were subjected to any skills audits. This process assisted the researcher to understand how skills audit can affect the budget during the implementation of skills development programmes in the area of the study.

Table 4.3: Showing information on skills development and skills audit

Items	F	%
Q.5. In your responsibilities within the Premier's Office have you ever been subjected to any skills audit?		
Agree	6	12
Strongly Agree	4	8
Disagree	18	36
Strongly Disagree	20	40
Uncertain	2	4
Total Frequency	FX= 50	100

In question 5, thirty eight (78%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Ten (20%) of the respondents agreed with the statement and only two (4%) of the respondents were recorded as uncertain. The above responses clearly show that the participants were not exposed to skills audits, hence the majority of them disagreed with the statement.

From the above information, it is evident that most employees were not subjected to any form of skills audit. According to Mavuso (2015:10) for supervisor to be successful in skills development, they need to conduct Skills Audit before training. Lack of availability of skills audits may affect the budget negatively with regard to the implementation of skills development in the area of the study. Furthermore, the Human Resource Development (HRD) unit will not be able to identify the gaps and needs amongst the employees; hence the skills audit should be implemented.

4.3.1.5 *Skills development, Performance Management Development System (PMDS) and staff development*

In table 4.4 the researcher checked how the incompletion of annexure 4 of the PMDS affects the implementation of skills development programmes. This process allowed the researcher to gain an understanding of how the Human Resource Development unit uses the training needs to support the implementation of skills development programmes in the OTP.

Table 4.4: Showing information on skills development, PMDS and staff development

Items	F	%
Q.6. Have you completed annexure 4 of the PMDS that relates to staff development programme?		
Agree	3	6
Strongly Agree	5	10
Disagree	25	50
Strongly Disagree	15	30
Uncertain	2	4
Total Frequency	FX= 50	100

In question 6 forty (80%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement, eight (16%) of the respondents agreed with the statement, and only two (4%) of them were recorded as uncertain. This disagreement by the majority of the respondents shows that most of them were not interested in completing annexure 4 of the PMDS because of their negative attitude towards the process.

From the above analysis, it is clear that the most of the respondents did not complete annexure 4 of the PMDS that relates to staff development programmes. A lack of completion of annexure 4 did not allow the Human Resource and Development unit to be able to see the training needs, hence it is difficult to implement skills development programmes in the OTP.

4.3.1.6 *Skills development, training courses and objectives*

Q: 7. Do you believe that the departmental training courses are aligned with departmental objectives and goals of the Office of the Premier?

In figure 4.3., the researcher checked the alignment of the training courses with the objectives and goals of the OTP. This was done to ascertain effectiveness of the implementation of skills development programmes.

Figure 4.3. Skills Development ,Training & Objectives
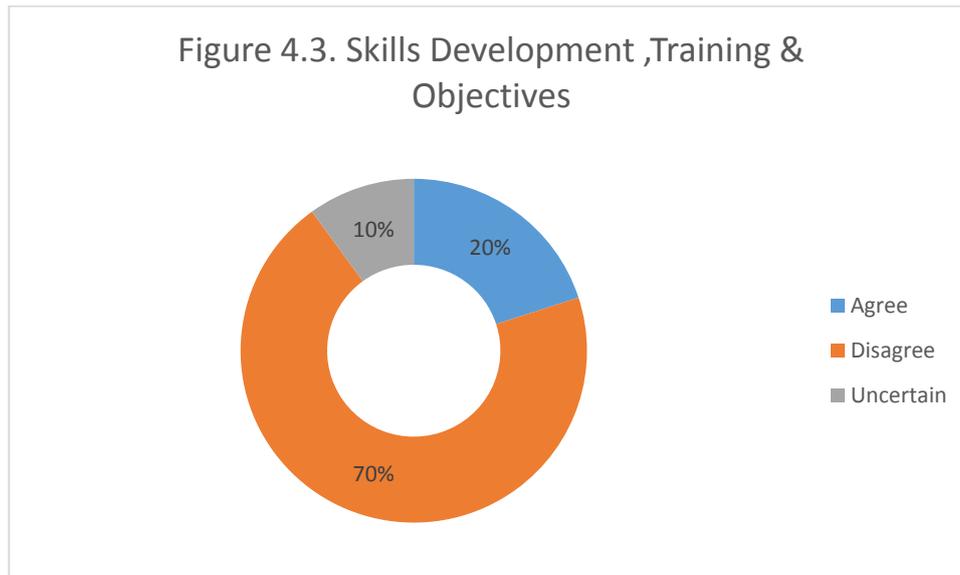
In question 7, thirty five (70%) of the respondents disagreed that the departmental training courses were not aligned with the objectives and goals of the Office of the Premier. Ten (20%) of the respondents agreed with the statement, and only five (10) of the respondents were recorded as unsure. The contradiction between the alignment of objectives and goals and the implementation of skills development in the OTP can hinder the implementation. From the above findings, it is clear that the majority of the respondents believed that the departmental training courses were not aligned with the departmental objectives and goals. A lack of alignment can cause misunderstandings amongst stakeholders during the implementation of skills development programmes in the area the study.

4.3.1.7 *Skills development and supervisors*

In the next table, the researcher checked if supervisors allowed employees to attend skills development programmes. This process assisted the researcher to have a deeper understanding of the relationship that the supervisors have with their employees during the implementation of skills development programmes.

Table 4.5: Showing information on skills development and supervision

| Items	F	%
Q, 8. Does your supervisor allow you to attend skills development programmes?		
Agree	3	6
Strongly Agree	5	10
Disagree	20	40
Strongly Disagree	10	20
Uncertain	2	4
Total Frequency	FX= 50	100

In question 8, thirty (60%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Only eight (16%) of the respondents agreed with the statement, while two (4%) of them were recorded as uncertain. The majority of the people who were not allowed to attend skills development programmes were likely to be reluctant to implement the programme. From the above information, it is evident that most of the respondents confirmed that their supervisor did not allow them to attend training courses related to skills development. These anomalies have caused misunderstandings between their immediate supervisor and employees during the implementation of skills development programmes. The misunderstandings can also cause contradictions during the implementation of skills in the OTP.

4.3.1.8 *Skills development and participation*

In figure 4.4 the researcher checked the participants' level of participation in skills development programmes in the past 12 months. This process assisted the researcher to see how a lack participation can affect the implementation of skills development in the OTP.

Figure 4.4. Skills Development, training and duration
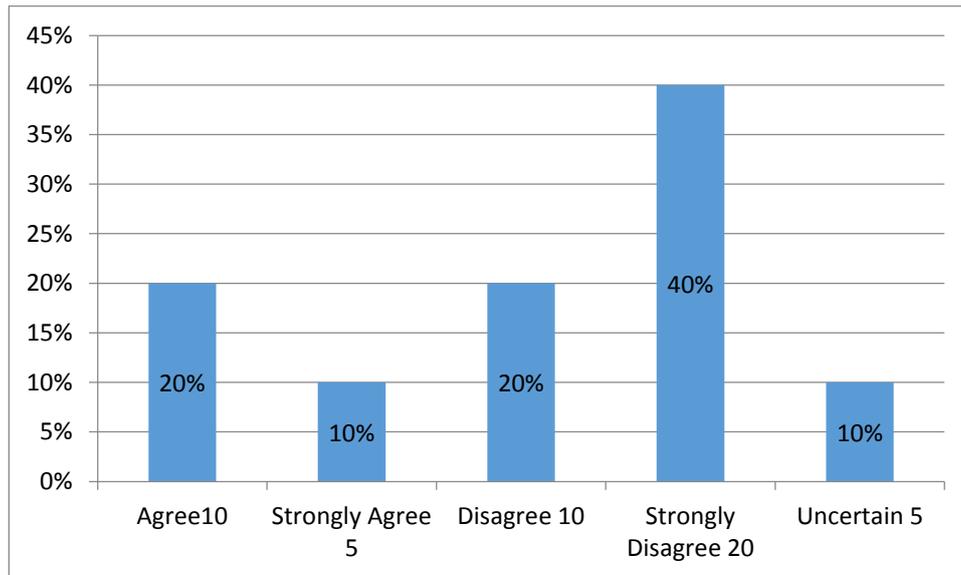
In question 9, thirty (60%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Only fifteen (30%) of the respondents agreed with the statement, while five (10%) of respondents were recorded as uncertain. The above responses clearly show that most of the respondents did not participate in any skills development programmes within the previous 12 months. Lack of participation can hamper the implementation of the skills development programme. From the above findings, it is clear that most of the respondents claimed that they did not attend training in the past 12 months. Inadequate training can result in incompetency and lack of performance during the implementation of skills development in the area of the study.

4.3.1.9 *Skills development and opportunities*

In the next table, the researcher checked whether the participants were given an opportunity to utilise the skills acquired during training. This process assisted the researcher to understand how unutilised skills can negatively affect the implementation of skills development programmes in the area of the study.

Table 4.6: Showing information on skills development and opportunities

Items	F	%
Q.10, Do you believe that your line manager often provides you with an opportunity to utilise the skills acquired during the training?		
Agree	3	6
Strongly Agree	7	14
Disagree	22	44
Strongly Disagree	10	20
Uncertain	8	16
Total Frequency	FX= 50	100

In question 10, thirty two (64%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Only ten (20%) of the respondents agreed with the statement and eight (16%) of the respondents were recorded as uncertain. The lack of utilisation of skills can make some of the employees redundant and cause them to move to other sectors where they will be allowed to implement their acquired skills. From the above analysis, it is clear that most of the employees were often not provided with an opportunity to utilise the skills acquired during the training by line managers. According to Mawila (2014:9), when employees are not given an opportunity to utilise the acquired skills, the organisation has wasted its financial resources and they cannot be expected to implement any skills programme effectively. From this statement, it is evident that when employees are not given an opportunity to implement what they have learned from the training, it can be a waste of human resources, a lack of implementation and a fruitless expenditure.

4.3.1.10 *Skills development and feedback after training*

In the next table, the researcher checked the level of feedback after training. This process assisted the researcher to understand how a lack of feedback can affect the implementation of skills development programmes in the area of the study.

Table 4.7: Showing information on skills development and feedback after training

Items	F	%
Q.11. Did you receive feedback after your training?		
Agree	6	12
Strongly Agree	5	10
Disagree	11	22
Strongly Disagree	20	40
Uncertain	8	16
Total Frequency	FX= 50	100

In question 11, thirty one (62%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Only elven (22%) of the respondents agreed with the statement, and eight (16%) of the respondents were recorded as uncertain. From the above findings, it is evident that the majority of respondents claimed that no feedback was given after the training. Mavuso (2015:6) argues that constructive feedback can enhance performance and effective implementation of skills development programmes amongst employees. Lack of feedback can demoralize and demotivate the trainees to attend future training.

Apart from the above empirical investigation of quantitative data analysis, the researcher also analysed the qualitative data collected by means of semi-structured interviews from twenty of the participants.

4.3.2 Data obtained through interviews

The data collected through semi-structured interviews was analysed. The researcher got direct responses from twenty respondents who were familiar with the implementation of skills development programmes in the OTP. To achieve this process, the researcher analysed the data obtained from ten female and ten male respondents who had more than ten years' experience in skills development in the area of the study. The equal distribution of gender was to adhere to gender equality and equity policies in the Province. The responses from the interviewees were derived from the following responses:

4.3.2.1 S*kills development, advancement and future path*.

Out of twenty managers interviewed, sixteen of the respondents claimed that most of the managers did not gear skills development towards employees' advancement, future path and effective implementation of the programmes. Only four of them agreed with the statement.

Some of them commented that:

> '*I never geared the skills development of the employee's towards their career advancement because of the poor management training programmes I have attended'.*

> '*I feel very disillusioned with the constant change in skills development and human resources development in our organisation'.*

> '*I don't want to attend any skills development training that will not assist me in my future career path and promotion'.*

> '*How do expect me to be excited with skills development training, while the process in not related to my future path'.*

The participants who differed from the above explained that:

> '*I use policy guidelines to gear employee's skills development towards their future career.'*

> *'We need to improvise, so as to, gear our employees towards their career advancement.'*

From the above responses, it is evident that most of the respondents do not want to adhere to skills development and human resource process. Although some of the managers support the idea, a lack of adherence to skills development can hinder the employees in their future career path and impact negatively on the implementation of the programme.

4.3.2.2. *Skills development and relevant resources*

Out of twenty respondents interviewed, eighteen disagreed that they were provided with the relevant resources to support skills development programmes. Only two of them agreed with the statement.

Some of the comments included:
> 'We *were given the resources but they are not relevant to develop employees in their career path'.*

> *'I have been involved in skills development for the past ten years but up to now I don't remember when I was requested to attend training on the use of technology towards the advancement of employees'.*

> *'We were given irrelevant resources by the Department, hence poor implementation skills development in the OTP.'*

> *'I don't blame the managers, if they don't implement skills development successfully, is due to lack of relevant resources.'*

The participants who had a different perspective from the above illustrated that:
> *'I don't wait for government to give me resources, I just use my experience to implement skills development in sphere of operation'.*

> *'I requested the other agencies to assist me with the resources, hence the implementation of skills development is successful'.*

From the above responses it is evident that most of the respondents were not enabled and given relevant resources to enhance employees' career development. Lack of relevant resources can demotivate managers to implement effective training and skills development programmes as required by the Act. From the other two respondents, it is clear that managers can also succeed in the implementation of skills development programmes if they are able to collaborate with other agencies.

4.3.2.3. *Skills development and clarity of policy*

Out of twenty managers interviewed, fifteen of the respondents claimed that policy guidelines were not clarified before implementation by the employees. Three of them agreed with the statement while two of the respondents were recorded as unsure.

Some of the respondents remarked that:

> '*The implementation of policies depends on the clarification of guidelines to the officials before execution and implementation".*

> '*I can't perform the way I want because of lack of clarity on policy guidelines'.*

> '*The main obstacle that we have during the implementation of skills development is the misinterpretation of human resources policies'.*

> '*Lack of clarity on policy guidelines has misled us during the implementation of skills development in the area of the study'.*

The participants who held a conflicting view from the above indicated that:

> '*I took my own imitative to learn on how policy guidelines should be used towards the implementation of skills development in the area of the study.'*
> '*Do not ask me about policies because I am just a junior manager in that regards'.*

From the above responses, it clear that most of the policies related to skills development were not clarified before implementation. However, three of the respondents agreed with the statement, the issue of clarification also needs to be

taken into consideration for the effective implementation of skills development in the area of the study.

4.3.2.4. *Skills development, training and impact assessment*

Out of the twenty respondents interviewed, nineteen of them confirmed that there is no tool to conduct an impact assessment with employees. Only one of them had a different view in this regard.

These were some of responses from the managers on the challenges they face:

> *'How can you expect me to conduct impact assessment whereas no one trained me in this regards."*

> *'Lack of training experts and assessment tool hamper the effective implementation of skills development in our organisation'.*

> *'I think the issue of impact assessment should belong to HRD unit not to managers, hence I don't see a need to know it'.*

> *'I think HRD should develop an assessment tool, so as to assist us to implement skills development programme'.*

> *'Most of the managers are failing to conduct impact assessment because of lack of relevant tool in the OTP'.*

The participant who disagreed with the above comments illustrated that:

> *'Before I join the Office of the Premier's I was conducting impact assessment in my previous employer'.*

From the above responses, it is evident that most of the managers are not trained on how to conduct impact assessments, hence, poor implementation of skills development programmes in the area of the study. The other employee who claimed to know the above process was trained to conduct impact assessments by another employer. This respondent cannot make an impact on the implementation of skills development programmes, if they are the only one who know the process. More of

their kind are needed, so as to enhance the implementation of skills development in the OTP.

4.3.2.5. *Skills development, implementation and alternative strategies*
Out of twenty respondents interviewed, seventeen of them believed that a lack of alternative strategies hinders the implementation of policies related to skills development. However three of them believed that something can be done to implement skills development without alternative strategies.

Some of them commented that:

> *'It is not possible to improve the skills development of employees without alternatives strategy that are meant to enhance implementation of skills development'.*

> '*Without an alternative strategy, there is no manager who can implement skills development programmes'.*

> *'Our senior managers do not have an alternative strategies, hence poor implementation of skills development in office'.*

> *'The availability of alternative strategies can always assist the managers to implement the skills development in the area of the study'.*

The participants who are contrary to the above comments demonstrated that:

> *'I cannot wait for an alternative strategies to implement skills development, where's there is a policy framework and Acts for skills development'.*

> *'An alternative strategy will not change the Acts that we have in skills HRD, hence I cannot wait for it to implement the programme'.*

From the above responses it clear that there were no alternative strategies developed to improve and implement skills development. A lack of alternative strategies can impact negatively on the implementation of skills development

programmes and employees' performance in the OTP. This idea was disputed by three respondents who acted against the statement.

4.4. ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS

The effectiveness of the implementation of skills development is influenced by many challenges and factors. Challenges such as a lack of understanding of the relevance of the <u>Skills Development Act</u> ,1998 (Act 97 of 199) (SDA), unfamiliarity with the relevance of the <u>Skills Development Levies Act,</u>1999 (Act 9 of 1999), a lack of exposure to the manner in which training needs are conducted, inadequate skills audits, incompletion of annexure 4, a lack of alignment, a lack performance, inadequate utilisation of acquired skills and other related issues were regarded by respondents as the main challenges facing the implementation of skills development programmes in the area of the study.

From the above information is evident that there are many challenges that hamper\ the implementation of skills development. However some of these were rank from 80% to 90% and need urgent attention. From the quantitative data, it is clear that 80% and 84% of respondents who claimed that a lack of understanding and familiarity of both the <u>Skills Development Act</u> and <u>Levies Act</u> hinders the implementation of skills development programmes. 80% of the respondents also regarded the incompletion of annexure 4 and a lack of alignment between training courses and departmental objectives as some of the main challenges that hinder the implementation of skills development programmes in the OTP.

To enhance the above findings, responses from the interviewees also revealed that some of the obstacles that hinder the implementation of skills development. These challenges range from sixteen to nineteen out of twenty and also need special attention. Eighteen and nineteen out of twenty raised the issue of the inadequacy and irrelevance of resources towards future advancement and a lack of impact assessments after training are also regarded as main problems in the implementation of skills development programmes.

From the above findings, it is evident that there are four main challenges that need urgent attention, namely: the lack of impact assessments after training, the provision

of relevant resources to support skills development, clarity on the Skills Development Acts and the lack of alignment between training and departmental objectives. The above findings call for the OTP to pay urgent attention to these issues, so as to enable the HRD unit to implement skills development in the area of the study.

4.5. SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the implementation of skills development in the OTP. The factors that prohibit skills development have been identified and discussed in full in this chapter. This was done to answer the research questions stated in chapter one. Challenges such as a lack of understanding of the Skills Development Act, the Skills Levies Act, lack of exposure to training needs, inadequate alignment of training courses and objectives, a lack of participation in skills programmes and other related issues were analysed in this chapter.

In the next chapter, an introduction, overview, findings, recommendations and conclusion of the study are presented.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter four the researcher analysed and discussed the implementation of skills development programmes in the Office of the Premier (OTP). This chapter presents the summary of findings, recommendations, future research, conclusions and limitations of the study. This study was guided by the following objectives stated in chapter one:

1. To examine the procedure for implementing a skills development programme in the Office of the Premier in the Mpumalanga Province, and

2. To determine the necessary skills required for enhancing performance in the Office of the Premier in the Mpumalanga Province.

In the next section, the summary of the findings are outlined and discussed against the objectives stated in chapter one.

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In chapter one an orientation to the background problem of the study was presented. From the literature review, it is evident that skills development programmes have a positive impact on the performance of employees as discussed in chapter two. In chapter three the researcher described the research methodology, designs, and techniques that were used to collect and analyse the data in chapter 4. The findings and recommendations outlined in this chapter are discussed against the objectives in chapter 1. The discussion of the above chapters was based on the objectives and research questions stated in the study.

Objective 1: To examine the procedure for implementing a skills development programme in the Office of the Premier in the Mpumalanga Province.

To achieve this objective the researcher checked the participants' level of understanding and familiarity of the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998), Skills Levies Act, 1999 (Act 9 of 1999), skills audit and clarity of policies. In this

objective it was found that, the majority of the respondents believed that a lack of understanding of <u>Skills Development Act</u>, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998, <u>Skills Levies Act</u>, 1999 (Act 9 of 1999), skills audit and inadequate clarity of policies hampers the implementation of skills development in the OTP. In order to achieve the above objectives, Human Resource Development (HRD) officials should be encouraged to empower employees with information related to the <u>Skills Development Act</u> ,1998 (Act 97 of 1998) and <u>Skills Levies Act,</u> (Act 9 of 1999). This process may assist employees to understand skills development within the parameters of a legal framework. A clarity of policies and the skills audit are also needed to enhance skills development in the area of the study.

Objective 2: To determine the necessary skills required for enhancing performance in the Office of the Premier in the Mpumalanga Province.

For the researcher to achieve the above objective, the necessary skills that are required to determine the performance of employees were verified. The employees revealed that there was a lack of alignment between Skills Development, training needs, objectives, and training courses. Furthermore, the majority of the respondents also believed that a lack of completion of forms related to staff development, a refusal of permission from supervisors for employees to participate in training courses, and a refusal to give employees opportunities to utilise the skills acquired during training were some of the challenges that impact negatively on skills development.

In this section the findings were obtained from the managers through interviews. To support the findings against the above objective, the researcher also checked the deeper understanding of the managers on issues related to the adherence of skills development towards career advancement, availability of relevant resources, clarity of policies, impact assessments, clear career path and alternative strategies. From these objectives, it was found that the majority of the respondents believed that a lack adherence to skills development, availability of relevant resources, a lack clarity of policies, inadequate career path advancement, and a lack of training on impact assessments and unavailability of alternative strategies.

To solve the above challenges, the OTP should encourage the managers to adhere to skills development, to check the availability of relevant resources, train their employees on impact assessments and to develop relevant alternatives towards the implementation of skills development.

5.3 RECOMMENDATION OF THE STUDY

On the basis of the findings from the primary data (empirical research and semi-structured interviews), the following motivated recommendations are made:

5.3.1 Human Resource Development (HRD) Legislations, Regulations, Acts of Parliament and Implementations.

The implementation of skills development programmes depends on the understanding of relevant legislation and related Acts that are meant to enhance the process. For officials to implement the above process, they should be encouraged to empower their employees with issues related to the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998) and Skills Development Levies Act, 1998 (Act 9 of 1999). To enhance this process, the OTP should also be encouraged to compel all managers to adhere to the Skills Development Act and human resource process. This process can assist employees to understand skills development and its implementation within the legal perspective.

5.3.2 Human Resource Development, Skills Training and Implementation

For officials to enhance the above process, they must be aware of skills training needs before the implementation. This process can be achieved, if HRD officials can be encouraged to align the departmental objectives with the training courses.

5.3.3 Human Resource Development, Feedback, Opportunity, practice, and Implementation

The implementation of skills development depends on the feedback and opportunities to practice after training. The trainees should be allowed to give feedback and have an opportunity to utilise the knowledge that they have gained from the training course or workshop. To enhance the above process, the managers should make sure that all employees who have attended training should write a

report to give feedback about what they have learnt from the training. Furthermore, the trainees should be also allowed to apply the knowledge that they have gained from the training. This process can enhance the organisational development and human career advancement.

5.3.4 Human Resource Development Impact Assessment on Skills Development and Implementation

The impact assessment process is meant to check the impact of training on employees' performance. The managers should be requested to conduct an evaluation of employee's performance, so as to see the impact made by training. To achieve this process, therefore, the HRD unit should be encouraged to provide a relevant tool to conduct an impact assessment in the area of the study

5.3.5 Human Resource Development, Policy Guidelines and Implementation

HRD's effective implementation relies on the relevance of policy guidelines. The HRD unit should be governed and directed by Government policies, so as to enhance the implementation of skills development programmes. To achieve, this process, the managers in the HRD unit should be encouraged to clarify policy guidelines to officials before the implementations of skills development programmes in the area of the study.

5.3.6 Human Resource Development Alternative Strategies

The success of the implementation of the HRD skills development programmes depends on the effective strategies that the unit is employing. If the strategy is not effective, the HRD unit needs to develop an alternative one, so as to enhance the process. To achieve this process, the senior managers should be encouraged to develop alternative strategies that may assist the managers to implement skills development programmes in the OTP in Mpumalanga.

From the above recommendations it is clear that there's an alignment between the findings and objectives stated in this study. This alignment was shown when the researcher discussed the relationship between the findings and objectives. The responses and the results derived from the respondents have assisted the researcher to achieve the intended objectives of the study.

5.4 FUTURE RESEARCH

All research studies are meant to suggest further research because there is no research which is complete in itself. For future research studies to have an impact on human resource skills development, the researchers must look at various related issues related. Challenges such as the impact related to motivation and skills development may be looked at. Furthermore, the role of HRD and financial management that impacts on skills development should also be investigated in future research. To achieve the above future research processes, the researcher is suggesting the following topics for further research:

5.4.1 Exploring the impact of skills development programme on employee performance.

In this topic, the researchers may investigate the relationship between skills development programmes and employees' performance. The outcome of the research may assist the organisation to understand the impact of skills development on employees' performance.

5.4.2 The impact of motivation towards the implementation of skills development programmes.

The research on the above topic, may assist the organisation to understand the impact of motivation on the implementation of skills development programmes. For the researchers to achieve the intended objectives of this study, they may need to conduct both an empirical investigation and interviews to collect relevant data for the study. The findings and recommendations from this study may also enhance the implementation of skills development in the proposed research area.

5.4.3 The role of financial resources in the management of skills development programmes.

To achieve the objective of this research, the future studies may investigate the role of financial resources on the management of skills development. The outcome of this research may assist the departments to budget more funds to enhance the management of skills development in the area of research.

5.4.4 The role HRD on the implementation of skills development programmes.

The effective implementation of skills development depends on the role of the HRD unit in managing the process. This process needs qualified managers in the HRD unit to enhance effective implementation. The findings and recommendations of this study may assist the managers in the departments to enhance their employees' skills development and performance in the public sector.

5.5. CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to investigate the implementation of skills development programme in the OTP. This process depends on the way public servants implement skills development programmes in the public service. The effectiveness of the implementation requires public officials to adhere to the <u>Skills Development Act</u>, <u>Levies Act</u>, understanding of training needs, skills audit, Performance Management Development System (PMDS), effective staff development, adequate skills programmes, alignment of objectives, qualified supervisors, effective participation, career opportunities, good feedback and evaluation of training programmes.

The researcher employed a mixed method approach to collect quantitative data from fifty employees and to obtain qualitative data from twenty managers from the OTP. The researcher used questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to collect relevant data from the above participants. To enhance this process, the researcher employed stratified random sampling to select the participants in the study. In this research it was found that, the majority of the respondents believed that a lack of understanding of the <u>Skills Development Act</u>, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998), <u>Skills Levies Act</u>, 1999 (Act 9 of 1999), skills audit and inadequate clarity of policies hamper the implementation of skills development in the OTP.

Despite the challenges stated in this research, there are benefits such as skills development programmes, career advancement and other related skills that assist employees to improve the quality of service delivery in the OTP.

In this section, it was also found that a lack of alignment between skills development, training needs, objectives, and training courses. Furthermore, the majority of the

respondents also believed that a lack of completion of forms related staff development, refusal of giving permission by supervisors for employees to participate in training courses, and refusal to give employees opportunity to utilise the skills acquired during training were some of the challenges that impact negatively on skills development.

The above challenges calls for stakeholders to look upon the researcher's findings and recommendations, so as to assist the Human Resources Development unit to implement and enhance skills development in the area of the study. It is now the responsibility of the stakeholders to consider the recommendations of the study, as possible ways to improve the management and the implementation of skills development programmes.

5.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research focuses on the implementation of skills development programmes in the OTP, within the Mpumalanga Provincial Government as described in the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998),. The fact that the study focuses on the public sector specifically on the OTP is a limitation. The findings cannot be generalised across all government departments or the private sector. Furthermore, the limitations were also caused by the negative attitude displayed by some of the participants during the research process. Negative attitudes restrain the researcher from asking more questions during the interviews. Lastly, the researcher did not manage to reach all the officials targeted by the study, due the vastness of the area and time constraints. However, the researcher managed to achieve the intended objective of the study.

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ANNEXURE 1

Dear Respondent

I am currently a student at the University of Limpopo studying towards a Master's degree in Public Administration. The topic for my research is titled: 'Implementing skills development programme in the public service: a case of the Office of the Premier'. You are therefore requested to provide your honest opinion in answering the following questions below where there is no wrong or correct answer. The purpose of this interview questions is to solicit your response about skills development issues in the Office of the Premier.

It is necessary to bear in mind that you are voluntarily agreeing to participate in this interview and may withdraw at any given time should you feel that your rights are infringed in the process.

PART ONE: Biographical information

Instructions: Please tick the appropriate block of your preferred answer.

Gender

Female	
Male	

Age group

Below 25 years	
Between 25 – 35 years	
Between 36 - 45 years	
Between 46 – 55 years	
Between 56 – 65 years	
Above 65	

Marital status

Single	
Married	
Divorced	
Widowed	

Race

Black	
White	
Coloured	
Indian	
Other (specify)	

Highest educational qualification

Less than grade 12	
Grade 12	
Grade 12 plus Certificate (s)	
Diploma	
Bachelor's Degree	
Post-graduate	
Master's degree	
Doctorate	

Work experience

1-5 years	
6 – 10 years	
11 – 15 years	
16 – 20 years	
21 – 25 years	
26 – 30 years	
31 – 35 years	
36 – 40 years	
40 years and above	

 Please state your level of opinion for each given statement using the following scales:

Strongly disagree (**poor)**   disagree (**not good)** not sure   agree (**good)** strongly agree (**excellent)**

Please mark the applicable box with an X

Do you understand the relevance of Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 (SDA) in the Public service?

Strongly disagree	disagree	not sure	agree	strongly agree

Do you understand the relevance of Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999 in the context of the public service?

Strongly disagree	disagree	not sure	agree	strongly agree

Have you been exposed to the manner in which training needs of your Office are recorded?

Strongly disagree	disagree	not sure	agree	strongly agree

In your responsibilities within the Premier's Office have you ever been subjected to any training needs/ skills audit?

Strongly disagree	disagree	not sure	agree	strongly agree

Have you completed annexure 4 of the PMDS that relates to staff development programme?

Strongly disagree	disagree	not sure	agree	strongly agree

Do you believe that the departmental training courses are aligned with departmental objectives and goals of the Office of the Premier?

Strongly disagree	disagree	not sure	agree	strongly agree

Does your supervisor allow you to attend skills development programmes?

Strongly disagree	disagree	not sure	agree	strongly agree

Have you participated in a skills programmes in the past 12 months?

Strongly disagree	disagree	not sure	agree	strongly agree

Did you receive evaluation forms after your training?

Strongly disagree	disagree	not sure	agree	strongly agree

Have you received formal feedback after training courses in the form of assessments outcomes?

Strongly disagree	disagree	not sure	agree	strongly agree

Do you believe that your line manager often provides you with an opportunity to utilise the skills acquired during the training?

Strongly disagree	disagree	not sure	agree	strongly agree

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

ANNEXURE 2

Dear Respondent

I am currently a student at the University of Limpopo studying towards a Master's degree in Public Administration. The topic for my research is titled: 'Implementing skills development programme in the public service: a case of the office of the Premier'. You are therefore requested to provide your honest opinion in answering the following questions below where there is no wrong or correct answer. The purpose of this interview questions is to solicit your response about skills development issues in the Office of the Premier.

It is necessary to bear in mind that you are voluntarily agreeing to participate in this interview and may withdraw at any given time should you feel that your rights are infringed in the process.

PART ONE (1)

Biographical information
Instructions: Please tick the appropriate block of your preferred answer

Gender
Female
Male

Age group

Below 25 years	
Between 25 – 35 years	
Between 36 - 45 years	
Between 46 – 55 years	
Between 56 – 65 years	
Above 65	

Marital status

Single	
Married	
Divorced	
Widowed	

Race

Black	
White	
Coloured	
Indian	
Other (specify)	

Highest educational qualification

Less than grade 12	
Grade 12	
Grade 12 plus Certificate (s)	
Diploma	
Bachelor's Degree	
Post-graduate	
Master's degree	
Doctorate	

Work experience

1-5 years	
6 – 10 years	
11 – 15 years	
16 – 20 years	
21 – 25 years	
26 – 30 years	
31 – 35 years	
36 – 40 years	
40 years and above	

Interview questionnaires for Managers within the Office of the Premier.

Do you think skills development can improve the future's performance of the employee in your organisation?

_____

_____

_____

- Does lack of resources have an impact on skills development in the Office of the Premier?

_____

_____

_____

- Does lack of clarity on policies ,negatively affect skills development in the Office of the Premier

_____

_____

_____

- Does lack of Impact assessment after training affect skills development in your Section?

_____

_____

_____

- Do lack alternative strategies on skills develop affect the career path of the employee?

_____

_____

_____

office of the premier
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

No 7 Government Boulevard Riverside Park, Ext 2, Mbombela, 1200, Mpumalanga Province.
Private Bag X 11291 Nelspruit, 1200
Tel: +27 (0) 13 766 0000, fax: +27 13 766 0000

Lihovisi la Ndvunankhulu

I-Ofisi Lika Ndunankulu

Kantoor van die Premier

MEMORANDUM

TO   :   **Mr T MDAKANE**
                 DIRECTOR-GENERAL: OFFICE OF THE PREMIER OF
                 MPUMALANGA

FROM   :   **Mr P J JIYANE**
                 SENIOR MANAGER: INTERNAL HRM
                 AND DEVELOPMENTS

SUBJECT :   **REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE**
                 OFFICE OF THE PREMIER: MS. LINDIWE MATHE.

The Internal Human Resource Management and Development (IHRM&D) Unit hereby requests the Director-General's approval for Ms Lindiwe Mathe to conduct a study in the Office of the Premier. Ms Mathe is employed as a Skills Development Facilitator (SDF) responsible for staff development in the Office of the Premier. In performing these functions she needs to be knowledgeable with all changes in relevant legislations and latest human capital developments trends.

Ms Mathe is currently registered for a Master Degree in Public Administration (MPA) with the University of Limpopo: Turfloop, (Graduate School of Leadership). One of the requirements to complete the programme is to conduct a study or research on the topic that she has identified.

During her tenure in government she has developed an interest in skills development and has therefore chosen a research topic related to her work. The topic is Implementing Skills Development Programme in the Public Service: A case of the Office of the Premier in Mpumalanga Provincial Government. This project will be conducted under the supervision of Professor KG Phago.

The results of the research will be shared with the Office of the Premier. The finding and recommendations of the study will assist the OTP on issues of Skills Development for the betterment of the organisation's performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above background information, the Internal Human Resource Management and Development (IHRM&D) Unit hereby request the Director-General to grant an approval for Ms Mathe to conduct the study within the Office of Premier.

MPUMALANGA
THE PLACE OF THE RISING SUN

Mr PJ JIYANE
SENIOR MANAGER: INTERNAL HRM AND DEVELOPMENTS
DATE: 08/04/2016

SUPPORTED/NOT SUPPORTED
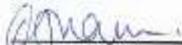
Mr JS DLAMINI
GENERAL MANAGER: STRATEGIC HR SERVICES
DATE: 8/09/2016

RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED
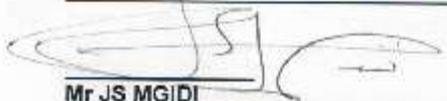
Mr JS MGIDI
DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT
DATE: 2016-09-12

APPROVED/ NOT APPROVED
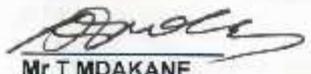
Mr T MDAKANE
DIRECTOR-GENERAL: OFFICE OF THE PREMIER OF MPUMALANGA
DATE: 13/9/2016

2

ANNEXURE 4

CONSENT FORM

Project title: **IMPLEMENTING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE: A CASE OF THE OFFICE OF PREMIER: MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT.**

Project leader: **DR F GANDA**

I, hereby voluntarily consent to participate in the following project: Implementing Skills Development Programme in the Public Service: A Case of the Office of Premier: Mpumalanga Provincial Government.

I understand that:

1. My responses will be treated with confidentiality and only be used for the purpose of the research.
2. No harm will be posed to me.
3. The research project aim has been explained to me.
4. I do not have to respond to any question that I do not wish to answer for any reason.
5. Access to the records that pertain to my participation in the study will be restricted to persons directly involved in the research.
6. Any questions that I may have regarding the research, or related matters, will be answered by the researcher.
7. Participation in this research is entirely voluntary and I can withdraw my participation at any stage.
8. I understood the information regarding my participation in the study and I agree to participate.

_____   _____

Signature of interviewee   **Signature of witness**

_____

Signature of interviewer

Signed at_____ on this _____ day of _____20_____

University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 2212, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email:noko.monene@ul.ac.za

TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS
COMMITTEE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING: 31 August 2017

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/270/2017: PG

PROJECT:

Title: Implementing skills development programme in the public service:
A case of the Office of Premer: Mpumalanga Provincial Government

Researcher: LJ Mathe

Supervisor: Dr F Ganda

Co-Supervisor: N/A

School: Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership

Degree: Masters in Public Administration

PROF TAB MASHEGO
CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

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

Note:
i) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the
researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee.
ii) The budget for the research will be considered separately from the protocol.
PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

Finding solutions for Africa

Kim N Smit Editorial Services

Certification of Editing

26 February 2018

To Whom It May Concern

Re: Certification of Editing –Dissertation

This letter serves to confirm that Lindiwe Mathe submitted a Mini-Dissertation to myself for editing. The Dissertation is entitled, '**IMPLEMENTING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE: A CASE OF THE OFFICE OF PREMIER: MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT.**'

The following aspects were edited:

- Spelling
- Grammar
- Consistency of layout
- Sentence structure
- Logical sequencing
- References

Should you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Kim Smit (078 493 6554)