

**An analysis of the skills development programmes within the context of human
resource development: The case of the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social
Development**

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Master of Public Administration at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West
University**

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DECLARATION

I, Mminawa Hobo (Student Number: 25693115), hereby declare that this mini-dissertation: “An analysis of skills development programmes within the context of human resource development: The case of the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development” submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree, Master of Public Administration, at the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, is my own original work and that all sources used or quoted have been accurately reported and acknowledged by means of complete references, and that this mini-dissertation was not previously in its entirety or partially submitted by me or any other person for degree purposes at this or any other University.

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ABSTRACT

This mini-dissertation investigated the challenging nature of skills development in the South African public service. It explores the implementation of skills development programmes within the context of human resource development in the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development (ECDSD) as a case study.

A qualitative approach was followed since this approach best complemented the nature of the study. The research design included observation, a thorough literature review and semi-structured interviews. Twenty (20) members of the Skills Development Committee of the ECDSD were interviewed to achieve the research objectives of this study. The study found that there are potential opportunities and impediments that must be urgently addressed. This would ensure the proper identification of individual employees' and core departmental competencies. Once these have been identified, the appropriate skills development and human resource development policies and programmes can be implemented, followed by monitoring and reporting on the departmental Workplace Skills Plan and Skills Audit.

Keywords: Analysis, case study, human resources, human resource development, human resource development strategy, public administration, public service, qualitative research, skills development.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASGISA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa
ATR	Annual Training Report
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
ETD	Education, training and development
FASSET	Finance and Accounting Services Sector Education Authority
FET	Further Education and Training
HET	Higher Education and Training
HR	Human Resources
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRIS	Human Resource Information System
HRM	Human Resource Management
HRDS	Human Resource Development Strategy
HCT	Human Capital Theory
JIPSA	Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition
KSA	knowledge, skills and attitudes
MMS	Middle Management Services
MPAT	Management Performance Assessment Tool
MTSF	Medium Term Strategic Framework
NDP	National Development Plan
NPC	National Planning Commission
NQF	National Qualifications Authority
NSA	National Skills Authority
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
NWU	North-West University
OD	Organisational Development
OFO	Organising Framework for Occupations
PIVOTAL	Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning'
PSC	Public Service Commission
PSETA	Public Service Education and Training Authority
PSR	Public Service Regulations

QCTO	Quality Council for Trade and Occupations
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SCM	Supply Chain Management
SDA	Skills Development Act
SDC	Skills Development Committee
SDF	Skills Development Facilitator
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SMS	Senior Management Services
SONA	State of the Nation Address
SSP	Sector Skills Plan
WSP	Workplace Skills Plan
WPPSTE	White Paper on Public Service Training and Education

CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1. INTRODUCTION

There has been significant progress in the transformation of the public service since 1994, particularly in relation to employment equity imperatives as required in terms of the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998. In spite of this, the redistribution of public services to meet the needs of the majority of South Africans still remains a major concern and service delivery often fall short of the quality that is needed. In its introduction, the Public Service Commission, 2011, asserts that there are numerous possible reasons why this is the case, such as the unanimous agreement that the human resource capacity of the public service lags far behind (South Africa, 2011b:2). This has led to a void in terms of the required and much needed skills necessary to address the needs and welfare of society at large, possibly due to lack of human resources and skills development of officials. To achieve the goals and objectives of the state, a capable public service in terms of human resource capacity is needed. This implies staff members that are skilled and proficient to deliver quality public services in a more effective, efficient, economical and sustainable manner.

The public service is a labour intensive employer who is reliant on the quality, skills and performance of its employees to deliver services. In its foreword, the Public Service Commission declares that there is a policy framework in place for human resource development (HRD) in the public service, and it is essential to monitor its implementation to ensure that its intentions are achieved (South Africa, 2011b:vii). It is for this reason that this study endeavoured to analyse the human resource development practices and skills development programmes in the ECDSD.

1.2. BACKGROUND

Thornhill (2013:4) contends that from time immemorial, human beings have not been able to provide for all their needs on their own, therefore they formed communities. Eventually, this led them to establish states. The state in this context is used to refer to a territory with a population that constitutes a society that is independent from and not part of another sovereign state. Such a state has public institutions to maintain law and order, to provide public services for the maintenance of society and to promote the general welfare of the population.

A state should be founded on by a capable public administration. In this regard, Cloete (1995:61) describes public administration as a collection of functions or activities performed by officials employed in public institutions such as state and provincial departments or administrations. Denhardt and Hammond (1992:257) also maintain that skilled personnel who staff public administration are essential to the accomplishment of the effective, efficient and productive execution of the formulated government policies. Schwella, Burger, Fox and Muller (2001:5) further state that public administration is a system of structures and processes operating within a particular society as its environment, with the objective of facilitating the formulation of appropriate legal and legitimate governmental policies and the effective, efficient and productive execution of formulated policies.

Since 1994, various pieces of legislation relating to public service and administration have been promulgated in South Africa (SA). A series of policy initiatives, including legislation aimed at human resource development in the public service, were introduced in South Africa, and their effective implementation is investigated in this study. The Public Service Act 103 of 1994 advocated for the formation of a new foundation for public administration. The White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service, 1995, further propounded the following central goals related to human resources in the public service:

- to create a genuinely representative public service that reflects the major characteristics of South African demography, without eroding efficiency and competence;
- to facilitate the transformation of the attitudes and behaviour of public servants towards a democratic ethos underlined by the overriding importance of human rights;
- to promote the commitment of public servants to the Constitution and national interest, rather than to partisan allegiance and factional interests;
- to assist in creating an integrated yet adequately decentralised public service capable of undertaking both the conventional and developmental tasks of government, as well as responding flexibly, creatively and responsively to the challenges of the change process;
- to promote human resource development and capacity building as a necessary precondition for effective change and institution building;
- to encourage the evolution of effective accountability and transparency in public management processes;

- to upgrade the standards of efficiency and effectiveness and improve the quality of service delivery; and
- to create an enabling environment within the public service in terms of efficiency and stability to facilitate economic growth within the country (South Africa, 1995:6).

Subsequently, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 (from here onwards Constitution) provides for the basic values and principles governing public administration. One of the key principles advocated in the Constitution is that public administration must be development-oriented and accountable. Furthermore, there must be cultivation of good human resource management and career development practices to maximise human potential. In reaffirming the principles of Section 195 of the Constitution (1996), Thornhill (2013:120) maintains that these principles can be realised only if the provisions of the Constitution and other legislation are applied in a way that fosters cultural transformation. The White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995, had already stipulated that the discriminatory effects of the apartheid public service system, coupled with the lack of opportunities for in-service education and training for disadvantaged groups within the public service at that time, had led to a serious problem of human resource capacity (South Africa, 1995:11). The above described circumstances had to be addressed if the public service was to become more representative, while at the same time becoming more efficient and effective. Subsequently, the White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, 1997, was passed to further reinforce and give effect to the provisions of the Public Service Act 103 of 1994. Its goals can be summarised as follows:

- A professional and impartial public service that is representative of all sections of society is essential for efficient and effective government, and the achievement of South Africa's democratic, economic and social goals.
- Transforming the public service into an instrument capable of fulfilling its role in bringing about the new South Africa through the commitment and effectiveness of its employees, who in turn depend on the way in which they are developed and managed.
- Transforming the way human resources are managed would, therefore, be the catalyst for the transformation of the public service itself.
- To provide a policy framework that would facilitate the development of human resource management practices that support an effective and efficient public service, geared for economic and social transformation (White Paper on Human Resource Management, 1997:6-7).

In addition, the government proclaimed the White Paper on Public Service Training and Education (WPPSTE), 1998. In its introduction, the WPPSTE (1998) asserts that it intends to provide a new national strategic policy framework on training and education, and by implication development, for public servants. The white paper intends to contribute positively to the goals of public service transformation. It also aims to bring public service training and education in line with international best practices, current global trends in human resource development and the national strategic policy context.

The government's commitment to guaranteeing the quality of training and education is well demonstrated in the South African Qualifications Authority Act 58 of 1995, the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 and the Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999. This legislation introduces new institutions, programmes and funding policies designed to increase investment in skills development. The alignment of the South African Qualifications Authority Act 58 of 1995 and the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 ensures the promotion of the quality of learning in and for the labour market. These acts also provide organised employers and workers with the responsibility for ensuring the relevance of training and development of human resources, which will enhance the quality of service delivery (Van Dyk *et al.*, 2002:36-37).

The Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 seeks to develop the skills of the South African workforce (private and public), thereby increasing the quality of workers' work life, improving the productivity of the workplace, promoting self-employment and improving the delivery of social services. It seeks to encourage employers to use the workplace as an active learning environment and to provide opportunities for new entrants to the labour market to acquire work experience. The Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 and the Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999 oblige employers to pay 1% of their payroll and to submit documents to the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) on their Workplace Skills Plans (WSP). The WSP is essentially an extraction from the thinking and planning for all the development and performance-focused initiatives that are required to achieve the goals of organisations. It is a valuable strategic tool to provide the organisation with a strategic basis for planning the development of the workforce and that of the organisation (Bellis & Hatting, 2003:3).

Further commitment by the South African government to supporting skills development in the public service is clear in the Public Service Regulations (PSR) (2001) on training and education principles. Part IX, E of the Public Service Regulations, 2001, emphasises the statement that employees should have ongoing and equitable access to training and

development geared towards achieving an efficient, non-partisan and representative public service. The assumption is that training should support work performance and career development. Training should become increasingly driven by needs, and link strategically to broader human resource management practices and programmes aimed at enhancing employment equity and representativeness (South Africa, 2001:37). Consistent with the above statement, the Public Service Commission, 2009, reports that the quality of human resources is a critical factor in the capacity of the government to deliver on its mandate. For the public service to succeed in its mandate of providing effective and efficient service delivery for the citizens of the country, it should invest in public service training and the development of its human resources (South Africa, 2009b:ii).

The Public Service Commission (PSC, 2011b) further reports that the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) developed the initial Human Resource Development Strategy (HRDS) for the public service (2002 - 2006). However, it soon became evident that many challenges in both service delivery and human resource development necessitated a review of the HRDS 2002-2006 and this review was carried out by the DPSA in 2007. The Human Resource Development for the Public Service Strategic Framework Vision 2015 was launched in 2008 and the revised edition of the strategy aims to transform the public service through its people as initially intended in 2002 (South Africa, 2011b:ii).

The Human Resource Development for the Public Service Strategic Framework Vision 2015, states that the public service is the vehicle through which the government fulfils its promises of “securing the wellbeing of the people of the Republic”. The effective performance of public officials and the capacity of departments to deliver services are both critical to all aspects of government’s agenda for transformation and development. The capacity to deliver lies in the ability of public servants to undertake their assigned responsibilities as public officials, with the necessary level of skills, knowledge, experience and commitment to serve and perform to the best of their ability. A Human Resource Development (HRD) Strategy for the public service is seen as central to developing this capacity and is embraced as fundamental to the agenda of enhancing service delivery (South Africa, 2008a:5).

Human Resource Development (HRD) for the Public Service Strategic Framework Vision 2015, rests on four distinct pillars. Human resource development practices and skills development programmes have to be implemented in the public service based on these pillars. The four distinct pillars relate to the following initiatives (South Africa, 2008c:54-55):

- *The Human Resources Capacity Development Initiatives:* Capacity development initiatives are those activities that strengthen our ability to develop human capital in public organisations. We must be able to build human capital efficiently and effectively, and the infrastructure we put in place must promote ease of access to opportunities for development for all. Most important in this regard is that developing human capital should lead to improved performance and enhanced service delivery.
- *The Organisational Support Initiatives:* Organisational support initiatives refer to those operational aspects of the organisation upon which a holistic human resource development function is dependent. While these may not necessarily be human resource development functions or concerns, human resource development cannot be effective or efficient if these are not operating effectively. The essential foundation of effective organisational performance must be in place for human resource development to be successful. The conceptual framework notes that these areas also have to be strengthened to add value to proper human capital formation and utilisation in public organisations.
- *The Governance and Institutional Development Initiatives:* Governance initiatives refer to the manner in which human resource development in the public service is promoted, governed and supported. Governance here refers to the manner in which strategic leadership ensures the successful implementation of the HRD Strategic Framework. Governance in this sense does not only refer to the roles and obligations of pivotal organisations in the government sector; but also refers to the interventions to track progress, promote quality and integrity and assess the outcomes and impact achieved.
- *The Support of Government's Economic and Growth Development Initiatives:* Economic growth and development initiatives seek to locate human capital formation considerations in their rightful place on the development agenda of government. The central concern here is the manner in which capacity development initiatives in government are aligned and integrated with the government's programmes and initiatives that advance social welfare and promote economic growth and development.

The Human Resource Development for the Public Service Strategic Framework Vision 2015 (2008) represents the human capital development value chain. It focuses on the development of the individual public servant, the departments, the network of departments both horizontally and vertically, and lastly the economic environment locally, regionally, continentally and

globally. Several other strategic initiatives and related mandates on human resource development have also been introduced by government to emphasise the significance of the subject within the public service. For instance, the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) III (2011) increases access to high quality and relevant education and training and skills development opportunities. This includes workplace learning and experience to enable all South Africans to effectively participate in the economy (South Africa, 2011a:5). This strategy is informed and guided by other essential government programmes, especially the Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa, the requirements of the New Growth Path, the Industrial Policy Action Plan, the outcomes of the Medium-term Strategic Framework (MTSF), the Rural Development Strategy and the New Environment Strategy, among others. These efforts seek a closer synergy between the world of work in the public sector and the formal education system. Priority 5 of the Medium-term Strategic Framework (South Africa, 2014), provides for a skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path (South Africa, 2014:22). Furthermore, the National Development Plan 2013 (NDP, 2013b) calls for ensuring that the skilled, technical, professional and managerial posts in the public sector better reflect the country's racial, gender and disability makeup. It envisages that by 2030, there should be access to education and training of the highest quality for all public servants (NDP, 2013b:280).

Existing literature on human resource development indicates key principles that underpin the concept or function of human resource development. Nadler and Nadler (cited by Erasmus *et al.*, 2013:21) describe human resource development (HRD) as a learning experience organised essentially by an employer, usually within a specific period of time, to bring about the possibility of performance and/or personal growth. Slotte *et al.*, (cited by Erasmus *et al.*, 2013) concur that HRD covers functions related primarily to training, career development, organisational development and research and development. Human resource functions can be added where these are intended to foster learning capacity at all levels of the organisation to integrate learning culture into its overall business strategy and to promote the organisation's efforts to achieve high quality performance.

Mayo (2006:1) contends that already in 1988, the Ashridge Management Research Group distinguished three basic models of managing HRD, with progressive levels of sophistication. They are the following:

- *The fragmented approach* – an emphasis on training programmes, discrete and formalised, and unconnected with other business priorities;

- *The formalised approach* – a more professional systematisation of training activities, including pre-training and post-training evaluation activities; and
- *The focused approach* – where training and development is a tool of organisational success, and activities are clearly focused towards that end.

The *formalised* and *focused* approaches are applicable to the ECDSD and should support the department in the achievement of the strategic outputs by appropriately capacitating human resources that serve or have the potential to serve in the department. The desired end result is human resources that are professional, productive and competent. The task at hand is to harness all the professional knowledge available to support human resources and human resource management to be much more effective in achieving what the organisation wants to achieve.

Furthermore, Mayo (2006:14) states that the key components of an HRD strategy comprise of three (3) parts:

- *An umbrella strategy*, which includes human resources approaches and policies that support the organisational strategy, and are semi-permanent,
- *Specific strategies*, which relate to the current human resources organisational goals and issues. These fall into two categories: those that are proactive in terms of supporting the objectives of management, and those that are remedial, that is, which help solve performance issues at any level, and
- *A functional strategy* for the HRD department, which represents the choices it makes in terms of its own approach to learning, to resourcing, funding, marketing, evaluation and so on.

These should be applicable to the ECDSD, particularly in terms of understanding where the department wants to be in the medium to long term, what the department is currently trying to achieve, and issues and challenges that have to be resolved.

Human resources are undisputedly the factor that gives organisations a visible advantage over their competitors. Human resources and their competencies are the single most important resource of the organisation and make up an important part of its strategic plan that makes up its strategic capabilities (Opperman & Meyer, 2008:6). The core competencies are knowledge, skills and activities that, in combination, provide the organisation with a real advantage. Identifying the level of these competencies in an organisation and aligning it within learning objectives will create the platform for all future development initiatives. This ensures that the

performance gap between the business strategy and performance is narrowed through effective learning and development strategies of its personnel.

A further significant point is that the mission of an organisation is the fundamental reason for its existence. In its mission statement, the ECDSO proclaims that it is committed to transforming society by building conscious and capable citizens through the provision of integrated social development services, with families at the core of social change (Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature, 2015b:11). Moreover, the department asserts that to achieve this mission it aims to empower its employees and citizens by building on existing skills, knowledge and experience by creating an environment conducive to life-long learning (Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature, 2015a:11).

To support the achievement of the strategic outputs of the ECDSO, it is crucial to adequately enable employees that serve or have the potential to serve in the department. The desired outcome is employees that are professional, productive and competent. Furthermore, to provide the effective, efficient and cost effective service delivery that is crucial to meet the needs of the department, it is imperative to provide opportunities for competencies of employees to be constantly enhanced. This helps in addressing the technical skills shortages, especially among the previously disadvantaged persons, in the core and critical business units of the department. Senge (cited by Buckley & Caple, 2004:11) suggests that the learning organisation is continually expanding its capacity to create its own future. Wilson (cited by McGee, 2006:241) further asserts that as the competitive environment has become more dynamic, strategic management as a discipline has widened its scope to include the internal resources of organisations and how these might create competitive advantage. De Geus (cited by McGee, 2006:241) also argues that learning is a key internal activity of a human resource department in an organisation. It is a fundamental part of a strategic process of an organisation and the primary way in which sustainable human resource advantage can be secured in the future. For this to happen, it is imperative to outline a clear context and human resource policy framework within which this can be done.

In its executive summary, the White Paper on Public Service Training and Education, 1998, identifies a range of broad principles that have to be implemented and evaluated to secure programmes of public service training and education. A summary of these principles is listed as a reference point for a better understanding of the context within which the skills development framework, strategy and policy development should be facilitated in a public institution (South Africa, 1998b:15):

- *Access and entitlement:* allowing public servants access to ongoing and meaningful training opportunities.
- *Needs analysis:* programmes based on the needs of the individual and organisation so that maximum benefit is derived from training.
- *Integration of policy-formulation, strategic planning and transformation:* the expectation is that training and education will systematically link issues of policy, strategy and transformation across spheres of government with a focus on building institutions, service delivery, human resource development, management and equity.
- *Equity and empowerment:* linking training to broader plans around achieving employment.
- *Consultation and participation:* to ensure broad buy-in for such training, all programmes will be developed and evaluated with the full participation of all relevant stakeholders.
- *Monitoring and evaluation:* to ensure that these principles are complied with, mechanisms to monitor and evaluate will be put in place.

The challenge for human resource development management and functionaries is to provide skills development programmes based on the best theories and practices from other public institutions and in line with the above broad principles. Therefore, providing new knowledge and skills development programmes will be a challenge if the organisation and its human resource structure, processes and principles do not support their application and implementation in the workplace.

1.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

In the executive summary of a study conducted by the Public Service Commission (2011), on human resource development practices in the public service, the commission states that only fifty-three per cent (53%) of the sampled departments had HRD strategies in place. Of these, only sixty-three per cent (63%) complied with the basic requirements for an HRD strategy. Seven per cent (7%) of the sampled departments had a training policy in place and three per cent (3%) had an implementation plan in place, instead of a strategy. Thirty-seven per cent (37%) of the sampled departments did not have any human resource development strategy or policy in place. It is evident that human resource departments have to align themselves with the above stated broad human resource development and skills development policy framework and legislative requirements by ensuring that they have the necessary human resource strategies and policies in place. The departments must implement their programmes

as budgeted for and must be held accountable for the spending of the funds allocated to them (South Africa, 2011b:xi).

The White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995, stipulates that the development of specific policy implementation strategies is the responsibility of each government department at central and provincial levels. Departments have to outline principles and priorities around training and development and identify specific policy operational guidelines for the successful implementation of skills development initiatives and processes (South Africa, 1995:15). In fact, Section 10 (1) (a) of the Public Administration Management Act 11 of 2014 maintains that the head of a public institution must, through the education and training of its employees, develop its human resource capacity to a level that enables it to perform its functions in an efficient, collaborative and accountable manner. The Public Service Commission (2011) indicates that the human resource development practices in government departments lack strategies and plans and that principles around training and development are not being addressed (South Africa, 2011b:viii).

Against this backdrop, it is imperative for all public service departments to develop their own human resource development strategies, plans and operational guidelines and procedures to serve as enablers or catalysts to assist in realising the intentions of the broad public service human resource development and skills development policy framework according to theoretical and legislative requirements. A preliminary investigation by the researcher on the subject under investigation clearly revealed that there is no departmental human resource development strategy in the ECDSD. This problem forms the focus of this study. This situation may constrain the effective implementation of skills development programmes within the context of human resource development in the department, which may in turn lead to the non-realisation of strategic goals and objectives of the department. This study therefore analysed the skills development programmes within the context of human resource development in the ECDSD to determine how effective they are.

1.4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary objective that this study aimed to fulfil was to analyse the skills development programmes within the context of human resources development (HRD) in the ECDSD, with a view to improve skills development processes in the future.

In order to achieve the primary objective, the subsequent secondary objectives were to:

- investigate the theories and principles of human resource development (HRD) and skills development programmes and relevant legislation and policies;
- examine the compliance of the ECDSD with legislation and regulations pertaining to human resource development practices and skills development programmes in particular;
- analyse the current functioning and challenges experienced by the ECDSD in the implementation of skills development programmes based on the knowledge obtained through theory and legislation; and to
- provide recommendations regarding best practices that can be adopted and implemented within the ECDSD to improve the implementation of skills development programmes.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The key research questions that this study aimed to address are the following:

- What do the human resources development practices, particularly the skills development programmes of government, entail?
- Does the ECDSD comply with the legislative and regulatory framework pertaining to human resource development and skills development in particular?
- What is the nature and extent of skills development in the ECDSD?
- How can the skills development approaches and practices of the ECDSD be improved to ensure more effective HRD functioning?

1.6. CENTRAL THEORETICAL STATEMENTS (CTS)

Mayo (2006:5) asserts that the great enemy of organisations, especially those that are diverse and complex, is the lack of strategic alignment and connectivity. This implies that human resource development should vertically support business strategies and align human resource development policies and initiatives horizontally with organisational and HR programmes. The aforementioned is also applicable to the ECDSD.

A human resources development strategy is an enabling strategy, seeking to improve the limitations of human resource potential within an organisation. The main aim is to further the execution of that particular subsystem's strategy to the extent that all subsystems will have well-equipped human resources in as far as job content and context ability goes (Van Dyk *et al.*, 2002:88). Management of the ECDSD should therefore also view human resource

development as an enabling strategy that must be directly linked to the different part-strategies of the functional units of the department.

Ulrich (cited by Opperman & Meyer, 2008:7) contends that developing more talented employees is not the end, but the means to the end of creating a competitive organisation. The ultimate aim and vision of an organisation is to establish a workforce that has the skills and knowledge to undertake the tasks required to meet future challenges. The ECDSO would benefit from having a pool of talented employees, which would result in improved and sustained service delivery.

1.7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Grix (2001:36) argues that research methodology is driven by certain ontological and epistemological assumptions and consists of research questions or hypotheses, a conceptual framework for the topic, the methods to be used in the study and their justification, and lastly, the data collection sources. In this study, the approach, method and procedure employed sought to offer the researcher a way of gathering information or gaining insight into the research topic. A qualitative research approach was applied and it took into account the research objectives of this study, which enabled the researcher to obtain essential data necessary to come to a better understanding of the skills development programmes within the context of human resource development in the ECDSO.

1.7.1. Research approach and design

A research design relates to the criteria used when evaluating social research. It is a framework for the generation of evidence that is suited both to a certain set of criteria and to the research question in which the researcher is interested (Bryman, 2012:45). It is a plan that guides the arrangement of conditions for gathering and analysis of research data in a manner that aims to combine relevance and the research purpose with economy in procedure (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002:29). Furthermore, the research design plans and structures a given research project in such a manner that the eventual validity of the research findings is maximised (Mouton & Marias, 1996:33).

As mentioned, a qualitative research approach was used in this study. One of the key distinguishing features of qualitative research is that the researcher attempts to understand people in terms of their own definition. The focus is on an insider perspective rather than on an outsider perspective (Mouton, 2013:194). It usually involves an in-depth investigation of a problem through, for instance, participant observation, interviewing, archival or other documentary analyses, or ethnographic study (Grix, 2001:33). These methods do not rely on,

but can involve some numerical measurements. Moreover, qualitative research involves the interpretation of data, where the researcher analyses cases, usually few in number, in their social and cultural context over a specific period of time, with the researcher positively interacting with the object of study.

Against this background, a qualitative case study design was appropriate for this study. Case study methods involve systematically gathering information about a particular person, social setting, event, or group to permit the researcher to effectively understand how the subject operates or functions (Berg, 2004:251). The case study is not actually a data-gathering technique, but a methodological approach that incorporates a number of data-gathering measures. The approach of case studies ranges significantly from general field studies to the interview of a single individual or group. In other words, the unit of analysis can vary from an individual to a corporation. In this study, the ECDSD was the unit of analysis. In addition, case studies may utilise a number of data-gathering technologies such as life histories, documents, oral histories, in-depth interviews and participant observation. Yin (cited by Zucker, 2009:2) states that data come largely from documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observation and physical artefacts. Denzin and Lincoln (2000:436) assert that a case study is both a process of inquiry about the case and the product of that inquiry. Similarly, Noor (2008:1602) maintains that it is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, using multiple sources of evidence. It is not intended as a study of the entire organisation. Rather it is intended to focus on a particular issue, feature or unit of analysis.

Furthermore, Stake (cited by Zucker, 2009:3) emphasises that the number and type of case studies depend upon the purpose of the inquiry: an instrumental case study is used to provide insight into an issue; an intrinsic case study is undertaken to gain a deeper understanding of the case; and the collective case study is the study of a number of cases to inquire into a particular phenomenon. This study presents an intrinsic type of case study in an effort to acquire a better understanding of this particular case. The intrinsic type of case study is not taken primarily because the case represents other cases or illustrates a particular trait or problem, but because in all its particularity and ordinariness, this case itself is of interest (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000:436). This type of case study assisted the researcher in this particular study to understand and analyse the skills development programmes within the context of human resource development in the ECDSD. The value of using a case study is that case studies become particularly useful where the researcher wants to understand a particular problem or situation in great depth. It can be useful in capturing the emergent and immanent properties of life in organisations and the ebb and flow of organisational activity, especially

where it is changing fast. Berg (2004:260) believes that the case study method is an extremely useful technique for researching relationships, behaviours, attitudes, motivations and stressors in organisational settings.

1.7.2. Instrumentation

To create convergence and corroboration and to eliminate the inherent biases involved in using only one data-collecting technique within the research, multiple data collection instruments was used in this study to gather and analyse data. The multiple data collection instruments used to gather data on the phenomenon include a literature analysis, semi-structured interviews and analysis of legislation and official documents. Van Esch and Van Esch (2013:214) assert that this approach allows the weaknesses and limitations of textual analysis to be complemented by the strengths of in-depth interviews, to bolster any findings or emerging themes through distilling, exploration, enhancement, elaboration, clarification and validation. These multiple processes clearly assist in understanding and building a refined insight into the phenomenon under investigation.

1.7.2.1. A literature review

In order to comprehend the research topic in all its complexity, relevant information must be obtained. This process is called a literature review (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:22). The literature review is an ongoing process since different theories and models and research results have to be studied, by necessity, before a clear statement of the problem can be formulated. This is the case not only because relevant research results can be published at any time, but also because in the course of research, new aspects and problems arise requiring new information.

The reason for conducting a literature review is for the researcher to study what is already known about the area of interest, so as to avoid reinventing the wheel. It enables the researcher to demonstrate the ability to engage in scholarly review, based on reading and understanding of the work of others in the same field. It is also a means of developing an argument about the importance of the research and where it leads (Bryman, 2012:98). The effort to review literature is necessitated by the importance of identifying the following questions:

- What is already known about this area?
- What concepts and theories are relevant to this area?

- What research methods and research strategies have been employed in studying this area?
- Are there any significant controversies?
- Are there any inconsistencies in the findings related to this area?
- Are there any unanswered research questions in this area?

In summary, undertaking a literature review for the purposes of this study would offer a synthesis of what has already been written on the topic, what has not yet been written on the topic or what is written in such a way that it is conceptually or methodologically inadequate. Against this background, extensive human resource development and skills development literature including books, articles, journals, policies, legislation, government circulars, directives and organisational memoranda and newspapers or print media were used to complete this study successfully.

It is further imperative to point out that the following databases were consulted in preparation for this study to ascertain the availability of relevant study material:

- NRF Nexus.
- Index to South African periodicals.
- Catalogue of theses and dissertations.
- Catalogue of books in the Ferdinand Postma Library (NWU: Potchefstroom Campus).
- SA ePublications.
- Government websites.
- SA media

A search for relevant and related literature had indicated that adequate information was available to complete a study of this nature.

1.7.2.2. *Semi-structured interviews*

This study mainly made use of semi-structured interviews. In a semi-structured interview the researcher has a list of questions or fairly specific topics to be covered, often referred to as an interview guide, but the interviewee has a great deal of leeway in how to reply (Bryman, 2012:471; Grix, 2001:76)). Questions may not follow exactly as outlined on the schedule. The interviewer may ask questions that are not included in the guide in reaction to things said by interviewees. The emphasis is on how the interviewee frames and understands issues and events, that is, what the interviewee views as important in explaining and understanding events, patterns and forms of behaviour. The advantage of this is that it allows a certain degree of flexibility and allows for the pursuit of unexpected lines of enquiry during the interview.

Ideally the number of questions should not exceed ten in total for manageability. The interviewer does follow a script to a certain extent. Also, by and large, all the questions are asked and similar wording is used from interviewee to interviewee. The results of such an interview can still be compared, contrasted and even be converted into statistics. In addition, if permission is obtained from the respondents, the interviews can be recorded to secure an accurate account of the conversations and to avoid losing data, since not everything can be written down during an interview. The recordings are numbered and labelled with the name of the interviewee to avoid complication (Grix, 2001:76).

1.7.3. Population and sampling

Babbie (1998:109) describes a population as the composite group of all the people about whom we want to draw information. Researchers are, however, almost never able to study all the members of the population, because in virtually all instances, the groups are too large. Exactly how large a sample in a particular study should be is also influenced by the complexity of the study.

The aim of selecting a sample is to ensure that the sample is representative of the population. In this study, purposive sampling was used because it essentially has to do with the selection of participants with in-depth knowledge on the research under investigation. Research questions are likely to provide guidelines as to what categories of people should be the focus of attention and therefore sampled (Bryman, 2012:416).

Qualitative research depends primarily on lengthy interviews with a carefully selected sample of participants. This type of research typically does not draw large samples. Various types of purposive sampling may be used. The researcher may select a few information-rich cases. The selected sample individuals or participants have had direct experience with the phenomenon being studied. Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2002:45) confirm that types of research that are less concerned with statistical accuracy are ideal for in-depth interviews. Quantitative research where questionnaires are involved need many more participants and can include a hundred or more participants.

The staff compliment of the ECDSD is four thousand four hundred and sixty-one (4461). Forty (40) represent the Senior Management Services (SMS) members stratum. One hundred and ninety-two (192) represent the Middle Management Services (MMS) stratum. Four hundred and fifty-six (456) represent the Junior Management stratum. Three thousand seven hundred and seventy-three (3773) represent the Operational Staff stratum. The department has twenty (20) Skills Development Committee (SDC) members. The committee is composed on a

50/50% basis where 50% are representatives at managerial level and 50% are representatives at employee level (organised labour). Therefore, in this study, the researcher intends to interview the 20 respondents represented in the SDC. The respondents represent the entire Departmental Skills Development Committee, which comprises management, organised labour, as alluded to above, and the Human Resource Development (HRD) Division which serves as a secretariat of the SDC. This is the organisational level structure that has the responsibility of ensuring that the human resource development practices and skills development programmes are implemented in the department. The selection of these participants is largely influenced by factors such as access to the respondents and the time available for the study. The main reason for their selection was, however, because of their knowledge of the study. One source explains this sampling technique and states that “the main goal of purposive sampling is to focus on particular characteristics of a population that are of interest, which will best enable you to answer your research questions. The sample being studied is not representative of the entire population, but for researchers pursuing qualitative or mixed methods research designs, this is not considered to be a weakness” (Anon., 2015).

1.7.4. Data collection

In order to address the objectives of this study, both primary and secondary data were collected. The use of the following data collection techniques was anticipated at different stages as the research process unfolded.

1.7.4.1. Primary data

As mentioned earlier, this study utilised semi-structured interviews. The choice of semi-structured rather than structured interviews was based on the fact that such interviews offer sufficient flexibility to approach different respondents differently while still covering the same area of data collection (Noor, 2008:1604). In this study extensive notes were taken and the resulting texts analysed. The sampled respondents who are members of the ECDS Development Committee assisted with primary data in relation to understanding the skills development programmes within the human resource development context in the ECDS.

1.7.4.2. Secondary data

An effort was further made to review the available research in the research area. Secondary data collection processes were undertaken by reviewing online data and material and by accessing published documents, private and government websites. The researcher used this technique to acquire data from a variety of authentic sources such as books, official documentation, policies and legislation, both magazine and academic articles, newspapers

and media reports. The information available on the internet was collected and integrated with the other textual data obtained. The data from all the available sources that were utilised during the research process was integrated and collated to conclude the data collection stage (Mouton, 2013:198).

1.7.5. Data analysis and interpretation

Babbie (1998:110) believes that researchers interpret the collected data for the purpose of drawing conclusions that reflect on the interests, ideas and theories that initiated the inquiry. In a qualitative case study such as this, the central task in data analysis is to identify common themes in people's descriptions of their experiences. Creswell (cited by Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:142) argues that subsequent to transcribing the interview, the researcher typically takes the following steps into consideration:

- The researcher identifies statements that relate to the topic. The researcher separates relevant from irrelevant data in the interview and then breaks the relevant data into small segments (e.g., phrases or sentences) that each reflect a single, specific thought.
- The researcher groups statements into "meaningful units." The researcher groups the segments into categories that reflect the various aspects ("meanings") of the phenomenon as it is experienced.
- The researcher seeks divergent perspectives. The researcher looks for and considers the various ways in which different people experience the phenomenon.
- The research contrasts a composite. The researcher uses the various meanings identified to develop an overall description of the phenomenon as people typically experience it.

The final result is a general description of the phenomenon as seen through the eyes of people who have experienced it first-hand. The focus is on common themes in the experience, despite diversity in the individuals and settings studied. The above process is enhanced by making use of the available computer-aided software for analysis of qualitative data, which is used as an instrument to help in the management of textual data, for the storage and retrieval of information, and other functions that these computer programs offer (Mouton, 2013:199). In this study, the information obtained from the semi-structured interviews is presented in Chapter 4. The results reveal the perceptions of the members of the Skills Development Committee of the ECDS. The transcripts of the semi-structured interviews were analysed to establish a complete record of the discussions and to facilitate analysis of the data. Subsequently, the transcribed text was read and the content of the discussions analysed with

the understanding to extracting trends and patterns that appeared in the questionnaire or semi-structured interview scripts. The researcher then made use of available computer-aided software for the analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data.

1.7.6. *Limitations of the study*

It is imperative in a research study, in particular, to have clearly defined limits. In identifying and presenting some of the limitations of case study research, the researcher focused on five themes as provided by Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2001:8). These five themes are the following:

- *There is too much data for easy analysis:* Case study researchers are conscious of being swamped in data. Researchers tend to generate many audio-taped interviews. Such data are analysed and in the process of analysis much data tend to be omitted.
- *Very expensive, if attempted on a large scale:* Case studies are time-consuming and the analysis of data is even more time-consuming. Yet cutting corners on either of these facets is likely to seriously weaken the value and credibility of any findings produced. This means that large or multiple case studies can be very expensive.
- *They do not lend themselves to numerical representation:* Some aspects of case study work can be fairly easily presented in numerical form, but many cannot. A researcher can start with more participants than those that finish. The researcher loses sight of some participants, or decides not to follow others. Consequently, it is difficult to express even the sample size of such a study in simple numerical form.
- *They are not generalisable in the conventional sense:* By definition, case studies can make no claims to be typical. Furthermore, because the sample is small and idiosyncratic and because data are predominantly non-numerical, there is no way to establish the probability that data are representative of some larger population. For many researchers, this renders any case study findings of little value.
- *They cannot answer a large number of relevant and appropriate research questions:* Despite the small amount of space given to it, this reservation is arguably the most important of them all. Case studies are neither ubiquitous nor a universal panacea. There are very many important research questions that cannot be answered in this way.

Notwithstanding the above detailed account of the case study method's limitations, this research approach enabled the researcher to gain a holistic view of the phenomenon and provided a well-rounded picture, since many sources of evidence were utilised. Therefore, the case study approach was a valuable resource of research in this study, but as with all research, interpreting this case study report required care and understanding.

1.7.7. Delimitations of the study

Due to the resource factors (both time and finances) required to conduct and complete this study, the proposed selected respondents were limited to the Departmental Skills Development Committee members only, and therefore the entire departmental staff and management were not included. It is important though to indicate that the Skills Development Committee is representative of departmental employees, management and the Human Resource Development Division as the secretariat. Leedy and Ormrod (2010:141) contend that by looking at multiple perspectives on the same situation, the researcher can make some generalisations of what something is like from an insider's perspective. Also, because this was a qualitative study and the researcher is also an employee of the department under study, there were potential limitations of researcher bias and perceptual misrepresentations. However, the researcher made every effort to uphold an objective opinion regarding the research with the guidance of his supervisor.

1.8. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Webster (cited in Babbie, 1998:438) describes ethics as conforming to the standards of conduct of a given profession or group. It is generally agreed that it is unethical for researchers to harm anyone in the course of research, especially if it is without the person's knowledge and permission. This includes misleading a respondent about the true purpose of the study, asking respondents questions that may cause him or her extreme embarrassment or humiliation, causing emotional turmoil by reminding him or her of an unpleasant experience, causing guilt, or invading his or her privacy. Respondents may also be injured by being studied without their knowledge, or by violating a promise of confidentiality.

Another crucial scientific element in ethical research is that of objectivity. Leedy and Ormrod (2010:135) assert that most researchers strive for objectivity in their research. Most researchers believe their observations should be influenced as little as possible by any perceptions, impressions and biases they may have. By maintaining objectivity, the researcher hopes to maximise the chances of determining the ultimate truth. In this study the researcher subscribed to the ethical standards of the North-West University. Participation in this study was on a voluntary basis. Respondents were assured of confidentiality, which entailed the

anonymous completion of the questionnaires. The researcher obtained permission from the Superintendent General of the ECDSD to conduct the research for academic purposes only. The researcher did not divulge any confidential information and ensured the protection of respondents' identities in the questionnaire.

1.9. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study will hopefully assist the ECDSD in its efforts to apply more effective human resource development practices to improve skills development processes. This can only take place once significant problems have been scientifically identified and investigated. Furthermore, it is envisaged that the study will provide information on processes that have to be established to meet the skills development requirements that must form part of the overall skills strategy of the organisation and the Human Resource Department. Such a strategy is essential to establish sound human resource practices, regardless of whether the SETA requires the department to submit the Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) or not. Consequently, this study endeavours to make a significant contribution to the department.

1.10. CHAPTER LAYOUT

The chapter layout for this study is as follows:

Chapter 1: Orientation and problem statement

This chapter provides an orientation, introduction and background to the study, as well as a detailed motivation of the research problem to be investigated. The chapter also discusses the research methodology.

Chapter 2: Theoretical overview of human resource development (HRD) and skills development programmes

This chapter firstly provides an overview of public administration, and secondly a theoretical orientation of human resource development (HRD) practices and skills development programmes in the South African government in particular. A comprehensive literature review is also undertaken to strengthen and motivate the research problem.

Chapter 3: The legislative and regulatory framework pertaining to human resource development and skills development

This chapter analyses the existing legislation governing and regulating human resource development practices and skills development in South Africa.

Chapter 4: An analysis of the skills development programmes within the context of human resource development: The case of the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development: empirical findings

This chapter investigates the effective functioning of human resource development practices and skills development programmes in the ECDSD. The research methodology utilised and the empirical findings of the study are also discussed in detail.

Chapter 5: Summary and recommendations

This chapter summarises the study and provides relevant specific recommendations for the effective functioning and implementation of human resource development practices and skills development programmes in the ECDSD.

1.11. CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced the purpose of the study by providing the background, problem statement, research question and the objectives. The central theoretical statements and methodology were explained. Emphasis was also placed on the skills development and human resource development imperatives and the challenges faced by the public service regarding the skills development and human resource development. Human resource development strategy for the ECDSD is a necessity if the department aims to effectively implement skills development and human resource development practices.

The next chapter addresses the first research objective namely to investigate the theories and principles of human resource development (HRD) and skills development programmes. It comprises firstly an overview of public administration, secondly a theoretical orientation of human resource development and skills development in South Africa and within the South African public service, in particular. A comprehensive literature review on the varying but interrelated human resource development approaches, models and theories is also undertaken in this chapter to strengthen and motivate the research problem.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL OVERVIEW OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (HRD) AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter clarified the research problem and research objectives of this study. This chapter addresses the first research objective, namely to investigate the theories and principles of human resource development (HRD) and skills development programmes. The chapter first presents an overview of public administration, and second a theoretical orientation of human resource development and skills development in South Africa and within the South African public service, in particular. A comprehensive literature review on the varying but interrelated human resource development approaches, models and theories is also undertaken in this chapter to strengthen and motivate the research problem. Notwithstanding the interrelationship of each of these elements, the study attempts to discuss each as a distinct entity. The study is delineated to deal with the analysis of skills development programmes within the context of human resource development in the ECDS.

2.2. AN OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Thornhill (2013:4) contends that since time began, human beings have not been able to provide for all their needs on their own, therefore they have subsisted in communities. In due course, this led to the establishment of states. At present, the world consist of more than two hundred (200) states, each of which represents a unique society with its own physical and social features, including a system of government that has its own peculiar public institutions. The state here refers to a territory with a population that constitutes a society that is independent from and not part of another sovereign political entity, with public institutions that maintain law and order, provide public services for the maintenance of society, and promote the general welfare of the population (Thornhill, 2013:4). South Africa, like every other state, has a multifaceted network of public institutions. These institutions exist to provide goods and services to maintain the state. A variety of activities or functions have to be conducted to develop, maintain and operate public institutions. These activities or functions performed by the administrative executive institutions are collectively known as public administration.

Cheminais *et al.* (1998:18) argue that at least two schools of thought used to guide South African public administration. The first and the oldest is the public administration *process model*, which may be called a closed-system approach to the study of the discipline. The basic

point of departure is that the phenomenon known as public administration constitutes six (6) main functions, namely policy making, organising, determining work procedures, financing, staffing and control. This took place in strict bureaucratic principles of rigid rules and regulations, centralisation and rational decision making. Management in this environment restricted to a large extent effective service delivery.

The second, and much more recent approach, is the new public management approach. The view is that a public manager's functions should take place in a more open environment where management concentrates on:

- Skills development
- Defining standards
- Measuring of performance
- Determining objectives and indicators
- Output control
- Seeking lower cost of service
- Efficient use of resources
- Using private sector management styles

Many public managers have been educated to believe that there is only one approach to public administration, and that is the traditional one. However, it is becoming increasingly evident that a more dynamic new management approach should be adopted (Cheminais *et al.*, 1998:18).

In this context, Opperman and Meyer (2008:6) maintain that it is generally acknowledged that human resources are the primary resource of any organisation, whether in the public or private sector. The success of any organisation depends on appropriate use of human assets available in the organisation. All other assets could only be supplementary to human assets. Accordingly, physical, financial, material, technological and information resources are not the only prerequisites for effective and efficient service delivery, but well-trained, motivated and efficient public employees are needed as well. The fact that officials are vital to the effective and efficient rendering of public services to communities is evident in the normative guidelines for the Public Administration, outlined in section 195 of Chapter 10 of the Constitution. Their importance is highlighted in a series of government White Papers, for instance the Reconstruction and Development Programme, the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, and the White Paper on Public Service and Training (Cheminais *et al.*, 1998:iii).

As alluded to earlier in this section on the public management functions, Robbins (cited by Van der Waldt *et al.*, 2002:53) argues that human resource planning is the process through

which an institution ensures that it has the right number and kinds of people at the right places at the right time, capable of effectively and efficiently completing those tasks that will assist the institution in achieving its overall objectives. Van der Waldt *et al.*, (2002:52) further maintains that it is crucial for any public manager to assess where the institution is, where it is going, and the implications for the future demands and supply of human resources. The purpose of human resource planning is therefore to ensure that people will be available to provide the continued smooth functioning of an institution.

Significantly, the following are the three main steps or processes in strategic human resource planning:

- The assessment of human resource requirements to identify the numbers of staff and skills required and the targets within these for meeting the goals of employment equity.
- The assessment of existing human resource capacity to analyse the numbers and skills of staff who are currently employed and their potential for meeting future requirements through training and development. The gaps in numbers and skills and in equity targets that must be filled, must also be identified.
- Drawing up a human resource plan or strategy to address the gap between the requirements and the existing capacity of staff.

Among other things, human resource planning should include a projection of the likely human resource availability in the future and the manner in which this will address future human resource requirements of the department. This is particularly important with regard to the high turnover of staff, shortage skills and competition between departments and between the public and private sector, to attract the best people. Furthermore, it should include the development of training and staff development programmes with internal and external service providers to address the gap between required and existing human resources (Van der Waldt *et al.*, 2002:53-54).

Boninelli and Meyer (2011:183) likewise agree that human resources is considered along with all the other factors such as the value chain, finance, marketing and sales, operations, and others, during the internal and external analysis phase of strategic planning. It is also considered during scenario planning, strategy development and implementation. The implication of this view is that if companies or organisations did optimal strategic planning, workforce planning would not be a stand-alone HR activity, but would form part of the strategic planning process.

In its introduction, the Public Service Commission report (2011) on the assessment of human resource development practices in the public service maintains that managing to harness the potential of individuals, each with their own needs, views and opinions, means that one must manage this resource with due sensitivity for providing constant stimulation and satisfaction (South Africa, 2011b:ii). This suggests organising the work in such a manner that it inspires and promotes intrinsic motivation, rather than work that takes place only when there is supervision or instruction. Such a task of growing, motivating and improving individual skills, training and development needs, remains one of the most challenging aspects facing an organisation. Due to the demands on the public service for efficient and effective service delivery, there is a need for government departments to adopt appropriate skills development programmes and human resource development (HRD) practices that ultimately improve performance. The essence is that public officials should undergo continuous education and training so that every official's potential may be utilised to the benefit of the employee and the employer. Supervisors should play a key role in identifying development needs and in satisfying these. If they cannot satisfy these needs themselves, they should request help from the appropriate educational institutions (South Africa: 2011:2).

Section 195 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 provides for the basic values and principles governing public administration. Sub-section (l) provides that public administration must be governed by the democratic values and principles enshrined in the Constitution, including the following principles:

- A high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained.
- Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted.
- Public administration must be development-oriented.
- Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias.
- People's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policymaking.
- Public administration must be accountable.
- Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information.
- *Good human resource management and career-development practices, to maximise human potential, must be cultivated.*
- Public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness, and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation.

In the State of the Nation Address (SONA) of 4 February 2000, former South African President, Thabo Mbeki explicitly pointed out that the political changes of 1994 may well take decades to modify the economic and socio-political face of South Africa (Carlton & King, 2004:10). Also, in its report titled Improved Government Performance Report (South Africa, 2007), the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) states that towards the end of 2004 former President Thabo Mbeki asked Ministers “whether we have the all-round capacity, the proper organisational structures and the resources, successfully to implement our developmental programmes”, and “what must practically be done to address the deficiencies identified?” (South Africa, 2007:33). Starting in January 2005, the Governance and Administration (G&A) Cluster conducted “capacity assessments” which sought to answer these questions. The context for the assessments was South Africa’s aspirations to become a developmental state, to bridge the divide between the country’s two economies and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. “Capacity” includes, but is not limited to, financial, technological, intergovernmental policies and systems and human resources (South Africa, 2007:33).

The Improved Government Performance Report (South Africa, 2007) further states that in respect of human resource management, the lack of capacity posed a serious challenge, specifically the lack of skills. Only a few government departments had sufficiently addressed human resource development and training. Human resource planning was greatly neglected in the public service, not least because of a lack of capacity of human resource personnel in government departments. The report stated that capacity development was required to enable HR practitioners to be able to play a strategic role in addition to their administrative role. The public service as a whole needed a massive capacity development initiative to address the general skills deficit in the public service. The coalface public servants required Batho Pele training; for the many office workers in the public service mass training in practical administration skills was recommended. The implementation of ABET was intensified for lower level workers. Also, the report stated that there was a critical shortage of basic administrative, research and writing skills in the public service. Report writing, even at senior management level, was almost uniformly poor. In respect of financial management, the report stated that there was a critical shortage of skilled and qualified staff (RSA, 2007:33).

The Public Service Education and Training Authority (PSETA) Sector Skills Plan 2015 – 2016 (2014:30) further states that according to the National Planning Commission (NPC), the state is capable to the extent “that it has the capacity to formulate and implement policies that serve the national interest” (NPC, 2012). It is developmental when “these policies focus on

overcoming the root causes of poverty and inequality, and building the state's capacity to fulfil this role" (NPC, 2012). A capable and developmental state is one that has the means to identify and deal with the causes of poverty and inequality in South Africa.

The NDP identifies seven major challenges facing the South African state: tensions in the political-administrative interface, instability of the administrative leadership, skills deficits, inappropriate staffing, the erosion of accountability and authority, poor organisational design and low staff morale (NPC, 2012). The plan elaborates further on these issues. It discusses eight areas where immediate action is required:

- Stabilising the political-administrative interface by creating a public service sufficiently insulated from political interference. This requires clearly distinguishing between the political and administrative head of department.
- *Making the public service and local government administration careers of choice by building a skilled and professional public service from the top and the bottom.*
- *Developing technical and specialist professional skills and creating career paths for technical specialists.*
- Strengthening delegation, accountability and oversight by promoting greater and more consistent delegation, making it easier for citizens to hold public servants and politicians accountable and ensuring effective parliamentary oversight of government.
- Improving inter-departmental coordination by adopting a less hierarchical approach and by strengthening the cluster system and the role of the Presidency in resolving strategic issues.
- Taking a proactive approach to improving relations between national, provincial and local government by devolving greater responsibilities where capacity exists.
- Strengthening local government by developing an enabling framework with active support and oversight from national and provincial government.
- Clarifying the governance of the state-owned enterprises by clarifying their public interest mandates and giving them straightforward governance structures that enable them to balance and reconcile their economic and social objectives (PSETA, 2014:30).

Many of these challenges are outside of the scope of the PSETA, though not all of them. In particular, points 2 and 3 above pertain directly to skills training, namely building a skilled and professional public service and developing technical and specialist skills for the public service.

Therefore, as with other functional staffing activities, ETD should not be regarded as functions that can be performed in isolation of the other activities. Indeed, ETD should be integrated purposely with other functional activities. The public sector authorities should, for example, regularly consider training and development functions when they create posts, determine entry

requirements, devise promotion systems and develop and implement merit-rating systems (Thornhill, 2013:242).

The above discussion shows that the organisation has to concentrate necessarily on developing the ability, wisdom and skills of its workforce to augment the human resources and to cope with changes, both internal and external. Training is the basis of developing human assets. Clearly, training is a tool to attain individual and organisational needs related to the jobs undertaken and is intended to improve the work culture of the group involved in a group task. An ideal training programme can be expected to change the attitudes and skills and to develop future vision among the participants. Considering the above overview, the subsequent section provides an overview of human resource development (HRD).

2.3. AN OVERVIEW OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (HRD)

Holton III *et al.*, (2002:5) argue that the development of human expertise has never been more important than it is today to all types of organisations all over the world. Every day, new possibilities are unfolded for solving problems and reaching new markets, all of these possibilities generated from the same source: human expertise. Developing and continuously improving human expertise is at the core of HRD.

Cascio (2006:292) explains that surveys of corporate training and development practices consistently found that four characteristics seem to distinguish companies with the most effective training practices. These four characteristics are described as follows:

- Top management is committed to training and development; training is part of the corporate culture.
- Training is tied to business strategy and objectives and is linked to bottom-line results.
- Organisational environments are 'feedback rich'; they stress continuous improvement, promote risk taking and afford opportunities to learn from the successes and failures of decisions.
- There is commitment to invest the necessary resources, to provide sufficient time and money for training.

The means that firms use to compete for business in the market place and to gain competitive advantage are known as competitive strategies. A key objective of the training programme, therefore, is to tie workplace training to business targets. Some companies are afraid of

training and development because they think that if they upgrade the skills of the workforce, their employees will be more marketable to competitors. The paradox is that if employees take charge of their own employability by keeping their skills updated and varied so that they can work for anyone, they build more security with their current employer, assuming the company values highly skilled, motivated employees. At the same time, if a company provides a large number of training and learning opportunities, it is more likely to retain workers because it creates an interesting and challenging environment. Therefore, human resource development is undisputedly one of the factors that give organisations a visible advantage over their competitors (Cascio, 2006:292-293).

Mayo (2006:5) further argues that the great enemy of organisations, especially those that are diverse and complex, is the lack of alignment and connectivity. From the human resource development perspective, there are two challenges:

- To what extent is human resource development vertically aligned? What does it mean to be a business partner, working with and supporting the business strategy and the managers seeking to implement it?
- To what extent is human resource development horizontally aligned? How consistent are human resource development policies and initiatives with other HR programmes?

Concerning the vertical alignment, most HR and HRD strategies will state their desire to be business-linked and most professionals will describe their roles today as those of business partnership. Sometimes the danger is that HR and human resource development professionals may well believe that their HR and HRD strategy is designed to benefit the organisation, but if it is prepared in isolation by the function itself, it runs the risks of nonalignment and inappropriate priorities (Mayo, 2006:5).

Different levels of alignment can be plotted along two dimensions. One dimension is about being reactive or proactive. Do we react to requests from managers for help, or are we regularly working with them to stimulate and suggest ideas, work out solutions together and jointly monitor the initiatives? The second dimension is whether we do this at an operational level or a strategic level. The distinction is between the current day-to-day business and that which is more forward looking and involves change from what we do today (Mayo, 2006:6).

The characteristics of the four quadrants based on the two dimensions named above are as follows (Mayo, 2006:7):

- Reactive, operational. This is about responding to managers' requests for training of various kinds, both for their departments and as a result of appraisals for

individuals. Human resource development sources solutions and suppliers and meet the requests.

- Reactive, strategic. In this mode, human resource development helps managers with their longer-term needs, responds to their business plans with appropriate supporting programmes and develops customised learning solutions.
- Proactive, operational. The difference here is that regular meetings occur with management, keeping in touch with progress on their business goals, suggesting ideas, challenging practices and working jointly on people-capability issues.
- Proactive, strategic. The level of involvement is broader and longer term here. It includes contributing to and challenging business strategies, working together with the management team on organisation development initiatives and building long-term capabilities.

It is very unlikely that any given human resource development function will be operating solely in one quadrant. The question to be asked is about the balance of efforts and how to manage client expectations. A comprehensive people-development strategy will embrace the whole range.

On the other hand, regarding horizontal alignment, the most important thing is that preferred human resource development initiatives do not conflict with initiatives, whether from HR or elsewhere. A classic example is the use of the reward systems to support desired business strategies. Ideally, all organisational strategies and plans are shared between units and functions and they are checked for consistency. Unfortunately, few organisations meet this aspiration and the responsible human resource development official will take the initiative to ensure that the human resource development strategy is aligned where it is needed. Since most human resource development departments report to the broader HR function, it may be the higher-level HR official who is involved more in the strategic partnership arena. Frequently, the official is excluded from any input into the substance of the business strategies themselves and is expected to be involved only in implementation. This depends on many factors, some of, which may be historical, but more than anything else on the calibre and business credibility of the individuals (Mayo, 2006:7).

Blanchard and Thacker (2007:36-37) maintains that human resource development (HRD) is in the business of supporting the organisation's strategies, goals and objectives. In this supporting role, human resource development contributes to the organisation's competitive position in the following ways:

- By providing key information related to developing the organisation's strategies;
- By providing key information related to developing HR strategies in support of the organisation's strategies;
- By providing human resource development strategies in support of the HR strategies.

The above listed human resource development supportive roles assist in ensuring that employees have the necessary competencies to meet strategic performance demands and assist in the removal of barriers to desired performance. These human resource development supportive roles are further explained and elaborated hereunder as follows:

- Human resource development should provide an assessment of employees' strengths and weaknesses relative to the competitive strategy. Unfortunately, many organisations do not think of human resource development in this strategic sense. Organisations' strategies are often formulated with little consideration of employee capabilities and it is only after implementation that the problems surface and human resource development considerations may arise.
- Human resource development influences the organisation's HR strategy. The HR strategy is one level below the organisation's strategy and is the set of tactics HR uses to support the organisation's strategy. For instance, an organisation's HR strategy may, as one of its strategic postures, assume a principle of promoting from within and moving the right people into the right positions. It may assume that enough of the right people will be available to fill all the positions and that the people can be identified. To implement this strategy, the HR function would have to create a succession planning process and a corresponding development programme for those identified as successors. It is imperative that prior to committing to this strategy, there is consultation with human resource development units or component managers to determine the probable cost and time parameters of such a programme. Furthermore, this and other HR programmes depend on a human resource information system (HRIS), for instance PERSAL in the government departments, which provides accurate and meaningful data necessary for HR planning. This is where human resource development can influence the strategy adopted by HR.
- Third, the human resource development function should develop and implement its own strategy. Also, certain strategic questions have to be asked. For instance, assuming that the organisation continues its current strategic direction, what are the implications for a human resource development strategy? How does the organisation determine the competencies of the employees? Assuming that there is a needs analysis, how will the organisation store and review the information? Clearly, the development of the HRIS is an important first step. If the organisation decides to

develop the current managers, should these manager's development programmes be centralised at human resource development unit or component or decentralised to the districts or branches? Should they be developed in-house or sourced out from accredited training providers specialising in management development programmes. How does management development fit into the culture of the organisation? The answers to these questions provide the content of a human resource development strategy (Blanchard & Thacker, 2007:36-37).

Opperman and Meyer (2008:6) maintain that human resources and their competencies are the single most important resource of the organisation and make up an important part of its strategic plan that makes up its strategic capabilities. The core competencies are knowledge, skills and activities that, in combination, provide the organisation with a real advantage. Identifying the level of these competencies in an organisation and aligning it within learning objectives will create a platform for all future development initiatives. This will ensure that the performance gap between the business strategy and performance is narrowed through effective learning and development strategies of its personnel.

Gibb (2008:6) argues that human resource development involves a process of observation, planning, action and review to manage the cognitive capabilities and behaviours needed to enable and improve individual, team and organisational performance. Human resource development begins with a phase of observation involving the assessment of HRD needs at work. This can be done at various levels and in various ways. It then involves planning, focusing on setting objectives for HRD and work interventions to achieve specific kinds of results. It subsequently requires action in professionally delivering HRD at work using a range of methods and techniques. The process is completed by review, when HRD experiences and outcomes are evaluated from testing what learners have learned about calculating costs and benefits. This cycle of activities forms the HRD process.

In the context of the bigger picture described above, HRD is the part of people management that deals with the process of facilitating, guiding and coordinating work-related learning and development to ensure that individuals, teams and organisations can perform as desired. A new recruit to a manufacturing company and an established senior manager assuming a new leadership role in a large multinational bank have different learning needs that present distinctive challenges. Nevertheless, the HRD process involved will have some common core feature. Coming to know core parts of the HRD process and being able to deal with them effectively is a significant part of human resource management (HRM) in work organisations. The nature of organisational learning needs will also be distinctive varying with the strategy,

structure and culture of the organisation. The ability to analyse these is also a significant part of general HRM (Gibb, 2008:6).

Gibb (2008:8) further argues that HRD in organisations typically involves major kinds of practice for facilitating, guiding and coordinating HRD. The management of practice is the second major feature that is essential to developing effective performers in work and organisations. Practices include, for example:

- On-the-job learning experiences at the workplace.
- Organisation-based or external short training courses.
- Learning partnerships such as coaching or mentoring.
- E-learning: either computer-based or in a learning centre

There are formal practices such as training courses and informal practices such as peer coaching and mentoring. On-the-job training is defined here as training given at the desk or place where the person usually works. Off-the-job training is defined as training away from the immediate work position at the employer's premises or elsewhere. It includes all forms of courses as long as they are funded or arranged by the employer. If one looks at techniques for HRD service delivery in organisations, the typical approach is to use internal and external off-the-job training. How these practices emerge, are supported and managed, and change as organisations, technologies and priorities change creates a great demand for understanding learning and managing the behaviour of a range of stakeholders from individual learners to specialist training organisations (Gibb, 2008:8).

Swanepoel *et al.*, (2010:446) likewise emphasise the view that the focus of HRD is learning, and its principal aim is to attain the objectives of both the organisation and the individual. HRD takes place over time and concerns itself with the provision of learning, development and training opportunities to improve individual, team and organisational performance. HRD is a long-term investment that will ensure the sustainability of the organisation by ensuring a planned way that employees possess the capabilities to achieve strategic goals. Generally, learning can be viewed as a relatively permanent change in behaviour, and HRD focuses on intentional rather than incidental learning. The learner focuses on a learning experience with the express purpose of learning something. Although a person can learn something incidentally by watching television, reading the newspaper or having a discussion with friends, the main purpose of such activities is not to learn. International learning can be formal or informal. Broadly speaking, formal learning refers to the situation where an employee is taken out of the normal working environment to attend a course or lecture or to do a practical course.

Informal learning, on the other hand, includes non-structured on-the-job training provided by the supervisor or by a person designated to do the training.

The following are a few of the many reasons why organisations train and educate employees:

- to improve the performance of employees who do not meet the required standards of performance once their training needs have been identified;
- to prepare employees for future positions;
- to prepare employees for forthcoming organisational restructuring or for changes in technology;
- to ensure competitiveness in the marketplace by retraining employees;
- to increase the literacy levels of employees;
- to benefit the individual employee, for example, HRD helps the individual to make better decisions and increases job satisfaction which in turn should benefit the organisation; and
- to improve interpersonal skills and to make the organisation a better place to work (Swanepoel *et al.*, 2010:447).

It is of utmost importance that human resource development should be tailored to fit the organisation's strategy and structure.

2.3.1. Human resource development: definition of concepts

This particular section discusses all important concepts related to Human Resource Development (HRD).

2.3.1.1 Human resource development

Meyer *et al.* (2004:2) contend that human resource development can be defined as all the processes, systems, methods, procedures and programmes an organisation uses to develop its human resources to equip its employees to contribute to organisational performance. Kraak (2010:69) defines HRD as the acquisition of education and training through qualifications, the optimal deployment and utilisation of skills and the sharing of accurate and credible information flows across supply and demand in ensuring credible skills planning. Slotte *et al.* (cited by Erasmus *et al.*, 2013:21) maintain that HRD covers functions related primarily to training, career development, organisational development and research and development. These are intended to foster learning capacity at all levels of the organisation, integrate learning culture into its overall business strategy and to promote the organisation's efforts to achieve high quality performance. Accordingly, McLagan (cited by Erasmus *et al.*, 2013:21) suggests that human resource development can be viewed as the synergetic combination of

training and development, organisational development and career development. These bring about greater organisational efficiencies and effectiveness through more fully engaged and skilled employees whose performance and work outputs are consistently and harmoniously linked to the goals of the organisation. Human resource development should be closely linked to the overall business strategy and plan of the organisation. It is about the development of people within the organisation. Well-trained, highly skilled, and knowledgeable employees are more valuable to an organisation than those who are not. Therefore, human resource development relates to the part of human resource management that specifically deals with training and development of the employees. The function of human resource development includes training an individual after he/she is first hired, providing opportunities to learn new skills, distributing resources that are beneficial to the employee's tasks, and any other developmental activities (McLagan cited by Erasmus *et al.*, 2013:21).

Hu (s.a) further defines strategic HRD as a systematic process of developing strategic human resources (which includes talent development, training and development, organisation development, performance development, and leadership development) to enable the organisation to achieve its strategic objectives, which includes financial performances and sustainable competitive advantages.

The above human resource development process elements are defined as follows (Barney, 1991; Wright et al., 1992; 2001, cited by Hu, s.a):

- *Talent development* is a systematic process of hiring, selecting, and staffing talents and nurturing their learning capabilities to enable an organisation to achieve its strategic objectives.
- *Training and development* is a systematic process of providing training and development of employees to enable an organisation to achieve its strategic objectives.
- *Organisation development* is a systematic process of implementing organisation-wide change and development interventions to enable an organisation to achieve its strategic objectives.
- *Performance development* is a systematic process of improving employees' performance, involvement, motivation, and commitment to enable an organisation to achieve its strategic objectives.
- *Leadership development* is a systematic process of improving, enhancing, and developing organisational leaders' competency to enable an organisation to achieve its strategic objectives.

The theoretical foundation of the above definitions comes from the resource-based view of firm and human resource. The resource-based view focuses on an internal analysis of the firm, providing an extremely important avenue for researchers to examine the ways that firms attempt to develop human resources as a competitive advantage. This principle provides a framework for viewing human resources as a pool of unique skills, knowledge, ability, and experience that can provide a resource to serve as a sustainable competitive advantage; which is different from traditional views of neoclassical economics and industrial organisation. Other research by Wright *et al.* (cited by Hu, s.a.) also suggests four criteria for a sustainable competitive advantage and attempts to evaluate the conditions under which human resources meet these criteria:

- In order for human resources to exist as a sustainable competitive advantage, they must provide value to the firm.
- A resource must be rare if it is to be a sustainable competitive advantage.
- In order for a resource to be considered a sustainable competitive advantage, human resources must be inimitable.
- A resource must not have substitutes if it is to be considered a sustainable competitive advantage.

In order to comprehend the concept of human resource development fully, it is imperative to describe the key interrelated, but distinct concepts of ETD as they have the foremost impact on human resource development in an organisation. This brief description is provided to demonstrate or illustrate the significant role that the human resource development function fulfils in an organisation. Erasmus *et al.* (2013:21) emphasise that the concepts of ETD are commonly used in organisations according to their unique needs, sometimes as synonymous. ETD cannot be divided into watertight compartments as a variety of methods and terms may be used within organisations. For instance, employees who are trained for a specific purpose are being developed in the process and training courses contain elements of education. Therefore, for purposes of this study, human resource development as an operational definition could be viewed as a term used to include education, training, development, and can be described as an integrated and holistic, conscious and proactive approach to changing work-related knowledge and behaviour using a range of learning strategies and techniques.

Subsequently, a concise description of the terms education, training and development is provided below.

A) Education

Education could be defined as the deliberate, systematic and sustained effort to transmit, evoke or acquire knowledge, attitudes, values, skills and sensibilities, and any learning that results from the effort, intended or unintended (Erasmus *et al.*, 2013:20). Education also includes the learning activities that occur in an organisation, specifically those that managers and both skilled and unskilled workers require. Unskilled workers could also receive education in the form of basic adult education to help them develop basic literacy and numeracy skills. Buckley and Caple (2004:6) maintain that education is a process and a series of activities that aim to enable an individual to assimilate and develop knowledge, skills, values and understanding that they are not simply related to a narrow field of activity, but allow a broad range of problems to be defined, analysed and solved. Mayo (2006:16) further concurs that education has to do with reframing, refining, or developing the mind, and could affect people's attitudes and values. It is more long-term approach in the sense that an individual is prepared for life. This process starts during childhood when parents and teachers educate a child for the future (Meyer *et al.*, 2004:16).

B) Training

Erasmus *et al.* (2013:20) outline that training refers to the planned acquisition of knowledge, skills and abilities to execute a specific task or job in a vocational setting. It is how an organisation uses a systematic process to modify the knowledge, skills and behaviour of employees to enable it to achieve its objectives. It is task oriented because it focuses on the work performed in an organisation based on job or task descriptions. The task or job requirements will determine the training standards for a particular job. Training aims to improve employee performance, usually when work standards are low because of a lack of knowledge or skills or poor attitudes among individual employees or groups. Buckley and Caple (2004:5) maintain that training is a planned and systematic effort to modify or develop knowledge or skill or attitude through learning experience to achieve effective performance in an activity or range of activities. Its purpose in the work environment is to enable an individual to acquire abilities to perform adequately a given task. Mayo (2006:16) further maintains that training is concerned with enhancing both the know-how (for specialised knowledge and skills in business, technical and professional areas) and with developing personal skills. Also, Blanchard and Thacker (2007:4) argue that it provides employees with the knowledge and skills to perform more effectively. This allows them to meet current job requirements or prepares them to meet the inevitable changes that occur in their jobs. It is generally correct that training requires opportunities for speedy and immediate application and consolidation in the workplace, without this, its effects may dissipate. Furthermore, training is an opportunity for learning. What is learned depends on many factors, such as the design and implementation

of training, the motivation and learning style of the trainees and the learning climate of the organisation (Blanchard & Thacker, 2007:4).

Training is of great importance from several perspectives. It not only helps the organisation to execute its chosen activities, but also helps to secure the competitive advantage that it desires (Blanchard & Thacker, 2007:6). For an organisation to be able to implement its business strategy, the primary requirement is that it should possess the skills needed to perform its activities effectively. An effective training system is a set of processes designed to transform organisational inputs into output that meets organisational needs. Training is not just running training programmes or putting a large percentage of employees through some training. Viewing training as simply a programme or set of programmes is too short-sighted. Training should be viewed as a set of integrated processes in which organisational and employee needs are analysed and responded to in a rational, logical, and strategic manner. When training is conducted in this manner, the organisation will improve, the value of the training unit will increase and further investment in training is likely to occur.

C) Development

Buckley and Caple (2004:16) refer to development as the general enhancement and growth of an individual's skills and abilities through conscious and unconscious learning. Erasmus and Van Dyk (cited by Meyer *et al.*, 2004:16) contextualise development from a broader perspective in which emphasis is placed on employee development rather than the development of a particular individual. Development occurs when ongoing learning opportunities are created so that employees can improve and maintain high levels of performance. Examples of development interventions are mentorship programmes, career development and ongoing seminars that give employees the opportunity to keep abreast of changes and trends in the business environment or in a particular field.

Buckley and Caple (2004:17) further contend that the short, medium, and long-term effects of training can only be experienced to the full if training is not only managed professionally, but is also linked with the corporate mission or purpose. Training plans should be related closely to corporate strategy and built into a training policy. This policy should describe in detail the organisation's commitment to training, the needs of both the business and individuals, together with opportunities for individual development. Furthermore, details of budgeting, priorities, roles and processes should be included. The assessment of training needs should be considered also from the top of the organisation downwards rather than being a mainly individually orientated bottom-upwards process.

For Blanchard and Thacker (2007:20), the terms training and development refer to distinct but related aspects of learning. Training is a set of activities, whereas development is the desired

outcomes of those activities. Training is the systematic process of providing an opportunity to learn knowledge, skills and attitudes for current or future jobs, whereas development is the result of learning. Education focuses on more general knowledge, skills and attitudes.

D) Learning

Siefert (cited by Van Dyk *et al.* 2007: 201) argues that the concept of learning refers to a relatively permanent or lasting change in a behavioural tendency, which is a result of specific experiences or repetitions of an experience. Blanchard and Thacker (2007:16) further explain that definitions for learning found in the literature vary according to the theoretical background of authors. Unless otherwise indicated, the term learning means a relatively permanent change in cognition, which is understanding and thinking that result from experience and that directly influences behaviour (Buckley & Caple, 2004: 4). These descriptions of learning show that learning is a process whereby an individual acquires knowledge, skills and attitudes through experience, reflection, study or instruction.

D1) Learning organisation

Another significant and critical dimension in the human resource development narrative is the introduction of the concept of a learning organisation. Peddler *et al.* (cited by Buckley & Caple, 2004:11) refer to the concept of a learning organisation as an organisation that facilitates the learning of its members and continually transforms itself. Learning by the organisation and by individuals within it is critical to its survival and development. Any organisation that describes itself as a learning organisation recognises the need for change and actively pursues it. This is reflected in its corporate vision and business objectives which are communicated to and shared by its members at all levels. In order to realise its business objectives and ultimately its vision the senior management team should show its commitment to the concept of the learning organisation by the comprehensive resourcing of learning strategies and opportunities. These resources should include appropriate rewards for learning, materials, time, support and empowerment.

Senge (1990:10-13) describes five disciplines that must be mastered when introducing learning into an organisation:

- *Systems thinking.* It is the ability to see the big picture and to distinguish patterns instead of conceptualising change as isolated events. Systems thinking needs the other four disciplines to enable a learning organisation to be realised. There must be a paradigm shift from being unconnected to inter-connected to the whole, and from blaming our problems on something external to a realisation that how we operate, our actions, can create problems.

- *Personal mastery.* It begins by becoming committed to lifelong learning, and is the spiritual cornerstone of a learning organisation. Personal mastery involves being more realistic, focusing on becoming the best person possible, and striving for a sense of commitment and excitement in our careers to facilitate the realisation of potential.
- *Mental models.* It must be managed because they do prevent new powerful insights and organisational practices from becoming implemented. The process begins with self-reflection; unearthing deeply held belief structures and generalisations, and understanding how they dramatically influence the way we operate in our own lives. Until there is realisation and a focus on openness, real change can never take place.
- *Building shared visions.* Visions cannot be dictated because they always begin with the personal visions of individual employees, who may not agree with the leader's vision. What is needed is a genuine vision that elicits commitment in good times and bad, and has the power to bind an organisation together. Building a shared vision fosters a commitment to the long term.
- *Team learning.* Team learning is important because modern organisations operate based on teamwork, which means that organisations cannot learn if team members do not come together and learn. It is a process of developing the ability to create desired results; to have a goal in mind and work together to attain it.

Mayo (2006:15) further states that the following are components that human resource development seeks to enhance through learning:

- *Values and attitudes* surround all our other capabilities and drive many of our behaviours. They are not easily changed, although some initiatives are targeted at them, for example, in workplace behaviour or attitudes to customers.
- *Qualifications* are indicators of depth of knowledge in specific areas.
- *Experience* is about the diversity of contexts that have been experienced, the depth and variety of challenges and particular situations.
- *Personal skill* is the core of most competency frameworks and includes a mix of behaviours derived from personality, experience and training.
- *Know-how* covers business, technical and professional knowledge and skills.
- *Know-who* is often neglected, but critical for success – the range of contacts, internal and external, that can provide information, expertise and support.

A learning organisation is therefore one that encourages learning among its people by promoting an exchange of information between employees, therefore building a more

knowledgeable workforce. Consequently, organisations tend to be more flexible as an enhanced knowledge base enables the workforce to improve their practices through adapting to new ideas.

The human resource development concepts of skill, competency, capacity, knowledge, values and attitudes are terms that have to be understood thoroughly to manage the education, training and development in any organisation. This is discussed next.

2.3.1.2 Skill(s)

A skill is an ability and capacity attained through thoughtful, systematic, and sustained effort to smoothly and adaptively carry out complex activities or job functions involving ideas (cognitive skills), things (technical skills), and/or people (interpersonal skills). Lewis *et al.* (2008:25) refer to a skill as the ability to do something well. This ability is usually gained through training or experience. It relates to the necessary competencies that can be proficiently applied in a particular context for a defined purpose.

2.3.1.3 Competency

A competency relates to a cluster of related abilities, commitments, knowledge, and skills that enable a person or an organisation to act effectively in a job or situation. Competence indicates sufficiency of knowledge and skills that enable someone to act in a wide variety of situations. Each level of responsibility has its own requirements, and therefore competence can be reached in any period of a person's life or at any stage of his or her career (BusinessDictionary.com, 2015:1). Blanchard and Thacker (2007:19) explain that a competence is a set of knowledge, skills and attitudes (KSA) that enables a person to be successful at a number of similar tasks. In the broadest sense, a job is broken down into a set of tasks and the competencies required to perform the job are determined through an analysis of the tasks. A competency is more than just KSAs, it is the ability to integrate and use KSAs to perform a task successfully. A carpenter, for instance, has knowledge about different types of wood, tools and their uses, and types of finishes that can be applied to wood. This knowledge alone will not make that person a good carpenter. The carpenter may also possess a set of skills such as cutting, shaping, joining and finishing. These skills alone will not make a good carpenter. The carpenter might love working with wood, place a high value on quality and find great satisfaction working on the details of planning a project. These factors alone will not make a good carpenter. It is the combination of these KSAs and others such as hand-eye coordination, visual acuity, patience and judgement that allow the carpenter to become

proficient. To be successful at carpentry or any other occupation, a person must acquire multiple competencies (Blanchard & Thacker, 2007:19).

Competencies comprise the following:

- Practical competence: the ability to execute a set of tasks.
- Foundational competence: the ability to comprehend what we or others are doing and why.
- Reflexive competence: the ability to integrate or connect our performance with an understanding of the performance of others, so that we can learn from our actions and are able to adapt to changes and unforeseen circumstances (BusinessDictionary.com, 2015:1).

Also related to the above explanation of competency is the concept of *individual capacity*. This concept is explained next.

2.3.1.4 Individual capacity

Individual capacity refers to the knowledge, skills, competence, behaviour, commitment, experience, attitude and values demonstrated by staff. Such capacity is developed through formal, non-formal and informal learning. Individual capacity is enhanced through education, work readiness, staff profiling, performance agreements, recognition and reward, learning frameworks, skills programmes and so on (PSETA, 2014:99).

2.3.1.5 Knowledge

Blanchard and Thacker (2007:17) contend that knowledge is a body of facts, principles, procedures and information acquired over time. This category of learning refers to the information acquired and placed into memory (*declarative knowledge*), how the information is organised for use together with what is already known (*procedural knowledge*), and the understanding of how, when and why information is used and is useful (*strategic knowledge*). Knowledge taught at school forms a crucial part of the kind of learners that will emerge from the education system. The outcomes for all learning areas include content knowledge and problem solving and how to integrate information learned across different learning areas. This will ensure that learners are equipped with relevant knowledge when they complete formal schooling. Gibb (2008:29) sustains this view by arguing that one long held view has the tripartite identification of knowledge, skills and attitudes (KSA) as constituent factors. Any

assessment of needs will lead to one or a combination of these. Kraiger *et al.* (cited by Gibb, 2008:29) also recognise three domains, which they define them as the following:

- *Cognitive learning*: needed for activities to enhance the acquisition and adaptation of knowledge.
- *Skills-based learning*: the ability to execute a sequence of behaviours smoothly.
- *Affective learning*: changes in attitude and motivation.

Kraiger *et al.* (cited by Gibb, 2008:29) further recognise, as mentioned earlier in this section, that needs in the cognitive domain could have three forms:

- *Verbal learning*, in the form of declarative knowledge (know-what).
- *Procedural knowledge* (know-how).
- *Tacit knowledge organisation*, structuring or mapping such knowledge.

Clearly, effective performance in work roles requires the development and combination of a number of constituent factors. How these factors are determined will shape how human resource development needs are defined.

2.3.1.6 Values

The Report of the Working Group on Values in Education, 2005, for the National Department of Education of South Africa (cited by Lewis *et al.*, 2008:54) gives the following definition of values: “by values we mean desirable qualities of character such as honesty, integrity, tolerance, diligence, responsibility, compassion, altruism, justice, respect, and so on”. The report continues to argue that “the education system should ensure that our learners possess these values not only for personal development, but also for the evolution of a South African national character.”

Furthermore, Robbins (cited by Lewis *et al.*, 2008:54) also argue that values are important because they lay the foundation for the understanding of attitudes and motivation and because they influence perceptions. Values influence attitudes and behaviour. The source of values can be attributed to factors like national culture, parental dictates, teachers, friends and similar environmental influences. A significant portion of the values that people hold is established in the early years from parents, teachers and others. However, values are not constant. They changes as people’s lifestyle and work environment change, or due to factors such as globalisation and the continuing and increasing use of information technology. The pace of life

is faster and it is possible that recent entrants into the work force are less willing to make personal sacrifices for the sake of their employment. These changes indicate that the curriculum that is provided in the schools should always be evaluated to check its relevance to current activities and challenges.

2.3.1.7 Attitudes

According to Lewis *et al.* (2008:54), values and attitudes are related as they are acquired from parents, teachers and peer group members. Attitudes are evaluative statements either favourable or unfavourable concerning objects, people, or events. They reflect how one feels about something. Attitude is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company, a church and a home. The remarkable thing is that individuals have a choice every day regarding the attitude they will embrace for that day. Individuals cannot change their past, they cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. Individuals cannot change the inevitable. The only thing individuals can do is play on the string they have, and that is their attitude. Individuals are in charge of their attitudes. Clearly, the education system should focus on teaching young adults to take responsibility for their attitudes and these should be positive and constructive because what is being taught at school today will be reflected by the kind of adults the society will have in future (Lewis *et al.*, 2008:54).

2.4 APPROACHES IN TRAINING TO HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

There are various approaches to human resource development. Each approach has its unique and distinct advantages and disadvantages and may be more or less successful depending on the specific circumstances in the organisation. Eight different approaches with regard to HRD are discussed and highlighted in the sections below.

2.4.1 The educational approach

Buckley and Caple (2004:6) argue that in terms of precision, education is person-oriented. It is a broader process of change and its objectives are less amenable to precise definition. Education attempts to increase the variability of individual differences by facilitating learning in such a manner that each individual comes to behave in a way that is particular to him. It is an organic process that brings about less predictable changes in the individual. Education usually provides more theoretical and conceptual frameworks designed to stimulate an

individual's analytical and critical abilities. Erasmus *et al.* (2013:23) also maintain that this approach serves individual needs. The learning content of most formal educational programmes is externally developed and frequently leads to recognised qualifications. This is normally a long-term planning process involving attending classes, or open and distance learning. Meyer *et al.* (2004:16) further state that education is not restricted to learning that takes place at school. It can also take place in the work situation when an organisation provides education opportunities to its employees to prepare them for challenges of life as manifest in the work situation, for example, educating employees on the implications of HIV/AIDS in the workplace or sensitising and making employees aware of the changing customer and market profile by means of diversity education sessions.

2.4.2 The systems approach

Buckley and Caple (2004:19) describe a system as a whole that functions as a whole by virtue of the interdependence of its parts. Interdependency or interaction of its component parts is therefore a prime characteristic of systems and organisations. Should a change occur in any one component of the system, it will affect all the other components either directly or indirectly. This suggests a certain holism, which means that a system must be seen as a functional unit (Van Dyk *et al.*, 2002:79). The system receives input from sources in the external environment. Then there is the transforming mechanism that acts upon these inputs and create outputs for users. The system may have a number of feedback mechanisms that either regulate its current output or require changes in the nature of the outputs. The organisation as a whole may be described in systems terms or its component parts.

Looking at training as a sub-system of the organisation, it receives personnel, materials and information from other functional sub-systems such as marketing, from other more general sub-systems such as the one that decides and communicates corporate objectives, or from externally generated feedback. The transforming mechanism in this training sub-system produces outputs which include the knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired by trainees. The users and other sub-systems should then provide the training system with appropriate feedback. This kind of model is essentially an 'open training system' which requires a proactive approach from the trainer. To operate effectively in an open system trainers have to be aware of and alert to the realities of and the changes in other sub-systems and organisations beyond their own that may impact on the form, content and conduct of their training efforts (Buckley & Caple, 2004:20).

In the past, too much training has been of the 'closed' system variety, which made it unresponsive to organisational needs. Blanchard and Thacker (2007:4) contend that open

systems have a dynamic relationship with their environment, but closed systems do not interact with their environment. A system such as a business must be responsive to the needs and demands of its environment because the environment provides the input needed for the system to replenish itself. For instance, if a business is responsive to the needs of society by providing valued goods and services (output), it receives financial and goodwill credits (input). The business uses these inputs to continue operating. If the business does not provide sufficient value to its environment, it will fail because the environment will not provide the necessary inputs for the system to replenish itself.

Many open systems exist as part of another open system, and are therefore sub-systems of that larger system. For instance, training can be seen as a sub-system within the larger HR unit, which is itself a subsystem of the company. The organisation's mission, strategies and resources all represent sources of input into the training sub-system. Organisational needs, training budget, staff, equipment, and so forth are all inputs from the organisation to the training sub-system. Training processes transform these inputs into usable outputs for the organisation such as improved knowledge, skills and attitudes, job performance and so on. The point here is that organisations invest money in the training function for which it expects a favourable return. From time to time, the organisation will examine the returns from training and determine whether the training system is working properly and what further investment is appropriate (Blanchard & Thacker, 2007:5-6).

2.4.3 The problem-centred approach

This approach solves short-term problems and is ad hoc in nature. It is dominated by operational problems that determine the needs of the individual or the group. This approach is often quite acceptable because it is pragmatic and budgets are allocated for special operational needs. The success of this approach depends on the identification of high-level skills and not the redefinition of an operational problem. On the surface, it seems to solve work problems and to be cost-effective, but the underlying fact is that the problem is often not properly diagnosed (Erasmus *et al.*, 2013:25).

Problem solving is defined as a behavioural process that:

- make available a variety of response alternatives for dealing with a problematic situation,
- increase the probability of selecting the most effective response from among these alternatives.

Five (5) stages of problem solving are identified:

- General orientation or "set"
- Problem definition and formulation
- Generation of alternatives
- Decision making
- Verification

Training in problem solving is conceptualised as a form of self-control training, that is, the individual "learns how to solve problems" and discovers for himself the most effective way of responding. General guidelines are presented for clinical application with cases characterised by a deficit in effective behaviour and its emotional consequences.

2.4.4 The action learning approach

Margerison (cited by Jerling, 1997:141) states that action learning is based on the concept of helping learners to learn from their day-to-day practice. This is the foundation of action learning. It means that learners can:

- learn from experience;
- share that experience with others;
- have colleagues criticise and advise;
- take that advice and implement it; and
- review with those colleagues the action taken and the lessons that are learned.

Learners really begin to learn effectively when they are confronted with difficulties and have the opportunity to share their experiences with others constructively. This forms the basis for assessing how to improve individuals' knowledge, skills and attitudes and the tasks they have to perform. Accordingly, Erasmus *et al.* (2013:25) maintain that the action learning approach focuses on managers who study real-life problems and how to solve those problems within a real life-life environment. This approach offers a challenge that in turn provides motivation and demands the transformation of problems into opportunities. Blanchard and Thacker (2007:462) also sustain this view by arguing that action learning is effective because it focuses on exactly what managers and executives have to do, which is to come up with effective solutions to complex problems, then implement and evaluate them. It requires working in teams (to problem solve) and on their own (researching the issue and gathering relevant data), both of which are important for effective managers and executives. The difference between traditional meetings to solve problems and action learning is the focus on the learning that takes place. The facilitator helps the team through debriefing after the meetings are over. The focus would be on how members communicated with each other, how they provide feedback,

and how well they are following their plan of action. The facilitator also gets the members to reflect on how they are approaching the problem and how their basic assumptions might affect their view regarding the selection of a solution to the problem. Once the group determines what specific training is required to help the team to be more effective, just-in-time training is provided. The result is that not only do organisations get solutions to problems, but the team members develop skills necessary to be effective managers. Moreover, they learn how to continuously learn from the process.

Furthermore, Alberts and Motlatla (1998:68) explain that because learning can take place on the job, managers are often concerned with how they can teach employees to behave in ways that most benefit the organisation. When attempting to mould individuals by guiding their learning and training in guaranteed steps, the behaviour is shaped. Behaviour is shaped by systematically reinforcing each step that moves the individual closer to the desired response. For instance, if an employee who is regularly half an hour late for work comes in only twenty minutes late, this improvement can be reinforced. As the employee's response gets closer to the desired behaviour the reinforcement is increased.

2.4.5 *The analytical approach*

The analytical approach is associated with organisational training needs assessments, followed by analysis of knowledge, skills and attitudes required for specific jobs. Cascio (2006:292-293) explains that the assessment phase serves as a foundation for the entire training effort. The information is drawn from job specifications and job descriptions and is generally utilised to develop courses for new job entrants. When job performance can be measured, the so-called training gap is determined and training programmes can be developed based on this information. Accordingly, the training and development phase and evaluation phase depend on inputs from assessment. The purpose of the assessment phase is to define what it is the employee should learn in relation to desired job behaviours. If this is not carefully done, the training programme as a whole will have little chance of achieving what it is intended to do.

Bittel and Newstrom (1990:219) argue that there are two major ways to identify training needs, which are essentially gaps between expected and actual performance. Both ways, informal and formal, are potentially useful. Informally, it is important to be on the alert for any of the following conditions:

- Too much scrap or rework
- Sub-par production rates

- Out-of-line operating costs
- A high accident rate
- Excessive overtime
- A general state of poor morale

Although these symptoms may indicate the need for training, they may also result from poor employee selection, motivational problems, or job-related conditions. Consequently, interpretation of these symptoms is best supplemented by formal analysis of needs.

Formal approaches to assessing training needs are more structured. They attempt to identify the people who need training and the type of training they need and even to determine whether or not training is a viable solution to performance problems. Common methods of assessing needs include the use of surveys, interviews and skills tests and the observation of employees while at work. If these methods are employed regularly, they can be especially useful for identifying trends or making comparisons with other employees or departments. For instance, training needs for supervisors have to be identified through careful observations, which indicate poor performance, low production, high cost, poor product quality, high scrap, spoilage, wastage, accidents, absenteeism, and turnover. Although this approach is time consuming, its basis remains very important.

2.4.6 The competence approach

Gibb (2008:32) points out that the concept of competence, imported from psychology, became widely used as an alternative to the concept of skills and many organisations have created sets of competence descriptions for their workforces. Competence in this sense comprises the key attitudes desired and expected of superior performers. It involves setting out a list of core qualities and standards by which all staff in an organisation can be evaluated or appraised, equally and consistently. Accordingly, Erasmus *et al.* (2013:26) maintain that the competence approach describes the outcome for a specific job and does not focus on the learning method. The student and/or trainer can decide how the student can become competent. Standards in terms of this approach are described in terms of the following:

- *Elements of competence.* An action, behaviour or outcome that a person must be able to demonstrate.
- *Performance criteria.* Statements against which the performance of an individual is measured.
- *Range statements.* Statements that define the range or breath of competence required for the individual to be considered occupationally competent.

In this approach the focus should be on considering and managing these three elements or aspects that collectively form the standard.

2.4.7 The training process or procedural approach

The on-the-job application of skills and knowledge learned in training, referred to as transfer of training, is the subject of increasing interest among management, performance technologists, and trainers. As training budgets increase, questions are being asked about the return on this investment and practitioners are searching for strategies to increase the likelihood of transfer of training. Also, there are two factors that are commonly cited as inhibiting the transfer of training process, namely low motivation and an unfavourable perception of supervisor support. A model of transfer of training, based on force field analysis, which considers the process of transfer of training in terms of inhibiting and supporting factors, is therefore essential. Potential strategies to support greater transfer of training are undeniably enormously vital (Halim & Ali. 2016 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/W5830E/w583e0h.htm>).

Blanchard and Thacker (2007:6) argue that an effective system is a set of processes designed to transform organisational inputs into output that meets organisational needs. Training is not just running training programmes or putting a large percentage of employees through some training. Viewing training as simply a programme or set of programmes is too short-sighted. Training should be viewed as a set of integrated processes during which organisational and employee needs are analysed and responded to in a rational, logical, and strategic manner. When training is conducted in this manner, the organisation will improve, the value of the training unit will increase and further investment in training is likely to occur. The model of a training process includes the following phases:

- Triggering event
- Needs analysis phase
- Design phase
- Development phase
- Implementation phase
- Evaluation phase

Each of these phases is explained in detail in the training models that are discussed in this section. In addition to the model, Erasmus *et al.* (2013:26) list the following procedures that accompany the training process or procedural approach:

- The existence of a training policy.
- The inclusion of training responsibilities in job descriptions.

- The regular and periodic definition of training needs.
- The creation of training plans.
- The provision of training resources.
- The implementation of training plans.
- The assessment of training results.

These procedures set out the basic requirements to follow in a training intervention and are widely used (Erasmus *et al.*, 2013:26).

2.4.8 Knowledge management system

Lippincott (cited by Meyer, 2007:118) defines knowledge management systems as a method or solution that enables an organisation to capture and distribute its knowledge assets in a way that is accessible and relevant to the individual performer. It is a process of generating, capturing and using information to enhance the organisational performance. It is impossible to create a learning organisation if the knowledge inside and outside the organisation is not systematically managed. Knowledge is the key feature of organisational learning. Organisations have knowledge in the form of technology, databases, systems, processes, procedures, documents, reports and people expertise. The challenge is that it is often difficult for an individual to access this knowledge at the particular moment when they need it. Moreover, most employees experience information overload in the knowledge economy. They are drowning in information but starving for knowledge that can be utilised. The other challenge of knowledge management is to develop a system in which people can make sense of information, sift out what is valuable knowledge and share it with the right people at the right time and place (Meyer, 2007:118).

A knowledge management system consists of various processes that should be systematically managed to ensure the effective sharing and use of knowledge in organisation. Katz (cited by Meyer, 2007:118) identifies and catalogues the following knowledge management processes:

- Generating new knowledge.
- Accessing knowledge from external sources.
- Representing knowledge in documents, databases and software.
- Embedding knowledge in processes, products and services.
- Transferring existing knowledge around the organisation.
- Using accessible knowledge in problem solving and decision making.
- Facilitating knowledge growth through culture and incentives.

- Measuring the value of knowledge assets and the impact of management (Meyer, 2007:118)

The management of these processes is essential in ensuring that real organisational learning and performance improvement occurs at all levels of the organisation. Knowledge management facilitates continuous and ongoing processes of learning, unlearning and relearning. Only when a well-developed knowledge management system is institutionalised in an organisation can the process begin to develop an appropriate learning strategy. Furthermore, while building a knowledge-based society and economy, the value of human resources and management expertise become particularly important to human resources management. Therefore, depending on the strategic direction of the organisation, a variety of approaches could be adopted simultaneously to achieve strategic objectives.

The discussion reveals that the systems approach and the training process or procedural approach is more appropriate and applicable to the ECDS.

2.5 EDUCATION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT (ETD) MODELS

Unquestionably, much depends on how human resource development is practised in an organisation. Garavan (cited by Buckley & Caple 2004:20) identifies and catalogues five (5) models based on the organisation's perceptions of the meaning of ETD. These five (5) models are explained as follows:

- In the *rudimentary model*, a single individual takes responsibility for the human resource development function, but his or her activities relate mainly to operational needs. Line managers and those in professional positions look after development and education. Working with this model often results in sporadic and unstructured learning activities.
- The *intermediate model* is representative of moderate-sized organisations. The human resource development function is a department in its own right, but the reporting line may not be part of human resource development line, but another function or indirectly responsible to the chief executive. The range of its work is likely to include giving information about training and development activities and presenting training and developmental programmes.
- The *specialised model* is more sophisticated. It has a centralised human resource development function and is self-sufficient to a large extent. It is staffed by full-time

specialised trainers who enjoy the benefits of being well funded to offer a wide range of general and specialised activities.

- The *developmental model* puts emphasis on continuous learning, with learning objectives being identified from real organisational problems. The model recognises that learners direct their own learning rather than being directed by and dependent on a trainer. However, there may not be a direct strategic link.
- The fifth model is described as the *strategically linked model*. This model, as its title suggests, ensures that human resource development is integrated into strategic planning and that human resource development practices are accepted and used by line managers as part of their everyday work.

This section described the five (5) possible models that are based on the organisation's perceptions of the meaning of ETD. The next section presents the general training models largely consisting of various steps, such as determining training needs and job analysis, programme design, presenting training and evaluating training.

It must, however, be pointed out that not all of these models are appropriate to all situations. The appropriateness of any particular model will be determined by, inter alia, the purpose and objectives of the analysis, the type of organisation, the resources available, including time and money, and even the personal predisposition of the user.

2.5.1 Nadler's critical events model

The critical events model provides a logical, straightforward approach to design an education. The training and development experience is aimed at correcting the problem that originally gave rise to the need. The model has a built-in validity check and openness in the form of the evaluation and feedback loop that is part of each event in the model (Jerling, 1996:75). It is a general model for training and views the training process in holistic terms. The Nadler's critical events model (CEM) is predicated on the following critical events, which are central to ETD.

Langenbach (cited by Jerling, 1996:72) discusses each of the events in the model as follows:

- *Identify the needs of the organisation.* The first event reminds us that the model was designed for use within an organisation where ETD is secondary to and supportive of other goals and aimed at increasing the effectiveness of the organisation.
- *Specify job performance.* The job referred to here is the one associated with the need of the organisation. The fact that there is a need indicates that the job is not being

performed as it should be, there is a gap between actual and ideal performance. It is therefore important to specify the performance requirements of the job.

- *Identify learner needs.* In the previous event, specific job performance was specified. In this event the focus is on the individual and the intention is to identify gaps between the ideal and actual situation that will prevent the individual from performing according to set standards.
- *Determining objectives.* The objective is the standard of what is to be accomplished or achieved by an ETD activity. Within this event we find two levels of objectives, namely those relating to the ETD programme in general, and those relating to learning experiences that are more specific. The ETD objectives must relate to the organisation and learning needs determined by earlier events, for instance, the improvement of selling skills to improve market share. Objectives related to ETD experiences are focused on individual learning outcomes, for instance, to sell twenty vehicles per month.
- *Build curriculum.* We can say that a curriculum is a series of lesson plans. Each lesson begins with a list of objectives that express the skills, knowledge and attitudes that the learner must acquire. It is vital that the objectives correspond to the content of the lesson plan.
- *Select instructional strategies.* This includes the various learning activities that are used by all involved in the learning experience, for example, group discussions and role play.
- *Obtain instructional resources.* In this event all the necessary resources, for example, facilities, facilitators, equipment, materials and so on will be made available to support the instructional strategies.
- *Conduct training (ETD).* In this event the designed processes are implemented. Some changes may still be made during this event, but it is assumed that at this stage the design is complete. The learners are identified and the actual ETD begins.
- *Evaluation and feedback.* During each of these events, except for identifying the needs of the organisation, evaluation and feedback occur to make sure that each event is completed effectively.

The above shows that it is important to remember that Nadler's critical events model begins with an organisation's need. The initial analysis of the need determines whether an ETD programme is an applicable response, in other words, whether an ETD programme will meet the organisational need. Jerling (1997:75) states that the model was constructed for those

instances or cases when ETD will solve a problem within an organisation with the ultimate objective of enhancing organisation efficacy.

2.5.2 *Camp, Blanchard and Huszco's training model*

Camp *et al.* (1986:5) present a basic outline of a training model referred to as a skeletal model to spell out their definition of an effective training process, rather than to serve as a general training model. In addition to soliciting continuous feedback, eight sequential steps are identified, namely diagnosing; establishing objectives; identifying resources; developing the curriculum; planning logistics; performing training; facilitating transfer of learning; and evaluation (Camp *et al.*, 1986:5).

Erasmus *et al.* (2013:32) agree with the above assertion and further maintain that training programmes that are developed and presented within an organisation must be geared towards definite needs.

- Step 1. It is important to carry out a comprehensive training needs analysis.
- Step 2. This step involves determining the training objectives. The training objectives serve as guidelines for the rest of the training programme.
- Step 3. The process takes into account the fact that training decisions have to be taken based on identified available resources such as time, money, people and materials. Training is an expensive process and funds set aside for this purpose must be used in a cost-effective manner.
- Step 4. This step is concerned with the development of the curriculum.
- Step 5. This step is concerned with the planning of logistics, which involves, among others things, arranging classrooms and presentation aids according to the planned mode of delivery.
- Step 6. In this step the physical presentation of the training has to be professional.
- Step 7. This step is concerned with facilitating the transfer of training to ensure a positive change on job behaviour. The aim is to improve job performance.
- Step 8. In this step the training data has to be gathered and evaluated because the future of training in an organisation is decided based on such data.

2.5.3 *High impact model*

According to Chang (1995:16), training is too often treated as a quick fix in practice, and consequently, it serves only as a Band-Aid which works itself loose over time. Successful training on the other hand, that is, training that enhances performance and ultimately the

bottom-line, is training that has a lasting impact. To have any lasting impact, training should be regarded as a process of deliberate planning, strategic implementation, and follow-through that must be carefully observed. Therefore, the focus is on the significance of effective targeted training. Extending the model beyond the evaluation stage, the point at which most other training models end, sustains the results or outcomes of training, and provides the required follow-through.

Erasmus *et al.* (2013:33) further explain that the high-impact training model is a six-phase process that focuses on providing effective targeted training. Each phase of the model moves the training effort forward. The result of each phase is the input for the next phase.

- Phase 1. *Identifying training needs.* During this phase, the specific training needed to improve job performance is identified. The reasons for training must be investigated and the required training has to be devised to satisfy the need described.
- Phase 2. *Map the training approach.* Once the training needs have been identified, measurable objectives must be set and the design must be mapped out. The objectives define what type of training is required in detail to improve job performance. To develop the design plan, objectives are used to guide the trainer through the process of choosing an approach to meet the objectives.
- Phase 3. *Produce effective learning tools.* The actual development of the training approach that has been chosen is done during this phase and the actual training materials are created. These might include training manuals or material to support on-the-job training or an instructor-led course. The products of this course are manuals, audio-visual aids, job aids, etc. Objectives set in phase 2 are used as a guide to develop training materials.
- Phase 4. *Apply successful training techniques.* During this phase, the training is delivered to the target group. The tools chosen in phase 3 will determine the approach during this phase. For a computer-based course, the training must be delivered based on a one-on-one coaching approach.
- Phase 5. *Calculate measurable results.* During this phase, the trainer must determine whether the training that was applied in phase 4 has contributed to job improvement, the results must be communicated and redesign measures, if needed, must be taken.
- Phase 6. *Track ongoing follow-through.* Once the success of phase 5 has been determined, the trainer must ensure that training remains objective. Organisations change constantly, and appropriate training must be developed to adapt.

Deducing from the above, it is clear that this model is designed to help organisations to implement training programmes that will deliver actionable training and development interventions that can be monitored and measured to improve both the training operations and the training programmes themselves.

All of the above three models are essentially appropriate and can be applicable to the ECDS.

2.6 THEORIES OF LEARNING WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Alberts and Motlatla (1998:68) argue that learning takes place all the time. A generally accepted description of learning is therefore any relatively permanent change in behaviour that occurs as a result of experience. The total learning process consists of the following:

- Implantation, which refers to the forming of the “trace” or change in the organisation of brain cells.
- Retention (memory), and
- Reproduction

There is no single theory of learning that that trainer should follow and completely obey. The trend is to borrow from the different theories when and where they are appropriate. Different learning theories apply according to the nature of the learning content, the abilities and nature of the students, the goals of the organisation and the learning resources available (Erasmus *et al.*, 2013:126).

The following three theories have been offered to explain the process through which we acquire patterns of behaviour:

- Classical conditioning: This occurs when an individual responds to some stimulus that would not usually produce such a response.
- Operant conditioning: This takes place when desired voluntary behaviour leads to a reward or prevents punishment. People learn to behave in a certain way to get something or avoid something. This includes positive reinforcement. Rewards are most effective if they immediately follow the desired response. Behaviour that is not rewarded or punished is less likely to be repeated.
- Social learning: People can learn through observation and direct experience. Much of what we have learned comes from watching models such as parents, teachers, managers and television. When setting up employee training programmes, the

following processes significantly improve the likelihood that the programmes will be successful:

- *Attentional processes*: People only learn from a model when they recognise and pay attention to its critical features. We should be most influenced by models that are attractive, repeatedly available and which we think are important or similar to us.
- *Retention process*: The strength of a model's influence will depend on how well the individual remembers the model's action.
- *Motor reproduction process*: After people have observed a new kind of behaviour in the model, they must practice this action themselves.
- *Reinforcement process*: Individuals will be motivated to exhibit the modelled behaviour if positive incentives or rewards are provided (Alberts & Motlatla, 1998:68).

Therefore, learning theories are conceptual frameworks describing how information is absorbed, processed, and retained during learning. Cognitive, emotional, environmental influences and prior experience all play a part in how understanding, or a world view, is acquired or changed and knowledge and skills retained.

2.6.1 Behavioural theory of learning

Erasmus *et al.* (2013:127) argue that major theorists in the school of behaviourism are Thorndike, Guthrie, Pavlov, Skinner, Watson, Hull and Tolman. Behaviourism relates to the concept of psychology, which sees its essence in the examination and analysis of that which is publicly observable and measurable. According to Seifert (1983:146) and Bearwell and Holden (cited by Van Dyk *et al.* 1997: 201), behaviourist theories are mainly concerned with the stimuli that immediately precede the learned behaviour. Learning is seen as a process through which a particular stimulus, repeatedly associated with or conditioned by desirable or undesirable experiences, comes to evoke a particular response. In addition, they are concerned with the consequences of behaviour, which are called reinforcements.

Jerling (1997:106) also explains that behaviourism has had a lasting impact on learning theory and ETD practice. Those who support behaviourism use detailed and accurate psychological research to formulate principles that explain and predict relationships between stimuli, that is, the means to induce behaviour. Behaviour refers to observable actions that are presumably in response to stimuli, and consequent conditions that relate to rewards, or punishment for action. Accordingly, behaviourism stresses the importance of external environmental

influences on specific, observable and measurable behaviour. Although those who belong to the behaviourist school hold a number of differing views, they share three primary assumptions. First, attention is focused on present behaviour, and not on what happened in the past to determine behaviour. Second, only external and observable phenomena are important. Third, the desired results of learning are specified in measurable terms before learning takes place.

2.6.2 Cognitive theory of learning

Essentially, the cognitive theories are diverse and include the “gestalt” (cognitive), developmental and constructivist learning theories. Van Dyk *et al.* (1997:204) argue that cognitive learning theorists are concerned with the internal, organising processes of thought that lead to performance. Erasmus *et al.* (2013:129) also explain that these theories all share the perspective that people actively process information and learning takes place through efforts of the student. These theories are concerned with acquisition, memory and relaying information. They explain learning in terms of processes that take place inside the brain. In addition, cognitive theories of learning focus on how individuals acquire information and knowledge, how they remember it and how they relate ideas and concepts to one another.

Jerling (1997:107) likewise argues that cognitive learning theory is concerned with insight and understanding. It focuses on the internal and the personal, not the external and impersonal influences of stimuli and responses. For the most part cognitivists firmly reject the behaviourist assumption that people are products of their environment. Rather, they see people as major influences on the environment. Cognitive learning theorists see human nature as being more complex than behaviourists do. In their view, human beings are easily able to adapt to their environment and are capable of changing it. The learner plays an active role because all learning is personal and experiential. The facilitator’s role is to create an environment that will lead to this kind of individualised learning.

Van Dyk *et al.* (1997:207) furthermore emphasise that the cognitive field theory is seen as the action carried out by a person in order to ultimately know. Everything that happens between the two extremes of not knowing and knowing is described as learning. Cognitive field theorists presuppose that the following six logical and important steps can be distinguished in the learning process:

- *Motivation.* The student must have the will or the motivation to learn, and without it there is little hope of learning.
- *Types of learning.* The learning requirements can be achieved in a variety of ways depending on the type of learning involved. This may be physical skills or an attitude or some cognitive skills.

- *Initial learning success.* When the student gains insight for the first time, he or she experiences initial learning success. The student then discovers the significance of an idea, concept, action or behaviour.
- *Reinforcement.* For learning to be successful, successful acts have to be repeated by practice and reinforcement.
- *Retention and actualisation.* Two issues are involved in this step. The first is retention or memorisation, which means that successful learning has been consolidated. The second step is actualisation, the ability to recall the new knowledge that has been acquired.
- *Application of transfer.* Transfer is the final proof of successful learning. This means that acquired knowledge can be applied in different situations, that is, the knowledge can be transferred to situations that call for similar skills and knowledge. This is seen as the phase of incorporating into normal work new ways of thinking or executing tasks (Bramley, cited by Van Dyk *et al.*, 1997:207). This transfer can be best achieved by maximising the similarity between the training situation and the job situation and by providing as much experience as possible with the task taught (Fisher *et al.*, cited by Van Dyk *et al.* 1997:207).

Learning causes an alteration in the level of knowledge of an individual. Therefore, learning experience enhances the skills and knowledge of the individual concerned so that he or she is in a position to execute a specific task.

2.6.3 Developmental learning theory

Jerling (1997:107) points out that developmental learning theory emphasises human freedom and shares a deep faith in the human capacity to act on the environment rather than merely react to it. Developmental theorists believe that human beings have a drive to become more of what they are capable of becoming. Learning is strictly internal and influenced by human developmental stages. Facilitators only facilitate learning, because individuals are self-actualising learners.

The link between development and learning is explicit in Mezirow's theory of transformational learning. Indeed, numerous studies have documented that growth and development are outcomes of transformational learning. What has not been questioned is that it appears that one must already be at a mature level of cognitive functioning to engage in the transformational learning process. For transformational learning to occur, one must be able to critically reflect and engage in rational discourse; both of these activities are characteristic of

higher levels of cognitive functioning (Mezirow, 2016. http://www.readcube.com/articles/10.1002%2Face.7401?r3_referer=wol&tracking_ac).

A defining condition of being human is that human beings have to understand the meaning of their experience. For some, any uncritical assimilation explanation by an authority figure will suffice. In contemporary societies, human beings must learn to make their own interpretation rather than act on purposes, beliefs, judgements and feelings of others. Facilitating such understanding is the cardinal goal of adult education. Transformative learning develops autonomous thinking. It is a process of effecting change in a frame of reference. Adults have acquired a coherent body of experience – associations, concepts, values, feelings, conditioned responses – frames of reference that define their life world. Frames of reference are structures of assumptions through which human beings understand their experiences. They selectively shape and delimit expectations, perceptions, cognition and feelings. They set the “line of action”. Once set, human beings automatically move from one specific activity (mental or behavioural) to another (Merriam, 2016. <http://aeq.sagepub.com/content/55/1/60.short>).

Each theory has an implied set of instructional practice that reflects the basic principles of that theory. By being aware of learning theories and the learning principles emanating from them, one can select those that are most likely to ensure that the specific learning goals and instructional objectives are met or accomplished. Some of the tenets embodied in these approaches, models and theories would be applicable in the ECDS and should support the department in the achievement of the strategic outputs by appropriately capacitating human resources that serve or have the potential to serve in the department. The desired result is human resources that are professional, productive and competent. The task at hand is to harness all the professional knowledge available to support human resources and human resource management to be much more effective in achieving what the organisation wants to achieve.

The next section discusses the concept of skills development and skills development programmes within the context of human resource development. It provides a synopsis of the concept of skills and how skills are developed (or the development of skills is constrained) within a broader organisational and institutional context.

2.7 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

One of the contemporary human resource development imperatives the legislation and other government policies and prescripts provide for is skills development. Skills development is one of the issues raised within human resource development that deal with what South African

organisations have to face to align themselves with national and international thinking on the current and future human resource development requirements. Skills development is a crucial requirement for organisations that are serious about the development of their human capital. The sub-section below explores the concept of skills, including a brief critical analysis of the human capital theory (HCT) and an analysis of scarce and critical skills in the skills development narrative.

2.7.1 Skills Development: an overview

Skills development refers to the development of people's skills and knowledge so that they can do their work to the best of their ability to ultimately achieve the set vision and objectives of the organisation. It also refers to all activities designed to assist employees in gaining knowledge or skills, or change attitudes or behaviour patterns that would not only enhance their performance in their current jobs, but also unlock opportunities for employees to move upwardly from one level to a higher level so that the organisational objectives may be achieved (Anon., 2011:3). Accordingly, Mohapi (2011:120) maintains that skills development is concerned with providing employees with the "knowledge and skills they need to do their jobs – no less and no more".

Estevez-Abe, *et al.* (1999:4) distinguish three types of skills that should be developed:

- Organisation or firm-specific skills
- Industry-specific skills
- General skills

These skills differ significantly in terms of their asset-specificity (i.e., portability). Organisation or firm-specific skills are acquired through on-the-job training and are least portable. They are valuable to the employer who carried out the training, but not to other employers. Industry-specific skills are acquired through apprenticeship and vocational schools. These skills, especially when authoritatively certified, are recognised by any employer within a specific trade. General skills as recognised by all employers carry a value that is independent from the type of firm or industry. Of course, any actual production system will involve all three types of skills to some degree. Nonetheless, it is possible to characterise distinctive product market strategies based upon the skill profile they require. It is therefore significantly imperative for the public institutions to have a focused approach on the identification of skills gaps and to be able to differentiate the type of skills needed and interventions necessary for the public institution to deliver public services.

Carlton and King (2004:8) argue that part of the effects of globalisation has been to bring about a rethinking of the nature of both knowledge and skills. Both these “outcomes-oriented” terms have become more important in policy and practice. At the same time, the more “input-oriented” terms of education and training have seen a relative decline in usage. The term “training” was previously linked to a narrow range of sectors and levels of employment. It was linked to separate institutions or seen as a distinct part of schooling. In either case, it was seen by many as having lower status than “education”. Training was reserved for youth or early adulthood. It formed part of the transition to both adulthood and employment. However, this was not universal and the transition also had strong class and gender dimensions. In India it was closely tied up with caste; in South Africa, with race (Carlton & King, 2004:8).

The 1990s saw a softening and broadening of the term “skills”. Skills are seen as important because they are part of education’s role in labour market preparation. Therefore, we see an emphasis on problem solving, communication, teamwork and other “core” skills. The growth of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has led to an increasing focus on skills relevant to this area. Even in technical areas there has been growing attention to the softer elements of design, and attempts to include more “generic skills” in the organisation of specialised, technical apprenticeships. Rapid technological change has reduced the weight given to pre-service training. Instead, notions of re-skilling and lifelong learning are given greater priority. Technological change also has encouraged a narrowing of the divide between education and training. This has led to the emergence of a common discourse about life skills, core skills, or generic skills that should be found both in school systems and in national training provision. The sharp division between education and training makes less sense within the post-industrial emphasis on services over production. It also has reduced relevance when the stress even in the productive sector is on becoming “cleverer” and more “knowledge-intensive” to be globally competitive (Carlton & King, 2004:8).

Blanchard and Thacker (2007:459) further refer to the following approaches to skills development:

- *Interactive skills training*: This approach uses simulations and feedback from observers to provide trainees with ways of interacting more effectively with others. The approach also makes managers more aware of how their behaviour influences the way others perceive and react to them.
- *Grid management*: The two most important managerial characteristics in this approach are the manager’s concern for work outcomes and concern for people (note the parallel here with employee and task orientation). The proposition here is that managers who have strong concerns in both these areas are the best managers. Training focuses on

developing the manager's ability to display these characteristics simultaneously. Even though the manager must respond to different situations with the appropriate behaviour, it is value orientation associated with strong concern for both people and task that guides the manager's behaviour.

- *Role motivation*: The object of this programme is to develop six motivational states in managers, namely favourable attitude towards authority, desire to compete, assertiveness, desire to exercise power for distinctiveness and a sense of responsibility. These motives help managers deal with employees work deficiencies and meet organisational criteria for effectiveness (primarily in large organisations). It includes development of interpersonal skills, but focuses primarily on self-examination and development of internal values.
- *Need achievement*: This programme of self-study, goal setting, and case analysis is designed to provide managers with an understanding of employees' need for achievement and development of that need so that it is focused on constructive behaviour. This approach yielded the best results for small business owners, particularly during the early stages of an employee's careers.

Lauder and Brown (cited by Lewis *et al.*, 2008:25) also point out that as a concept, being skilled used to be viewed as integrated, holistic practices where no distinction was made between knowledge (knowing) and skill (doing). However, in reality, a review of current literature broadly distinguishes between two sets of skills, those that are needed to technically perform a specific activity (e.g. building and construction) and those that are more social in nature and relate to the way in which the skills are used in different organisational settings. This distinction between specific vocational skills and more general skills differs dramatically from some human capital perspectives that are based on the premise that skills are contextual. These "dis-embedded" skills make it easier to argue for the continued investment in training (company-specific, context-specific training), and for the dominant focus on qualifications as a deciding factor in recruitment, as qualifications are traditionally built up from a set of "dis-embedded skills".

Furthermore, Lewis *et al.* (2008:25) argue that the Western Cape Provincial Economic Review and Outlook (PERO) profiles three broad categories of skills: basic skills, subject specific or vocational skills and employability.

- *The first category of skills, basic skills, are those skills that are generic and transferable, essential to every individual's personal development in his/her education, work and everyday life.* Basic skills include the intellectual skills of critical, analytical

and creative thinking, problem solving, communication skills, information and communication technology (the ability to manage information), numeracy skills, the ability to improve one's own learning and performance and the ability to work with others.

- *The second category of skills relates to skills that are essential to the understanding and practical application of knowledge within an academic discipline and/or a vocational profession.* These skills form the basis of a qualification in a specific area and are quality assured and accredited in line with national guidelines that aim to benchmark levels of competence in the field. Different examples could include the field of engineering (the skills necessary to be a competent civil engineer), or in the field of the health professions (the skills necessary to be a competent physiotherapist).
- *The third category of skills relates to those skills that enhance achievements in the field of learning and facilitate transition and integration into effective performance in the workplace.* Some examples include self-management and people management (including creating and maintaining effective relationships with others, time management, change management), negotiation skills, leadership skills, networking skills, presentation skills (self-presentation and oral presentation skills) and career management (being aware of new opportunities, job searching, self-marketing, entrepreneurship).

In addition, these specific vocational skills can be differentiated into those that are organisation or firm-specific and those that are industry-specific. Naturally, the most mobile of these skills are the general skills, with organisation or firm-specific skills providing the individual less elasticity in respect of employment. What is evident from this definition of skills is the associated minimum level of education recommended for each. Organisation or firm-specific skills require a higher level of general education upon which internal training and development is built. Industry-specific skills are dependent on a closer link between the education and training systems and industry. For general skills, a basic general education level is a requisite. Skills that are embedded in the history, culture and institutions of a country may provide the distinctive edge needed to develop into an innovation hub. Soft skills such as listening, multi-tasking and the ability to do team work are highly valued in the services sector and are very much intuitive skills that are not acquired through formal education and training. In addition, the belief that employability skills can be abstracted from their social context and taught in a classroom flies in the face of social theories of learning, which emphasise the symbiosis between context and skills, the one continuously shaping and changing the other (Lewis *et al.*, 2008:25).

Lauder and Brown (2006) and Kraak (cited by Lewis *et al.*, 2008:26) further maintain that in arguments on the nature of skills, three typologies of skills are commonly referred to. Simplistically, skills are seen as being on a continuum from low skills to high skills:

- higher levels of skills are typically associated with professional and management jobs in leading-edge sectors and the financial/services sector;
- intermediate skills are associated with technician-level jobs;
- low skills are associated with semi- or unskilled work.

Kruss *et al.* (2012:1) also maintain that it is now widely accepted that the skills of the workforce is a critical determinant of global competitiveness, as new technologies become more complex and competition is increasingly driven by quality, flexibility, design, reliability and networking. In a time of global economic recession, debt crises and burgeoning unemployment, skills and capabilities are even more significant. In order to advance - or increasingly in the present context, simply to keep up - countries have to develop their technological capabilities to increase their share of knowledge-intensive and complex activities that require higher skills levels in general, and in relation to the technological trajectory of specific sectors. The competitive edge results from firms' capability to "absorb, use, adapt and build" on new technologies, which in turn relies on national systems of education, training and skills development. The successful developing countries typically held up as shining examples for emulation – Korea, Malaysia, Singapore – all foregrounded and prioritised strategies for education, skills and capability development (Kruss *et al.*, 2012:1).

Nelson and Winter (1982) and Lall (cited by Kruss *et al.* 2012:1) argue that the technological capability approach stresses that what is critical in developing countries is the learning process within firms, the ability to master the tacit elements of new technology imported through foreign direct investment or through acquiring new physical plants and equipment. The question is whether a country is able to produce not only more skills, but also a higher level of skills across the workforce, and more significantly, different kinds of skills to respond to new information intensive technologies, the new organisation of production and the management of knowledge networks. These higher level and new kinds of skills are required at all levels of the workplace – worker, technical and supervisory, engineering and managerial. New "communicative" skills such as the ability to work in teams, problem solving, driving quality improvement and complying with health and safety regulations are stressed. The knowledge and capabilities that are built through experience and not simply the formal education-based skills built through institutional learning are equally significant (Nelson & Winter, 1982; Lali cited by Kruss *et al.* 2012:1).

The above discussion simply provides a glimpse into the diverse descriptions that cover a variety of programmes and techniques associated with the skills and competencies available in organisations.

2.7.2 Skills development and the Human Capital Theory (HCT): a brief but critical overview

Ngcwangu (2014:152) argues that the critical ideological dimension to the skills development narrative is related to the perspective of Human Capital Theory proponents. Human Capital Theory (HCT) proponents associate 'skills' with the neoclassical ideas of Human Capital Theory which seeks to extend economic theory to explain the entirety of human behaviour. Human Capital Theory proponents' approach can be considered 'utilitarian' as it privileges the dominant role of the market in defining 'skills'. A range of policy propositions, developmental plans, job creation schemes and education policies in South Africa have been premised on this problematic rationale. Even the notion of 'skills shortages' and 'scarcity of skills' presupposes that a pre-existing market is waiting readily to 'absorb' the skilled cohorts of workers and trainees. Critiques of HCT have maintained that 'Human Capital Theory may be a logical outcome of the sort of reasoning utilitarians get up to but it does not help us to understand human behaviour' (Fevre, cited by Ngcwangu, 2014:152). Also, Brown (cited by Ngcwangu, 2014:152) further argue that: 'Capitalism is based on profit maximisation rather than universal skills upgrading. It is naive to assume that economic competitiveness will lead employers to invest in upgrading skills throughout the economy.'

Critical alternative approaches are based on the acknowledgement that skills are socially constructed and are driven by social institutions. For instance, Brown (cited by Ngcwangu, 2014:152) emphasise that in the new political economy issues of income distribution, opportunity, democratic participation, and the ways people come together in pursuit of their individual interests and collective goals are seen to have a decisive impact on national skill formation strategies. What emerges is that the notion of human capital is insufficient to describe the variety of forces that drive the development of human beings, neither is it sufficient to provide a holistic critique of the myriad factors that contribute to unemployment, inequality and poverty. One of the issues that affect researchers of skills development is whether technological change itself results in an improvement of skills or instead results in what Braverman (1974) refers to as de-skilling. Sears (cited by Ngcwangu, 2014:152-153) maintains that technological change in capitalist society has not usually been associated with a generalised increase in skill requirements. Livingstone (cited by Ngcwangu, 2014: 152-153)

contends that the biggest challenge to human capital theory is the societal underemployment of credentialed knowledge. All of those efforts to repair human capital theory remain in jeopardy because of their failure to account for a growing general gap between people's increasing learning efforts and knowledge bases, and the diminishing numbers of commensurate jobs to apply their increasing knowledge investments. The issue of underemployment receives very little attention within the South African policy discussion on skills as it exposes the fact that even those citizens with high level qualifications often find themselves in employment that rewards them less than their acquired skill or knowledge.

2.7.3 Scarce and critical skills analysis

Scarce and critical skills refer to an absolute or relative demand, current or future, for skilled, qualified and experienced people to fill particular roles or professions, occupations or specialisations. Daniels (2007:2) explains that scarce skills refer to occupations for which there is a scarcity of qualified and experienced people, currently or anticipated in the future, either (a) because such skilled people are not available, or (b) because they are available, but do not meet employment criteria. This scarcity can arise either from an absolute scarcity of these skills or a relative scarcity. Absolute scarcity refers to suitably skilled people that are not available, for example in a new or emerging occupation, for example biotechnology, and information technology, a lack of sufficient numbers of workers with specific skills, or insufficient numbers to satisfy replacement demand. Relative scarcity, on the other hand, refers to a situation where there are suitably skilled people, but they do not meet other employment criteria (Daniels, 2007:2).

The critical skills refer to specific skills within an occupation. In the South African context critical skills consists of generic skills, which include problem solving and learning to learn; language, literacy or numeracy skills; and working in teams; and particular occupational skills required for performance within that occupation. It is the latter form that accounts for the problems that emerge when an organisation or firm experiences technological change or reorganises production methods (Daniels, 2007:2). Significantly, skills shortages are not only about scarce and critical skills, which imply some form of advanced qualification in a "high skills" environment. Indeed, one of the central tenets of Andre Kraak's work (2004, 2005, cited by Daniels, 2007:3) has been that the emphasis on "high skills" is not sufficient in a developing economy such as South Africa. Emphasising low skilled strategies should be viewed in a positive light, particularly with respect to addressing unemployment and stimulating labour-intensive forms of production. Furthermore, exclusive emphasis on the "high skills" strategy ignores the tough conditions and constraints that developing economies face in their attempts

to move up the value chain. Consequently, it is important to think of “skills shortages” as comprising everything from the most advanced qualifications to the most elementary, and “skills development” as something that may be needed for different people at different stages of their life cycle, or over the business cycle, or both.

Kraak (cited by Daniels, 2007:57) further notes that due to the rise of the new global economy characterised by high-quality, high value-added export-oriented manufacturing and services, the vital quality of human resource development is the attainment of high participation rates in general education and training, particularly the development of multi-functional skills capabilities. These are only achieved with high levels of general education upon which appropriate forms of vocational and career-oriented training can be optimally built.

Irrefutably, educational accomplishment alone does not afford the workforce with the requisite instruments to survive in an emerging high-skills economy. Some skills are job-specific, others are shaped by cultural background and personality, suggesting that no learning institution can provide all skills. As organisational structure and environment are dynamic, lifelong learning becomes central for career development. Individuals must obtain a set of skills that enable them to integrate their knowledge, experience and transferable skills to make effective progress in their careers (Lewis *et al.*, 2008:26).

Kraak (cited by Lewis *et al.*, 2008:27) makes an argument for investing in knowledge rather than focusing on what he terms “narrow job demarcations” to enable a multi-functional skills competence or a “portfolio of competences”. Although there is no widely accepted single definition of competences, these are widely understood to be an individual’s intrinsic and learned capabilities to perform a particular activity or task and are not limited to what is revealed by paper-based qualifications and/or certifications. Competencies link “professional practice and personal intention” and are evidenced through the interplay between “knowledge, skill and attitude attributes and the meta-cognitive capacity to apply them at the right time when required.” In supporting this McKenna and Sutherland (cited by Lewis *et al.*, 2008:27) refer to a “definition” of skills that equates skills to competencies, and notes that these are “the higher-level intellectual challenges of application and knowledge, in addition to the acquisition of knowledge, and not the lower level skills that are developed through mere repetition and which do not require high level skills”. In effect, this differentiates between how knowledge and skills are taught, trained or transferred within learning environments.

2.8. HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT: SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SERVICE

This section discusses the human resource development and skills development in the South African public service where the lack of adequately skilled personnel has always been a concern of government. Pillay *et al.* (2012:7) argue that the 2006 report titled *The State of the Public Service* emphasises the challenge to consolidate transformation in the public service and the need to improve service delivery. Furthermore, the 2008 *Report on the State of the Public Service Training Needs* supports these views and acknowledges the developments that have taken place in the public service, particularly with regard to putting in place the necessary legislative and regulatory framework for capacity building. Among others, the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) have been established and departments are compelled to spend 1% of their personnel budget on training.

Developing countries are most often faced with the task of social and economic development in the face of the high demand placed on limited public resources. Bureaucracies in these countries are often described as large and ineffectual (Dass & Abbott, cited by Pillay *et al.*, 2012:25). To remedy this, countries such as China, the Philippines and Chile have embarked on mass scale public sector reform with some success. These reforms have been based on theories such as the “New Public Management”. This theory aims to respond to the failures of traditional forms of government by employing private sector principles such as “Total Quality Management”. A component of such theories is the continuous skills development of staff (Dass & Abbott, cited by Pillay *et al.*, 2012:25).

Carlton and King (2004:9) argue that the skills revolution is also a crucial part of the reconstruction of South Africa. It is seen to be central to facing the challenge of globalisation, to reversing the shedding of formal sector jobs, and to making more competitive the untapped potential of both rural and urban micro-enterprises. Like the parallel reform in the education sector, the training reform has had to run two processes; for the majority Black population, it had to dramatically redress the legacy of the decades of job segregation and exclusion from skilled worker status; and at the same time it has had to accompany an industrial and commercial restructuring made necessary by trade liberalisation and the rapid removal of protection. These in turn have resulted in a very substantial rise in unemployment at the very time that aspirations for more rewarding work have been kindled by the end of political apartheid.

Both the education system and the training system have endured far-reaching organisational and structural reforms. Understandably, in both cases the last years of the previous century saw the very essence of their curriculum content being radically rethought to fit the new South

Africa. Consequently, both the schools and the training systems have to absorb and digest new ways of teaching, learning and assessing that differ starkly from the traditional. This dual challenge would be a tall order for any society. It is doubly so when the revolutions have to encompass a curriculum for competitiveness and a curriculum of national inclusion (Carlton & King, 2004:9).

Lewis *et al.* (2008:28) argue that among the many debates on the state of education in South Africa, including the quality of education, is the skills debate: the age-old argument that education does not prepare young people for life, and especially not for the labour market. Employers, in particular, argue that the products of our schools do not have the requisite skills to fit into, and add value to, the existing economy. The skills argument (lack of skills, skills mismatch) is seldom quantified, but upon further interrogation, reference is made to poor attitudes and values (lack of confidence, poor work ethic and unrealistic expectations), poor communication skills (language and literacy), poor reasoning skills (little or no mathematics or science knowledge) and no entrepreneurship skills. It is often said that the “shortfall is due to the policies of the apartheid era and the slowness of our education and skills development institutions to catch up with the current acceleration of economic growth”. While this may explain the skills gap partly, the other reality is that the economy of the country has shifted over the past few years from primarily primary sector-driven (agriculture, etc.) to tertiary (services) sector-driven, in accordance with global trends.

In the presidential ten-year review of 2004, the then president, Thabo Mbeki, distinguished between two economies dividing our nation. “The first is an advanced, sophisticated economy, based on skilled labour, which is becoming more globally competitive. The second is a mainly informal, marginalised, unskilled economy, populated by the unemployed and those unemployable in the formal sector.” Bridging this divide and growing the economy to the benefit of both the first and second economies demand new thinking by government, the private sector and civil society to identify the bottlenecks in delivery and to work towards addressing these. Critical to this is an understanding of how, why and what should to be done to overcome them. Evidence from the “East Asian tigers” has shown how, as a developmental state, “future skills can be successfully planned for, even before there is a demand”; a very different perspective to that which promotes skills training as a tool to reduce unemployment (Lewis *et al.*, 2008:28).

Improved departmental performance in the South African public service has been linked to the strategic positioning of HR and HRD. Analysis of the latest government departments’ Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT) data shows that the HR component of MPAT has the largest and most direct influence on departments, receiving higher performance

ratings on external assessments such as the auditor general's findings (Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, 2013). An effective and autonomous human resources function is important for stabilising administrations and developing clear and attractive career paths for officials. Well-functioning organisations require strong technical capacity and this in turn requires effective capacity to recruit the appropriate staff (given the mandate and functions of the organisation) and an ability to effectively train and retain staff. Successful approaches to training and recruitment of new officials have been shaped by a strategic prioritisation of the skills needs of the department. Success in these departments also appears to have been tied to departments building partnerships with education institutions that help shape the most appropriate form of sector specific training for new and existing staff (PSETA, 2014:12).

Research on training in the public service suggests that:

- individual training should be linked to organisational contexts, goals and capacity needs;
- skills development plans must attend to the need for basic organisation building in the public service, and
- skills development initiatives of the PSETA should therefore prioritise training that supports organisational development (OD) (PSETA, 2014:12).

The DPSA's HR Connect 2013 results suggest large shortfalls in public servants' skills and content knowledge across all Organising Framework for Occupations (OFO) groups. The DPSA's competency assessments of capacity of the SMS in 2013, found that on average across the sample of the SMS, none of the management levels scored at the level of proficient or above. Many managers in the public service did not have the relevant expertise to turn high level plans into detailed operational plans or to develop systems to support this. PSETA (2014:14) asserts that based on the Auditor General findings (Auditor General, 2013) there is a real need to improve the state of financial management in the South African public service, especially as it affects procurement. There are vacancies in occupations such as contract management and procurement officers, yet the main challenge in this function is that many of the current staff do not have the experience and training needed to ensure that specifications are appropriately developed, service providers are appropriately contracted and the standard of work appropriately monitored (PSETA, 2014:14).

Furthermore, significant state policies and an analysis of the research on the drivers of organisational performance in the public sector indicate that the areas of priority support for this sector are:

- Support for the development and recruitment of technical and professional skills, and
- Skills development initiatives that support organisational development (OD).

These organisational development competencies are:

- developing human resources and human resource development capacity;
- developing operationally focused managers, in other words a focus on developing competency in detailed programme planning, project management and designing processes to support delivery;
- improving basic administration capacity across many departments in the public service such as record keeping, data collection, database management; and
- strengthening competencies in supply chain management (SCM).

Government departments have to be supported to identify their staff's competency gaps and what kinds of training is best suited to address these. This highlights the importance of the focus on building HRD skills. The capacity for the public service to act as a training space is highly uneven and departments should be encouraged to build this capacity over time, rather than pushing to take on as many interns and learnerships as possible to meet annual targets. Where skills gaps are simply related to lack of knowledge of a very specific task, such as how to operate a computer programme, staff could take part in cost-effective e-learning courses. Where these gaps are more profound, solutions should include mentoring and or coaching, possibly supplemented by longer-term classroom-based training (PSETA, 2014:17).

Reviews of skills development initiatives in the public service show that over the last two decades a substantial proportion of public servants have received training and that substantial funding has been spent on this training. These studies also show, however, that the return on investment has generally been low in terms of the impact on public sector performance (PSC, 2011; PSETA, 2011; DPSA, 2013b; Pillay *et al.*, 2011; interviews with officials in the DPSA and PSETA, June 2013 cited by PSETA, 2014:37)). Much of the training has been in the form of short courses by private providers, which appear not to have substantially altered the skills profile of officials, even where the stated outcome of the training is in line with the skills requirements of the officials' job. The management or leadership training undertaken by public servants has not had the intended impact on improving performance (PSETA, 2014:37).

Skills development in isolation will not yield a more capable state. Skills development must be integrated with wider organisational development initiatives to be effective. Skills are developed or the development of skills is constrained within a broader organisational and

institutional context. The identification of priority skills and training needs should be shaped by an analysis of the major drivers or inhibitors of public sector organisations' performance in South Africa. This analysis should then be coupled with the following:

- An identification of the skills implications emerging from new policies (increased spending on infrastructure for example) and broader anticipated changes in the nature of the state.
- An analysis of datasets showing where organisations experience the greatest shortage of staff, where they predict an increased future demand for staff and where they feel staff require the most capacity building (PSETA, 2014:37).

The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997:33) further maintains that human resource development and skills development are critical to the achievement of social goals and have to be developed by both the public and private sectors. Government should consult with all stakeholders, including academic, formal and informal training institutions and organisations and professional and allied associations. Opportunities should be created for personnel in the public and private sectors to develop themselves and to make a contribution to the reconstruction and development process. The efficient and effective delivery of services is contingent upon sound human resource planning and development. An appropriately trained pool of personnel at all levels, which includes both generic and specialised services, should be developed. Appropriate training should be provided by all employers in both the public and private sectors (White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997:33).

To ensure that the skills of personnel are upgraded, both the public and private sectors should embark upon comprehensive capacity-building programmes. Such programmes should be based on a systematic analysis of training needs and should also form part of on-going in-service training programmes. A balance should be established between preventative, curative, promotive and developmental perspectives in the planning and management of human resources. Training programmes should be specifically designed to reorient existing personnel towards developmental approaches. Some of these should be in-house programmes, others will be provided by both governmental and non-governmental organisations. Negotiations should be undertaken with training institutions to provide a range of capacity-building programmes. Career paths must be determined by human resource planning. Career planning and affirmative action should be linked to capacity-building programmes (White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997:33).

Therefore, it is of paramount importance to any organisation to strive for the development of its employees as esteemed members of the organisational management team. Training

becomes the basis of the development of human assets. It is a tool to attain individual, organisational needs related to the jobs undertaken and is also intended to improve the work culture of the group involved in a group task. An ideal training programme can be expected to change the attitude and skills and to develop forward vision towards the task (Vijayabanu & Amudha, 2012:276).

2.9. CONCLUSION

To conclude on what has been discussed above, it seems that an effective training system should comprise a set of processes designed to transform organisational inputs into output that meets organisational needs. Training should be viewed not just as running training programmes or putting a large percentage of employees through some training. Viewing training as simply a programme or set of programmes is too short-sighted. Training should be viewed as a set of integrated processes during which organisational and employee needs are analysed and responded to in a rational, logical and strategic manner. When training is conducted in this manner, the organisation will improve, the value of the training unit will increase and further investment in training is likely to occur. Human resource development and skills development are essentially mechanisms designed to enhance individual employees' capacity and thereby organisational effectiveness and efficiency. Therefore, proper implementation of skills development programmes and human resource development practices in an organisation should ensure that both the employees and the organisation are capacitated to meet the organisation's goals and objectives.

In the next chapter, the study examines the policy environment leading up to the suite of South African skills development legislation and regulations promulgated after 1994 and the related strategies. This investigation addresses the first research objective of this study.

CHAPTER 3

THE LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK PERTAINING TO HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined a comprehensive literature review on the concept of human resource development and the varying, but interrelated human resource development approaches, models and theories. It also outlined the concept of skills development and skills development in South Africa and in the public service, in particular. The significance and role of human resources, human resource development and skills development with regard to accelerated and quality service delivery were also discussed. In addition to learning from best practice on skills development programmes within the context of human resource development and how these can best be implemented, policies and legislation also guide the implementation process.

In order to effectively manage and guide the skills development, training and capacity building of employees within the public service, legislation, proper strategies, policies, processes and procedures are necessary. This chapter first investigates and analyses the history of skills development and human resource development policy and legislative framework in South Africa. Second, it investigates and analyses the existing legislative and regulatory framework governing skills development and human resource development practices in the South African public services and the relevant and related strategies affecting the skills development and human resource development practices in terms of role players, support structures, benefits, components and so forth. The discussion to follow is in line with the second research objective of this study as outlined in Chapter 1.

3.2. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT REGULATORY FRAMEWORK IN SOUTH AFRICA: A BRIEF HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

Groener (2014:10) argues that the institutional arrangements under the apartheid government reflect the racially defined systems of training delivery, comprising the Department of Manpower (DOM), which coordinated a racially defined system of training governed by the Manpower Training Act 56 of 1981. The DOM delivered training for White people and to some extent, for Indian and Coloured people. The homeland governments provided vocational training for African people. These apartheid institutional structures created structural racial

inequalities with its provision of higher standard and well-resourced training for White people, and low standard, under-resourced training for Black people.

Van Dyk *et al.* (2002:35) explain that the training environment should not be viewed in isolation, but against the background of current economic, technological, social and political factors that are in the process of transforming the working world. The responsibility of reforming the training system in response to changing demands rests with the state. In fulfilling this core function, the state is faced with the dilemma of increasing the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, equality and sustainability of the training system to meet new requirements at a time of reduction in public spending. The training system in South Africa is receiving severe criticism for lacking relevance to market demands. The government is confronted with the challenge of balancing the demand for a skilled and flexible labour force to make industries in the country more competitive and ensuring equal access for all citizens to training opportunities and redressing disadvantages faced by particular groups.

To influence the training system and bring about the necessary changes to meet new challenges, the state is compelled to take the lead in developing policy that is supportive of the economic and social changes the country is facing. Together with policy goes the legislation that should make provision for enabling mechanisms, but that will also regulate the actions and inputs of those involved in the training market (Van Dyk *et al.*, 2002:35).

Carlton and King (2004:9) further explain that the skills revolution is a crucial part of the reconstruction of South Africa. It is seen to be central to facing the challenge of globalisation, to reversing the shedding of formal sector jobs and to making more competitive the untapped potential of both rural and urban micro-enterprises. Like the parallel reform in the education sector, training reform has had to face two challenges. For instance, first, for the majority Black population it had to dramatically redress the legacy of the decades of job segregation and exclusion from skilled worker status. Second, it has had to steer an industrial and commercial restructuring made necessary by trade liberalisation and the rapid removal of protection. These in turn have resulted in a very substantial rise in unemployment at the very time that aspirations for more rewarding work have been kindled by the end of political apartheid.

Daniels (2007:1) also accentuates that the genesis of South Africa's skills policy regime is intricately linked to its history as an apartheid state, the legacy this presented in the labour market and the efforts post-1994 to ameliorate the iniquities of "Bantu" education. At the same time, South Africa's highly isolationist geo-political and economic policies were substantively transformed in the democratic era, forcing firms to become more competitive and export-oriented. This has often had the effect of augmenting capital-intensive technological change and otherwise inducing a thorough reorganisation of the forms and methods of production,

with its resultant skills implications. As a democratic nation, South Africa found itself in a situation where:

- Reintegration into the international economy mandated skills-biased changes to the methods of production and the world of work. The result: too few workers with adequate skills, or labour supply was not able to match labour demand.
- The country faced an unemployment crisis of historic proportion. The result: labour demand was not large enough to absorb the supply of labour.

Bird and Heitman (2009:6) explain that subsequent to the change to democracy there were two “skills development” policy agendas in South Africa, one under the Minister of Education and the other under the Minister of Labour, with Education having the responsibility for the public institutions, the schools, colleges and universities, and Labour having the responsibility of learning in and for the labour market with provision extensively drawn from private providers. Bird and Heitman (2009:9) argue that this “disarticulation” between the two was “a real danger.” Although the “disarticulation” was evident from before 1994, the most recent flagging of the problem came in 2006 when the then Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka launched her *Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA)* drive together with its partner programme, the *Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA)*. These were rooted in the 2004-2009 government’s electoral mandate to halve poverty and unemployment by 2014. JIPSA aimed to find quick, effective and practical solutions to critical skills shortages needed for economic growth and social development. The question, however, is why JIPSA was needed at all, given that there was already a National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) under the Minister of Labour, which purported to address identical issues? The short answer is that the NSDS was a closed system, whose implementation reach was circumscribed by the scale of levy funds collected and the inability of these funds to reach those public providers principally responsible for training in many of the critically scarce skill areas, such as engineers.

On the reverse side, public provision was still predominantly supply-led without a clear indication of a tight grasp on how to respond to demand. The disarticulation between the two had also hampered the delivery of apprenticeships, resulting in a critical shortage of craft skills. The result was that key skill needs, including those for social development such as civil engineers for local government, were being critically “under-supplied” (Bird & Heitman, 2009:9)

Bird and Heitman (2009:7) further argue that South Africa’s experimental work on occupations aims at providing a common language that can be spoken by employers, growth and development strategists and be understood by educationalists and trainers as well. This may

be an initiative worth monitoring and evaluating, for if it is successful, it has the potential to contribute to the bridging of the “education” / “labour market” divide. In effect, it was developed with that purpose in mind. The JIPSA initiative promoted a number of short-term interventions such as those focused on ratcheting up the number of apprentices and engineers-in-training, but consciously did not address the system rupture. It deliberately focused on the full supply chain needed for the provision of identified scarce skills and identified the responsible implementers. It handed over to them the task of addressing such blockages as constrained the meeting of targets. It hoped in this way to highlight system ruptures without engaging in the contestation of system revision. In 2007, with the assistance of the Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, this approach led to a joint statement between the Ministers of Education and Labour which “formalised” their respective authorities, although it did not clarify their interface. This agreement was heralded as somewhat of a victory by Labour’s skills development community, who had for some time faced considerable pressure to accept absorption under the Education umbrella. However, it was widely accepted that the problem had not gone away.

Kruss *et al.* (2012:1) further explain that in a developing country context like South Africa, those most vulnerable to marginalisation who may struggle to become employable and to access the labour market are women, young people from low socio-economic backgrounds with poor education, or those located in isolated rural areas. Given historical trajectories, such social differentiation tends to coincide with racial categories. Accordingly, South African government policies require mechanisms to promote inclusive skills development, to find ways to ensure a broad reach so that past inequalities are not reproduced by new systems.

Kraak *et al.* (2013:16) also argue that both the education system and the training system have sustained far-reaching organisational and structural reforms in the last years of the previous century. The currency of their curriculum content has been radically rethought to fit the new South Africa. As a result, both the schools and the training systems have to absorb and digest new ways of teaching, learning and assessing that differ clearly from the traditional. The architects of these enormous changes have been the post-apartheid South African government. The series of Green and White Papers that underpin the reforms are some of the most thoughtful and persuasive initiatives that have appeared in any country emerging from minority or colonial rule.

The importance of skills development for growth and development in South Africa has been stressed in a number of recent policy documents, including the New Growth Path, the National Development Plan, the Industrial Policy Action Plan, the Human Resources Development Plan (HRD-SA) and the Green Paper on Post-school Education and Training. All these documents

focus on education and skills development as the major constraint to higher levels of economic growth and development in the country. For this reason, skills development remains one of the priorities in government policy (Kraak *et al.*, 2013:21).

Ngcwangu (2014: 151) argues that the democratic government of South Africa is confronted with enormous demands for public goods and services, primarily from underprivileged communities. The post-apartheid state ushered in a period of wide-scale reform of public policies, among which were reforms to the country's education and training systems. These reforms were proposed as a means to begin to redress the historical imbalances created by apartheid's racialised labour market, which had resulted in what McGrath *et al.*, (cited by Ngcwangu, 2014:151) have characterised as a "low skills regime". A key challenge facing the new government was to develop policies that could address this historical legacy, while simultaneously overseeing the integration of the South African economy into a hostile global capitalist economic system. This resulted in an expectation that the post-apartheid state would develop policies that will redress the historical imbalances that occurred as a result of apartheid. In addition, scholars such as Motala *et al.* (cited by Ngcwangu, 2014:151) have argued:

At the end of Apartheid, there was a real expectation that the death of a racist, fragmented, incoherent, yet planned education and training system together with its policies and practices – the manufactured bureaucracies spawned to give effects to the intentions of apartheid ideologies and political leaders and its deleterious outcomes, would be terminated once and for all.

The post-1994 government introduced several new policies, which include the Green Paper Skills Development Strategy for Economic and Employment Growth in South Africa in 1997, the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998, the Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999 and the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) 2001-2010, launched in 2001. Also, of importance are the government's White Paper on Reconstruction and Development, 1994 and the Growth, Employment and Redistribution document, 1996, since these have presented the broad political and economic frameworks within which the government has formulated its skills development policies. The government created new sources of funding by instituting an imposed skills levy on particular kinds of organisations. These levies are channelled into the National Skills Fund (NSF), and the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) are among those who distribute these funds for skills development programmes. Through the SETAs, the government has established a system of providing skills development programmes, such as learnerships, learning programmes and skills programmes (Groener, 2014:11).

The above historical context on the skills development and human resource development policy, legislative and regulatory framework is further expounded in detail in the next section.

3.3. TRAINING-RELATED LEGISLATION: OVERVIEW

This section deals with training and development-related policy frameworks and the four main training and development pieces of legislation, namely the South African Qualifications Authority Act 58 of 1995, Skills Development Act 97 of 1998, Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999 and National Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008. However, before discussing these four pieces of training and development legislation, it is imperative to first briefly reflect on the following legislation and policy initiatives that form the foundation for training and development legislation in South Africa after the advent of democracy.

3.3.1. *The Public Service Act 103 of 1994*

Initially, the Public Service Act 103 of 1994 advocated for the formation of a new foundation on which public administration would have to be premised. The Act further makes provision for the establishment of a training institution. The Act provides that:

1. There shall be a training institution listed as a national department in Schedule 1.
2. The management and administration of such institution shall be under the control of the Minister.
3. Such institution:-
 - a. Shall provide such training or cause such training to be provided or conduct such examinations or tests or cause such examinations or tests to be conducted as the Head of the institute may with the approval of the Minister decide or as may be prescribed as a qualification for the appointment or transfer of persons in or to the public service.
 - b. May issue diplomas or certificates or course diplomas or certificates to be issued to persons who have passed such examinations.

The next policy initiative is the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995.

3.3.2. *White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995*

The aim of this White Paper is to establish a policy framework to guide the introduction and implementation of new policies and legislation aimed at transforming the South African public service. Section 13.1 of the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995, on human resource development and capacity building states that the government, sees itself as playing a direct and active role in building public sector capacity. As noted earlier in this document, the effective mobilisation, development and utilisation of human resource capacity within the public service will be critical for the success of institution building and management programmes, and for the success of the transformation process more generally. Accordingly, a coherent strategic framework for human resource development should be developed at both the national and provincial levels. Such a framework will have as its purpose the development of an optimal fit between the needs of the employee, the job, the organisation and the environment, so that employees reach their desired level of satisfaction and performance, and the organisation meets its goals. A strategic framework for effective human resource development will entail a number of related elements, including staff training. These will include:

- The elevation of the role and status of human resource development within the overall framework of government policy;
- The development of effective and lifelong career development paths for all categories of public servants;
- An improvement in employment conditions;
- The introduction of effective appraisal systems and the use of incentives to reward individual and team performance;
- The basing of promotion and career advancement on performance rather than on seniority or qualifications.

The White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service, 1995, further advocates for the promotion of human resource development and capacity building as a necessary precondition for effective change and institution building (South Africa, 1995:6).

Following this policy framework is the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996.

3.3.3. *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996*

Thornhill (2013:120) argues that the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 provides for the basic values and principles governing public administration. One of the key principles advocated in the Constitution is that public administration must be development-

oriented and accountable. Furthermore, there must be cultivation of good human resource management and career development practices to maximise human potential. In reaffirming the principles of Section 195 of the Constitution (1996), Thornhill (2013:120) maintains that these principles can be realised only if the provisions of the Constitution and other legislation are applied in a way that fosters cultural transformation.

The Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa (HRD-SA) 2010-2030 (2009) further accentuates that the Preamble to the Constitution of South Africa, adopted in 1996 as the supreme law of the Republic, states, among other things, that it aims to improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person.

Furthermore, in section 29, which forms part of the Bill of Rights and which deals with education, the Constitution states the following:

1. Everyone has the right –
 - a. To a basic education, including adult basic education; and
 - b. To further education, which the State, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.
2. Everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable. In order to ensure the effective access to, and implementation of, this right, the State must consider all reasonable educational alternatives, including single medium institutions, taking into account –
 - a. Equity;
 - b. Practicability; and
 - c. The need to redress the results of past racially discriminatory laws and practices.
3. Everyone has the right to establish and maintain, at their own expense, independent educational institutions that –
 - a. Do not discriminate on the basis of race;
 - b. Are registered with the State; and
 - c. Maintain standards that are not inferior to standards at comparable public educational institutions.
4. Subsection (3) does not preclude state subsidies for independent educational institutions (South Africa, 2009:5).

Human resources development (HRD) is critically important in South Africa's development agenda. The importance of HRD demands a response that has a sense of urgency. It

demands a comprehensive and determined response from government. However, the scope and importance of the HRD project extends beyond government:

- It demands collective will and purposeful action from all stakeholders in society.
- It demands the determination, commitment and accountability of individuals to invest time and effort in their own development.
- It demands the commitment of all enterprises and organisations to invest time and resources in HRD toward public good (South Africa, 2009:5).

Therefore, the urgency of the challenges and priorities and the significance of the outcomes South Africa seeks to accomplish, oblige South Africans to forge a social compact that will promote demand-driven HRD in the country.

3.3.4. *The White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, 1997*

The White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, 1997, was passed to further reinforce and give effect to the provisions of the Public Service Act 103 of 1994. Its purpose can be summarised as follows:

- A professional and impartial public service that is representative of all sections of society is essential for efficient and effective government and the achievement of South Africa's democratic, economic and social goals.
- Transforming the public service into an instrument capable of fulfilling its role in bringing about the new South Africa through the commitment and effectiveness of its employees, who in turn depend on the way in which they are developed and managed.
- Transforming the way human resources are managed would, therefore, be the catalyst for the transformation of the public service itself.
- *To provide a policy framework that would facilitate the development of human resource management practices that support an effective and efficient public service, geared for economic and social transformation* (White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, 1997:6-7).

The next policy initiative is the White Paper on Public Service Training and Education, 1998.

3.3.5. White Paper on Public Service Training and Education (WPPSTE), 1998

The aim of this White Paper on Public Service Training and Education (WPPSTE), 1998, is to provide a framework for public service training and education that is appropriate, adequate and accessible and meets the current and future requirements of public servants, the public service and the public. In addition, in its introduction, the White Paper on Public Service Training and Education (WPPSTE), 1998, asserts that it intends to provide a new national strategic policy framework on training and education, and by implication development, for public servants that would contribute positively to the goals of public service transformation. It also aims to bring public service training and education in line with international best practices, current global trends in human resource development and the national strategic policy context (South Africa, 1998b:13).

The anticipated outcome will be a new system of public service training and education that will be:

- Strategically linked to broader processes of transformation, institution building and human resources development within the public service;
- Strategically linked to the NQF and SAQA frameworks and to the Department of Labour's proposals for a new Skills Development Strategy;
- Strategically planned and effectively resourced;
- Based on the elevation of the importance and status of training and trainers;
- Effectively organised, coordinated and accredited in ways that promote quality, accountability and cost-effectiveness;
- Flexible and decentralised within national norms and standards;
- Based on broad participation and involvement by all relevant stakeholders;
- Capable of promoting uniform outcomes through a multiplicity of accredited providers;
- Capable of promoting access by all personnel to meaningful training and education opportunities;
- Capable of promoting the empowerment of previously disadvantaged groups;
- Capable of facilitating the development of effective career paths for all public servants;
- Demand-led, needs-based and competency-based;
- Capable of promoting positive learning outcomes that add value to individual and organisational capacity (South Africa, 1998b:13).

Significantly, while recognising that there are many different types and levels of training and education (from a professional degree to structured forms of on-the-job training), this White Paper nevertheless rejects the rigid distinction between education and training that has been inherited from the past, which equated education with knowledge acquisition and training with

operational skills development. This division was in the past associated with the split between tertiary education and skills training by training institutions. It is now national policy that tertiary institutions must also take responsibility for skills training within a competency framework. Training and education should be seen as equally weighted components of the entire learning process. The WPPSTE is therefore based on the assumption that training and education are equally weighted components of a holistic capacity building process that should become the foundation for all programmes that cater for the training and education needs of the public service, no matter who is responsible for delivering them (South Africa, 1998b:23).

3.3.6. Skills Development Act (SDA) 97 of 1998

The Finance and Accounting Services Sector Education Authority (SETA) FASSET (2011:12-13) states that central to the skills development environment is the Skills Development Act (SDA) 1998, which describes the purpose of the legislation and creates the institutional infrastructure for implementation of the legislation.

According to Bellis (cited by Meyer *et al.*, 2004:12), the prerequisite for achieving the purpose of the Skills Development Act include:

- Establishing an institutional and financial framework comprising the National Skills Authority, the National Skills Fund, a Skills Development Levy Grant, the Skills Development Planning Unit, Labour Centres and the Sector Skills and Education Authority (SETA).
- Encouraging partnerships between the public and private sectors of the economy to provide education and training in and for the workplace.
- Cooperating with South African Qualifications Authority.

3.3.6.1. Purpose of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998

The stated purpose of the Skills Development Act (SDA) 1998 is:

- (a) to develop the skills of the South African workforce
 - (i) to improve the quality of life of workers, their prospects of work and labour mobility
 - (ii) to improve productivity in the workplace and the competitiveness of employers
 - (iii) to promote self-employment; and
 - (iv) to improve the delivery of social services

- (b) to increase the levels of investment in education and training in the labour market and to improve the return on that investment
- (c) to encourage employers
 - (i) to use the workplace as an active learning environment
 - (ii) to provide employees with the opportunities to acquire new skills
 - (iii) to provide opportunities for new entrants to the labour market to gain work experience
 - (iv) to employ persons who find it difficult to be employed
- (d) to encourage workers to participate in learnerships and other training programmes
- (e) to improve the employment prospects of persons previously disadvantaged by unfair discrimination and to redress those disadvantages through training and education
- (f) to ensure the quality of education and training in and for the workplace
- (g) to assist
 - (i) work-seekers to find work;
 - (ii) retrenched workers to re-enter the labour market;
 - (iii) employers to find qualified employees; and
 - (iv) to provide and regulate employment services (FASSET, 2011:12-13).

Furthermore, in 2008 the SDA was amended. The introduction to the amended legislation states:

To amend the Skills Development Act, 1998, so as to define certain expressions and amend certain definitions; to extend the functions of the National Skills Authority; to change the composition of the National Skills Authority; to extend the Minister's power in respect of SETAs; to provide anew for the obligations of SETAs in respect of financial management; to require SETAs to conclude service level agreements with the Director-General; to ensure that the membership of SETAs are representative of designation groups; to empower the Minister to make regulations regarding learnership agreements; to regulate private employment service agencies; to allow the use of money in the National Skills Fund for the administration of the Fund; to provide anew for budgeting in respect of training by national and provincial public entities; to empower the Minister to establish and promote a national standard to promote good practice in skills development; to extend the Minister's power to make regulations; and to amend Schedule 2; to effect consequential amendments to the Mine Health and Safety Act, 1996: and to provide for matters connected therewith.

The amended SDA has resulted in the following changes:

- It provides new and amend existing definitions

- It empowers the Minister to establish and promote a national standard to promote good practice in skills development (FASSET, 2011:12-13).

Subsequently, the main elements of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 are discussed next.

3.3.6.2. Main elements of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998

A) National Skills Authority

Van Dyk *et al.* (2002:38) point out that the functions of the National Skills Authority are:

- To advise the Minister of Labour on –
 - A national skills development policy
 - A national skills development strategy
 - Guidelines on the implementation of the national skills development strategy
 - Allocation of subsidies from the National Skills Fund
 - Any regulations to be made
- To liaise with Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) on
 - The national skills development policy
 - The national skills development strategy
- To report to the Minister on progress made in the implementation of the national skills development strategy
- To conduct investigations arising out of the Skills Development Act

B) Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs)

According to Van Dyk *et al.* (2002:38), SETAs may establish chambers for sub-sectors in the SETA. Provision is also made for a constitution for each SETA. All financial matters regarding SETAs are dealt with, including the sources of funds for SETAs, the requirements governing the investment of revenue by SETAs, the manner in which the funds may be used, and the budgeting, financial reporting, and auditing procedures that SETAs must follow.

The Framework for the National Skills Development Strategy 2011/12 – 2015/16 (2010) further states that institutions are a key part of the strategy to improve the mismatch between labour demand and supply. The key to doing this is to understand the interconnection between the broad economic, social and skills-based policy processes and the labour market outcomes. In accordance with the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 section 10(1) (a), each Sector

Education and Training Authority (SETA) is required to develop a Sector Skills Plan (SSP) within the framework of the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS). Sector Skills Plans are five-year sector education and training skills development reports prepared by SETAs, aimed at identifying:

- the skills needs of industry / economic sectors (skills shortages, skills gaps and skills supply) based on the standard industrial classification codes allocated to each individual SETA by the Minister in the SETA establishment and re-certification process;
- possibilities and constraints in the effective utilisation and development of skills in relation to government's priorities and the objectives of the HRDS, the NSDS, Provincial Growth and Development Strategies (including major projects) and relevant industry / economic strategies.

SETAs function as advisory bodies on education and training. They are financed from the skills development levies, interest and penalties collected from employers. The SSPs focus on an analysis by each SETA of its sector and associated skills requirements. Analysis of economic development and employment trends includes a consideration of national and sector growth and development strategies, particularly those related to the National Economic and Development Strategy, the National Human Resources Development Strategy and those related to the Industrial Policy Framework, innovation and technology and Rural Development. In accordance with the requirements of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998, the SSPs should reflect provincial growth and development strategies, particularly the skills demand and supply issues identified through provincial skills development forums as specified in the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 (South Africa, 2010a:5).

C) Learnership

A learnership is a mode of delivering a learning programme, which combines work-based experience with structured learning. It is one of the means of achieving an NQF-registered qualification. A person who completes a learnership will be able to demonstrate the practical application of competencies (skills, knowledge, values and attitudes) in an employment context. A learnership is somewhat similar to the traditional apprenticeship system. Like apprenticeship, learnerships potentially prepare people for any occupations, but not only blue-collar trades. It provides a bridge between vocational and professional training programmes. Furthermore, learnerships are critical for young people entering the job market. The vast majority of matriculants who are unable to pursue higher education are faced with the daunting task of trying to get a job with no work experience. Learnerships have huge benefits for

different sectors of society, ranging from employers to the employed and unemployed, especially the youth (Meyer *et al.*, 2004:225).

In addition, Kruss *et al.* (2012:3-4) further maintain that the new learnership system introduced through the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 is intended to address the shortcomings of the traditional apprenticeship system, particularly the lack of structured workplace learning and to increase access. It differs from the traditional apprenticeship system in that it operates across all industrial sectors and across all skills levels. The learnership system also includes basic skills level at NQF levels 1 to 3, the intermediate level, including artisanal skilling at National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 4, and high skills level at NQF Level 5 to 8 certification. It incorporates traditional and well established professional internship training programmes in fields such as accountancy into an integrated national system, but also creates new structured occupational learning pathways in service sectors such as tourism, media or community care. The new system has a dual mandate, namely to enhance skills upgrading across all levels of the existing workforce in organisations or firms (for those who enter as 18.1 or employed learners) as well as providing vocational education and training for the (young) unemployed to facilitate transitions to the labour market (for those who enter as 18.2 or unemployed learners).

D) Skills programmes

Section 20 of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 makes provision for the skills programmes. A skills programme is any learning programme that is occupationally based, which when completed will constitute a credit towards a qualification registered in terms of the National Qualifications Framework as defined in Section 1 of the South African Qualifications Authority Act 58 of 1995. A skills programme uses accredited training providers as referred to in section 17(1)(c) of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 and complies with the requirements of the act (Meyer *et al.*, 2004:225).

The Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) created by the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 have developed a variety of criteria to assess skills programmes for the purpose of grants approval. The following are some of the generally used criteria:

- Occupationally based (related to work or economic activity).
- Provided by an accredited provider or a provider who has submitted a formal application for accreditation to the relevant Education and Training Quality Assurance (ETQA) body before the start of the planned programme.

- The learning programme for the skills programme has been submitted to the relevant ETQA for evaluation.
- Constitutes at least one credit towards a qualification on the NQF.
- Addresses skills needs identified in the sector skills plan of the Education Training and Development Practitioners (ETDP) SETA and where applicable, the workplace skills plan and or research carried out to identify skills need.

Furthermore, the SETA will be looking for evidence that:

- The planned programme is located within a personal and career development programme.
- The principles of mobility and portability receive attention during the planning of the programme.
- In selecting individuals to take part in the training, the organisation is applying the principles of access, redress and equity (Meyer *et al.*, 2004:225).

Overall, learnerships and skills programmes are occupationally based programmes that combine structured learning with on-the-job experience, integrating learning with real life working experience. A skills programme must be linked to one or more unit standards, and a learnership must terminate in a qualification. Providers can structure a series of skills programmes so that they build up into a qualification. The SETAs should be committed to programmes of learning that lead to the achievement of qualifications and assist employers and providers to achieve this (Meyer *et al.*, 2004:226).

E) Quality Councils (QCs)

Erasmus *et al.* (2014:94) point out that Umalusi is the Quality Council (QC) for General and Further Education, the Council on Higher Education is a QC for Higher Education, and the QC for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) is the body of Artisan Development and Quality Council for Trade and Occupations. The Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 makes provision for Artisan development by establishing a National Artisan Moderating Body and makes provision for the listing of trades and a National Register of Artisans. It further requires that no person may obtain an artisan qualification unless they have passed a trade-test by an accredited trade centre. The QCTO is established by the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 and consists of 16 members who must, among other things, advise the Minister on all matters related to policy concerning occupations standards and qualifications.

The importance of the Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999 is discussed next.

3.3.7. The Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999

The purpose of the Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999 is to provide for the imposition of a skills development levy. Meyer *et al.* (2004:12) argue that the Skills Development Levies Act was introduced by government to encourage employers to increase training expenditure. According to the provisions of this Act, employers are required to draw up, implement and report on a workplace skills plan to qualify for a partial refunding of the levy. Employers are obliged to appoint skills development facilitators, draw up and submit workplace skills plan (WSP), implement training in accordance with the WSP and report on the implementation of the WSP.

FASSET (2011:14) further maintains that the principal aim of the Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999 is to finance skills development programmes by way of a compulsory levy system. Based on the Act, every organisation that exceeds the threshold set for the annual payroll (currently this threshold is R 500,000 total payroll per annum), as calculated for Pay as You Earn (PAYE) has to pay one per cent (1%) of their total payroll as a Skills Development Levy (SDL). Significantly, the Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999 did have an effect as expenditure on training increased. The average expenditure on training, as a percentage of payroll, in 2002/2003, was 2.1%. Large enterprises spent 2.8%, which is a much higher proportion than medium and small enterprises. This pattern of higher levels of spending in large enterprises is similar internationally, where expenditure on training usually increases with enterprise size (Labour Market Review 2005, cited by FASSET, 2011:14).

The Skills Development Act and the Skills Development Levies Act introduced new institutions, programmes and funding policies designed to increase investment in skills development. The legislation addresses the ever-present reality of the global economy and the imperative to increase investment in skills to improve productivity and competitiveness of industry, business, commerce and services. Furthermore, these two Acts focus on employment. The interpretation of these Acts must be done in conjunction with other labour legislation such as the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997, the Labour Relations Act and all other legislation specific to sector operation.

3.3.8. The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act 58 of 1995

Meyer *et al.* (2004:12) argue that the development and implementation of the National Qualification Framework is provided by this Act. SAQA is a body consisting of 29 members who are appointed jointly by the Minister of Education and Labour. The Act ensures the removal of unnecessary constraints to entry into and progress within the learning system and

creates measures for quality control (Meyer, cited by Meyer *et al.*, 2004:12). Billes (cited by Meyer *et al.*, 2004:12) argue that the objectives of the SAQA Act 58 of 1995 are:

- to create an integrated national framework for learning achievements;
- to facilitate access to, and mobility and progression within, education, training and career paths;
- to enhance the quality of education and training;
- to accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities;
- to contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large.

Likewise, Van Dyk *et al.* (2002:45) argue that the function of SAQA is to oversee the development and the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The development phase has two parts:

- The refinement of the proposed structure of the NQF in terms of learning, including level descriptors, which specifies the nature of the national qualifications at each level.
- Working out procedures for the facilitation and registration of the bodies that will actually set learning standards in their fields and other bodies that will undertake the accreditation of monitoring and auditing bodies (Quality Assurance Bodies).

The implementation phase involves registering standards and accreditation bodies, and the registration of national standards and qualifications, ensuring compliance with accreditation criteria and ensuring international compatibility. This set of activities represents the permanent work of SAQA. Where existing bodies meet SAQA's criteria, they will be registered. Where there are no bodies in a particular learning field, SAQA will help establish and register new bodies, assuming the providers in that field choose to participate (Van Dyk *et al.*, 2002:45).

3.3.9. National Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008

The object of the National Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008 is to provide for the further development, organisation and governance of the NQF.

1. This Act applies to;
 - (a) qualifications offered by:
 - (i) education institutions; and
 - (ii) skills development providers; and
 - (b) professional designations.

The NQF is a comprehensive system approved by the Minister for the classification, registration, publication and articulation of quality-assured national qualifications.

The objectives of the NQF are to:

- create a single integrated national framework for learning achievements;
- facilitate access to, and mobility and progression within, education, training and career paths;
- enhance the quality of education and training;
- accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities (South Africa, 2008b:6).

The objectives of the NQF are designed to contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large. The Act further states that SAQA and the quality councils must seek to achieve the objectives of the NQF by:

- developing, fostering and maintaining an integrated and transparent national framework for the recognition of learning achievements;
- ensuring that South African qualifications meet appropriate criteria, determined by the Minister as contemplated in section 8, and are internationally comparable; and
- ensuring that South African qualifications are of an acceptable quality (South Africa, 2008b:6).

The South African Qualifications Authority Level Descriptors for the South African National Qualifications Framework, 2012, also maintains that the objectives of the NQF are designed to contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large. The NQF is organised as a series of levels of learning achievement, arranged in ascending order from one (1) to ten (10). Each level on the NQF is described by a statement of learning achievement known as level descriptors. The level descriptors were developed by SAQA and agreed to by the quality councils (Council on Higher Education; General and Further Education and Training Quality Council (Umalusi) and the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations), as discussed earlier. They were published in the Government Gazette in November 2011. Their primary focus is qualifications experts who are involved in developing and implementing the South African NQF. Others who will benefit from the level descriptors are the users, including learners and skills development practitioners. The level descriptors focus on the challenges involved in taking the objectives of the NQF forward at national level. One of the ways through which SAQA aims to advance the objectives of the NQF in establishing a single integrated national framework for learning achievement is the level descriptors. An important purpose of the level descriptors is to support the design and implementation of qualifications and part qualifications within the NQF. They have been

designed to contribute to coherence in learning achievement and facilitate evaluation criteria for comparability and articulation within the NQF. Quality councils, who recommend qualifications for registration on the NQF, must use the NQF level descriptors as a key reference in a transparent manner. The level descriptors reflect a broad agreement on the potential benefits of the South African NQF for promoting lifelong learning (SAQA, 2012:2).

The NQF is a single integrated system that comprises of three coordinated qualifications sub-frameworks. These are:

- General and Further Education and Training Sub-Framework (GFETQSF).
- The Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF).
- The Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF).

The sub-frameworks have qualifications registered at the following NQF levels:

- GFETQSF - levels 1 to 4;
- HEQSF - levels 5 to 10; and
- OQSF - levels 1 to 6

Furthermore, for NQF levels 7 and 8, the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations can motivate for a qualification only in collaboration with a recognised professional body and the Council on Higher Education in a process coordinated by SAQA.

Table 3.1. Principles of the NQF

Principle	Definition
Integration	Form part of a system of human resource development that provides for the establishment of a unifying approach to education and training
Relevance	Be and remain responsive to national development needs
Credibility	Have national and international value and acceptance
Coherence	Work within a consistent framework of principles and certification
Flexibility	Allow for multiple pathways to the same learning ends
Standards	Be expressed in terms of a nationally agreed framework and internationally acceptable outcomes
Legitimacy	Provide for the participation of all national stakeholders in the planning and coordination of standards and qualifications
Access	Provide ease of entry to appropriate levels of education and training for all prospective learners in a manner which facilitates progression
Articulation	Provide for learners, on successful completion of accredited prerequisites, to move between components of the delivery system
Progression	Ensure that the framework of qualifications permits individuals to move through the levels of national qualifications via different appropriate combinations of the components of the delivery system
Portability	Ensure that learners can transfer their credits or qualifications from one learning institution and/or employer to another
Recognition of prior learning	Through assessment, give credit to learning which has already been acquired in different ways, e.g. through life experience
Guidance of learners	Provide for the counselling of learners by specially trained individuals who meet nationally recognised standards for educators and trainers

Source: Meyer *et al.* 2004:15

Meyer *et al.* (2004:15) argue the above list of objectives, and the principles embedded in them presents a vision of quality education and training that the adoption of the NQF as a transformation mechanism has to achieve.

3.3.10. The Framework for the National Skills Development Strategy 2011/12 – 2015/16.

The Framework for the National Skills Development Strategy 2011/12 – 2015/16, 2010, contends that section 22 of the Bill of Rights of the South African Constitution states, under the heading 'Freedom of trade, occupation and profession' that every citizen has the right to choose their trade, occupation or profession freely. The practice of a trade, occupation or profession may be regulated by law. It is from this right that the term PIVOTAL has been

derived. It is the acronym for “Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning”. The Department of Higher Education and Training’s first five-year strategic plan defines PIVOTAL programmes as follows:

“Pivotal programmes are those ‘Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning’ programmes that meet the critical needs for economic growth and social development. They are also programmes that generally combine course work at universities, universities of technology and colleges with structured learning at work. This is achieved by means of professional placements, work-integrated learning, apprenticeships, learnerships, internships and the like. To achieve this goal, there must not only be improved access to and success at post-school learning sites such as universities and colleges, but there must also be structured bridges to the world of work and quality learning upon arrival there.” (South Africa, 2010b:15).

PIVOTAL programmes are distinguished from the skills programmes because they reach beyond a particular application or specialisation and signal to the labour market that graduates are able to meet the full range of challenges normally associated with the occupation. This cluster of programmes is critical in a context where broader, more generic occupational skills are required by those who must be able to respond to a rapidly changing world with flexibility (South Africa, 2010b:15).

One of the PIVOTAL programmes which is espoused in the Human Resource Development Strategic Framework Vision 2015, 1998, sub objective of the Capacity Development Initiatives Pillar is the Public Service Internship Programme. The Public Service Internship Programme is briefly discussed next.

A) Internship programmes

The Public Service Internship Programme (2006), state that an internship in the public service is a planned, structured and managed programme that provides work experience for a specific period of time. It is a practical programme to assist with the continuous development of people for future appointment in the labour market. Various forms of Internships are being offered within the public service:

- Traditional graduate Internships, which is offered to a person who has completed a qualification and requires workplace experience to enhance future employment opportunities.

- Student internships, which are offered to persons who are enrolled at a tertiary education institution and required practical experience as part of their study programme.
- Internships linked to professional development that are a requirement for professional registration with Professional Bodies or Councils (South Africa, 2006:4-5).

Another significant initiative in the South African skills development landscape is the Recognition of Prior Learning.

B) Recognition of Prior Learning

The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process through which formal, non-formal and informal learning are measured, mediated for recognition across different contexts and certified against the requirements for credit, access, inclusion or advancement in the formal education and training system or workplace. The aim is to make it possible to obtain formal recognition for knowledge gained throughout life, such as in workplaces and own reading or experiences. The RPL process also entails providing support to a candidate to ensure that knowledge is discovered and displayed in terms of a relevant qualification registered on the National Qualifications Framework (South Africa, 2002a:7).

Therefore, people who seek to enrol on learning programmes without the standard entry qualifications should to be afforded the opportunity to have their skills acquired through experience measured against that which they require to attain. The result of this measurement should determine their current skill profile and the gaps that they have to fill if they are assessed to be not yet fully competent.

RPL is done:

- To redress the historical disadvantages like exclusion of many people from education and training because of regulations used by institutions, exclusion from certain jobs of certain population groups, etc.
- To validate people's skills and knowledge.
- For broader development of individuals.
- To facilitate access to jobs and progression in career paths.
- For recognition in terms of grading and pay/salary.
- For planning through skills audits.
- To promote employment equity (South Africa, 2002a:8)

C) Professional bodies

Training provision also stems from Professional bodies that are aligned to the sector education and training authorities (SETAs) to ensure that professions remain at the forefront of international competitiveness. Professional associations play a dominant role in the sectors' qualification offerings. In addition, the professional bodies organise and perform quality assurance and provision of education and training in the sector, and confer professional designations. FASSET (2011:30) state that in terms of the NQF Act (2008), SAQA may develop policies for recognising professional associations and for the registration of professional designations. This must be done in consultation with Quality Councils. Employees should be allowed to register for or subscribe as members of relevant professional bodies for continuous professional development.

3.3.11. The National Skills Development Strategy III

Kruss *et al.* (2012:1) argue that it is widely accepted that the skills of the workforce are critical determinants of global competitiveness as new technologies become more complex and competition is increasingly driven by quality, flexibility, design, reliability and networking. In a time of global economic recession, debt crises and burgeoning unemployment, skills and capabilities are even more significant. In order to advance, countries have to develop their technological capabilities to increase their share of knowledge intensive and complex activities that require higher skills levels in general and in relation to the technological trajectory of specific sectors. The competitive edge results from organisations' capability to absorb, use, adapt and build on new technologies, which in turn rely on national systems of education, training and skills development. The successful developing countries typically held up as shining examples for emulation, namely, Korea, Malaysia, and Singapore, all foregrounded and prioritised strategies for education, skills and capability development. In South Africa, an evolving set of government policy interventions and funding mechanisms are organised under the rubric of the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) which is now in its third iteration for the next five-year period, 2011 -2015.

3.3.11.1 The purpose of the NSDS III

The key driving force of this strategy is improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the skills development system. This strategy represents an explicit commitment to encouraging the linking of skills development to career paths, career development and promoting sustainable employment and in-work progression. NSDS III seeks to encourage and actively support the

integration of workplace training with theoretical learning, and to facilitate the journey individuals make from school, college or university, or even from periods of unemployment, to sustained employment and in-work progression. Emphasis is placed on training to enable trainees to enter the formal workforce or create a livelihood for themselves. The emphasis is particularly on those who do not have relevant technical skills or adequate reading, writing and numeracy skills to enable them to access employment (South Africa, 2011a:5).

NSDS III further seeks to promote a skills development system and architecture that effectively responds to the needs of the labour market and social equity. The strategy seeks to establish and promote closer links between employers and training institutions and between both of these and the SETAs.

The National Skills Development Strategy III responds to the following pressing challenges that influence the ability of our economy to expand and provide increased employment opportunities:

- The inadequate skills levels and poor work readiness of many young people leaving formal secondary and tertiary education and entering the labour market for the first time. This is compounded by inadequate linkages between institutional and workplace learning, reducing the employability and work readiness of the successful graduates from FET and HET institutions, not to mention the many who enter the world of work without a formal qualification.
- The desperate plight of so many of the longer term unemployed who lack basic numeracy and literacy, do not possess entry-level skills, and do not have the work experience and work-based training needed to enable them to seek and obtain work.
- Continuing skills shortages in the artisanal, technical and professional fields that are fundamental to the development and growth of our economy.
- An over-emphasis on NQF level 1-3 learnerships, with insufficient progression towards more appropriate (intermediate and higher) skills required for growth sectors in a knowledge economy. There is a need for much more substantial programmes that improve qualifications, support career-pathing, enable greater flexibility and mobility and increase productivity.
- The failure of businesses in many sectors of the economy to equip their workforce to adapt to change as the economy becomes more knowledge-based. When structural change occurs, too often the outcome is retrenchments rather than retraining and redeployment of working people.
- Systemic blockages such as: a lack of synergy between the various post-school sub-systems (e.g. universities, FET colleges, SETAs); a lack of clarity in relation to the role

expected of the various parts of the skills development system; inefficiency and waste; and the silo mentality which prevents the partnerships and alignments needed to improve effectiveness.

- The absence of coherent strategies within economic and industrial sectors, compounded by the lack of systematic skills development to support and sustain growth and development.
- The urban bias of our economic development and therefore the urban bias in our skills development initiatives, resulting in skills for rural development being neglected (South Africa, 2011a:5).

The intention of NSDS III is to make sure that the energy and resources of education and training stakeholders are focused on ensuring that these challenges are addressed, and that measurable impact is achieved over the coming five-year period.

The strategy is informed and guided by other essential government programmes, especially the Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa, the requirements of the New Growth Path, the Industrial Policy Action Plan, the outcomes of the Medium-term Strategic Framework (MTSF), the Rural Development Strategy and the New Environment Strategy. It seeks a closer synergy between the world of work in the public sector and the formal education system.

3.3.12. The human resource development strategy for South Africa (HRD-SA)

Meyer *et al.* (2004:8) argue that one of the most exciting initiatives in the history of ETD in South Africa was the launch of the government's HRD strategy. At the heart of the proposed HRD strategy is the belief that enhancing the abilities and skills of the people is a necessary response to the current low skills levels and unemployment. People need knowledge, skills and democratic values and more importantly opportunities to apply them. The government's HRD strategy has two roles to play, namely:

- To ensure that the various components of state work together in a coordinated way to deliver opportunities for human development; and
- To ensure that those people who have suffered from discrimination in the past are given priority for HRD (Meyer *et al.*, 2004:8).

The initial HRD strategy was developed against the backdrop of the two features of national problem, namely:

- The impact of poverty related concerns on the population and the workforce (e.g. AIDS).
- The high degree of inequality prevalent in South Africa, especially around race, gender and disability in so far as education, income and occupational levels are concerned (Meyer *et al.*, 2004:8).

In view of the above national problems, the following HRD strategy key mission statement was formulated, namely:

*to maximise the potential of South Africa through the acquisition of knowledge and skills, to work productively and competitively in order to achieve a raising quality of life for all and to set in place an operational plan, together with the necessary institutional arrangements to achieve this (Meyer *et al.*, 2004:9).*

The strategic objectives of the national HRD strategy are:

- *Improving the foundations for human development.* A solid foundation consisting of early childhood development, general education at school and adult education and training.
- *Improving the supply of high-quality skills (particularly scarce skills) which are more responsive to societal and economic needs.* Securing a supply of skills, especially scarce skills, within the Further and Higher Education and Training bands of the NQF so that these skills anticipate and respond to specific skills needs in society through state and private sector participation in lifelong learning.
- *Increasing employer participation in lifelong learning.* An articulated demand for skills generated by the needs of the public and private including those required for social development opportunities and the development of small business.
- *Supporting employment growth through industrial policies, innovation, research and development.* A vibrant research innovation sector that supports industrial and employment growth opportunities.
- Ensuring that the four above strategic objectives of HRD strategy are linked.

A new human resource development strategy for South Africa (2010-2030) is discussed next.

3.3.13. A new human resource development strategy for South Africa (2010-2030).

Erasmus *et al.* (2014:84) argue that a new HRD strategy for South Africa (2010-2030) has been formulated to meet the following objectives:

- To replace the existing HRD strategy;

- To address the shortcomings in the existing strategy; and
- To optimise the efficacy and outcomes of HRD in respect of South Africa's developmental agenda.

The goals of the new HRD strategy for South Africa (2010-2030) are:

- To urgently and substantively reduce the related scourges of poverty and unemployment in South Africa.
- To promote justice and social cohesion through improved equity in the provision and outcome of education and skills development programmes.
- To improve national economic growth and development substantively through improved competitiveness of the South African economy.

The HRD strategy is designed to complement a range of purposefully developed development interventions to achieve the following:

- Improve South Africa's Human Development Index and the country's position in the global ranking.
- Improve the measure and ranking of South Africa's economic competitiveness.
- Reduce Gini coefficient (corresponding to a reduction in the inequality of wealth in the country).
- Improve in the measure of social cohesion as measured through specific social surveys.

The Human Resource Development Strategy South Africa 2010 – 2030, 2009, also states that since the inception of democracy, various policies and strategies of the South African Government have identified the development of adequate human resources to meet the development priorities of the country as a key strategic priority. The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) identified HRD as one of the five core programmes to drive the implementation of reconstruction and development in South Africa:

The Government's economic policies require human resource development on a massive scale. Improved training and education are fundamental to higher employment, the introduction of more advanced technologies, and reduced inequalities. Higher labour productivity will be the result of new attitudes towards work and especially new skills in the context of overall economic reconstruction and development. New and better management skills are urgently required. (South African Government, 1994) (South Africa, 2009a:11).

This priority was reinforced in the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR), which stated that transformation depended on "enhanced human resource development". The

Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA), which was launched in February 2006, is primarily aimed at giving effect to government's commitment of halving unemployment and poverty by 2014. The analysis on which ASGISA was based identified the shortage of suitably skilled labour as one of six binding constraints to accelerated growth in South Africa.

The development and implementation of a credible HRD strategy is therefore consistent with the historical and current thrust of government's development agenda. HRD has been identified as a vital instrument in all government strategies to accelerate development. In view of this, the interventions and activities outlined in this strategy have been formulated in response to a careful analysis of the HRD implications of the following development strategies in South Africa:

- Government Programme of Action (covering all cluster priorities);
- The Medium-term Strategic Framework (MTSF);
- ASGISA;
- National Industrial Policy Framework (NIPF);
- Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP);
- Emerging Anti-Poverty Strategy; and
- Technology and Innovation Strategy (South Africa, 2009:11).

In addition, the HRDS-SA is based explicitly on relevant current and emerging education and training related strategic frameworks, not least of which are the following:

- The National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) 2005-2010 (Including the Scarce Skills List 2007);
- The Basic Education Strategic Plans (ECD, schooling, ABET);
- The Further Education and Training (FET) Strategic Framework;
- The Higher Education (HE) Strategic Framework;
- The Immigration Policy; and
- The HRD Strategy for the Public Sector (South Africa, 2009:11).

The major drive of the strategy is to determine and apply a set of actions that will generate adequate leverage for the full scope of HRD inputs and activities to enhance the outcomes that support the country's development. Furthermore, the HRD strategy determines how HRD processes, policies and programmes contribute to the accomplishment of corporate goals contained in the business plans (Erasmus *et al.*,2014:386).

The human resource development for the public service strategic framework vision 2015, is deliberated next.

3.3.14. Human Resource Development for the Public Service Strategic Framework Vision 2015

The Human Resource Development for the Public Service Strategic Framework Vision 2015, 2008, explains that the initial Human Resource Development Strategy of the Public Service was published in April 2002 with an implementation period that extended between 2002 and 2006. This period ended and in light of developments during the period, the need for a revised strategy was seen as most crucial. As the first phase in developing a revised Strategic Framework for human resource development, the DPISA undertook a National Stakeholder Review process which sought to assess the impact of the Human Resource Development Strategy of 2002, and which sought to solicit ideas for developing and successfully implementing a revised strategy for human resource development for 2007 forward (South Africa, 2008c:9).

The effect of ongoing growth, adaption and refinement in the human resource development field is a body of constraints and challenges that still affects practice in the field. Some government departments, because of inherent historical advantages, have progressed well in creating an effective infrastructure for capacity development. Others did not have as many resources in the previous dispensation and they still face challenges in meeting the demands to build human capital in their respective jurisdictions. In spite of this, human resource development as a field has moved significantly forward. This progress or movement cannot be solely attributed to the human resource developments of 2002-2006. It is all too often evident that the overall refinement of policy frameworks and accountability structures of government have had significant spill over effects on the growth, efficiency and performance of human resource development in the public service. As the field moves ahead at different rates in different jurisdictions and in different areas of performance, human resource development still struggles to set its anchor and find meaning and stability in the public service. As a result, challenges still exist. These challenges cannot overshadow the gains that have been made in the field (South Africa, 2008c:9).

Significantly, the Human Resource Development for the Public Service Strategic Framework for Vision 2015 hinges on four pillars of strategic interventions (South Africa, 2008a:54-55). Based on the research review, each of these pillars represents a critical set of strategic initiatives that will further strengthen human resource development in the public service. Each strategic pillar and the initiatives they embody are highlighted and discussed briefly below:

- ***The Capacity Development Initiatives.***

Capacity development initiatives are represented in those activities that add value in strengthening our ability to develop human capital in public organisations. We must be able to build human capital efficiently and effectively, and the infrastructure we put in place must promote ease of access to opportunities for development for all. Most important in this regard is that developing human capital should lead to improved performance and enhanced service delivery. The end must justify the means and the efforts made.

- ***The Organisational Support Initiatives.***

Organisational support initiatives refer to those operational aspects of the organisation upon which a holistic HRD function is dependent. While these may not necessarily be HRD functions or concerns, HRD cannot be effective or efficient if these are not operating effectively. The essential foundation of effective organisational performance must be in place if HRD must be successful. The conceptual framework notes that these areas also have to be strengthened to add value to proper human capital formation and utilisation in public organisations.

- ***The Governance and Institutional Development Initiatives.***

Governance initiatives refer to the manner in which HRD in the public service will be promoted, governed and supported. Governance here refers to the manner in which strategic leadership will be provided to ensure the successful implementation of the HRD Strategic Framework. Governance in this sense does not only refer to the roles and obligations that will be undertaken by pivotal organisations in the Government Sector; but also refers to the interventions that will be made to track progress, promote quality and integrity and assess the outcomes and impact achieved.

- ***Initiatives to Support Government's Economic Growth and Development Initiatives.***

Economic growth and development initiatives seek to locate human capital formation considerations in their rightful place on the development agenda of government. The central concern here is the manner in which capacity development initiatives in Government are aligned and integrated with the Government's programmes and initiatives that advance social welfare and promote economic growth and development.

The aim of the HRD Strategy framework for the Public Service Vision 2015 is to provide guidance on the development of officials in the public service. It is informed by all relevant

policies and documents that are applicable to HRD in the public service (Public Service Commission, 2011b:6). The Strategy represents the human capital development value chain which focuses on the development of the individual public servant, the departments, the network of departments both horizontally and vertically, and lastly the economic environment locally, regionally, continentally and globally.

3.4. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IMPERATIVES

The following skills development imperatives are central to the administrative management and implementation of skills development programmes in any organisation, including the ECDS.

3.4.1. Workplace Skills Plans (WSPs)

FASSET (2004:29) state that the Regulation Gazette, No. 7091, 22 June 2001, explains that employers who are up-to-date with their levy payments may expect a grant from the SETA if:

- At least one Skills Development Facilitator is designated by the employer and the name is submitted to the SETA.
- A Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) is correctly submitted to the SETA at the appropriate time

Erasmus *et al.* (2014:379) also maintains that the purpose of compiling the Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) is to provide a mechanism against which a grant can be released from SETAs to individual organisations. It further serves as a format for the collection of information by the SETAs from individual organisations.

The Regulation Gazette, No. 7091, 22 June 2001 also indicates the importance of the Workplace Skills Plan to:

- Employers to provide a strategic basis for planning the development of the workforce and organisation.
- Workers to provide opportunities for enhanced job satisfaction and promotion prospects.
- SETAs to assist in the identification of imbalances in the supply of, and demand for skilled labour. This information can also be used by school leavers and unemployed people to inform choices about training options. Also, to support the assessment of training capacity and training investment to ensure the sound allocation of resources.

- Government to assist in the development and review of the National Skills Development Strategy which must be demand-led and sensitive to labour market needs (FASSET, 2004:29)

The WSP provides that basis for identification and planning for skills development initiatives, which are pertinent to the organisation's strategy and to individual development needs. It provides the basis against which an organisation can report progress towards skills development needs and target all skills development interventions to address specific organisational and strategic needs. The WSP and the Annual Training Report (ATR) are central to the establishment of a demand-led skills development system which is responsive to the economic and social needs of South Africa. It allows the employers to outline the organisation's skills priorities and skills development objectives.

3.4.2. Skills audit

Erasmus *et al.* (2014:380) argue that successful workplace planning encompasses a skills audit to determine the real skills requirements of the organisation. A skills audit is an investigation which is undertaken to determine the accrual skills of the current workforce to define the skills gaps and real skills requirements of the organisation. The ultimate aims of the skills audit are to establish:

- The skills that actually exist within the organisation.
- How they compare with the organisational skills requirements as determined through the workforce planning and job analysis.
- What the skills development priorities are (per occupational group, levels and demographic profile).
- How the skills development priorities may best be addressed through a systematic plan and when they will be addressed.
- What the key success indicators/measures of the WSP will be.
- How to implement, track and monitor progress.
- What to report to management and the relevant SETA (Erasmus *et al.*, 2014:381).

A skills audit requires time, money and expertise. Unfortunately, many organisations undertake training without making this essential preliminary investment. Often there is no systematic plan to predict future skills development needs or to determine whether perceived skills development requirements can be addressed.

3.4.3. Skills Development Facilitator.

FASSET (2011:6) states that the skills development facilitator (SDF) is the person who gives advice on and helps plan skills development for a workplace. The SDF provides the enterprise and its members with guidance, resources and support in order that they may achieve capacity building objectives relating to skills at the national, sectoral and organisational level, and to continuously facilitate interventions aimed at improving organisational skills development. The SDF is responsible for the planning, implementation and reporting of training in an organisation, with Seta related duties

The functions of an SDF are to:

- Assist the employer and employees to develop a Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) which complies with the requirements of the Seta.
- Submit the WSP to the relevant Seta.
- Advise the employer on the implementation of the WSP.
- Assist the employer to draft an Annual Training Report (ATR) on the implementation of the WSP.
- Advise the employer on the quality assurance requirements set by SETA.
- Act as a contact person between the employer and the Seta.
- Serve as a resource with regard to all aspects of skills development.
- Communicate Seta initiatives, grants and benefits to the employer.
- Communicate with branch offices, and all employees in the main office and branch offices, concerning events and grants being offered at the Seta.

The employer must provide the SDF with the resources, facilities and training necessary to perform functions set out above.

An SDF is a:

- *Facilitator:* To facilitate the development of an employer's skills development strategy.
- *Expert:* To serve as an expert resource for accrediting the employer as a training provider and for the implementation of appropriate learnerships and skills programmes.
- *Administrator:* To complete and submit the WSP and ATR.
- *Advisor:* To advise the employers and employees on the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) and on the implementation of the WSP.
- *Education and needs evaluator:* To assess the skills development needs of the organisation.
- *Mediator:* To serve as a contact person between the employer and the relevant Seta.

SDFs should have some training and show competence against relevant unit standards, and retain the right to reject the SDFs grant submissions.

3.4.4. The Skills Development Committee

FASSET (2011:8-11) provides an outline of the skills development committee. Essentially, it is strongly recommended that for organisations with more than 50 employees a training committee is established for the purposes of consultation on training matters. This committee, as a whole, should reflect the interests of employees from all occupational categories in the organisation's workforce. A consultative forum should be established or an existing forum used if this is appropriate. For example, an existing diversity committee, affirmative action or employment equity forum may be utilised.

3.4.4.1. Composition of the training committee

All stakeholders should be included in this forum, for example:

- Representative trade unions
- Employee representatives from designated groups, non-designated groups, all occupational categories and levels, and senior management, including the managers assigned with responsibility

This forum should engage in proper consultation. Proper consultation includes:

- The opportunity to meet and report back to employees and management
- Reasonable opportunity for employee representatives to meet with the employer
- The request, receipt and consideration of relevant information
- Adequate time being allowed for each of the above steps

Ongoing interaction with and accessibility to senior management with regard to workplace skills issues is critical to the success of this process. The frequency of consultative forum meetings will vary from employer to employer depending on the size of the organisation, sophistication, existing levels of diversity, and what has already been accomplished in the workplace with regard to skills development. Meetings should take place regularly and employers should allow time off for these meetings.

The role of a training committee is to:

- Drive and direct the skills development process.
- Ensure that representative consultation takes place regarding up-skilling of employees.
- Authorise and sign off the grant application to the Seta.

- Ensure that the SDF is leading the way with the Skills Development process.
- Support the SDF in the efforts of 'spreading the word' regarding training and up-skilling.

The following sub-sections provide the constitution and critical objectives of a training committee, which include, among others, provision of inputs to and endorse the WSP; to advise on the implementation of the WSP and to ensure support to both management and employees in implementing skills development in its totality.

3.4.4.2. Constitution of the training committee

A training committee must have a constitution in place with the given mandate and should be performance-driven to ensure commitment. The committee should, aside from its legal obligations in terms of the Employment Equity Act and recommendations of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998, be committed to:

- Improving the quality of life of all workers, their prospects of work and mobility.
- Improving productivity in the workplace and the competitiveness of the organisation.
- Increasing the levels of investment in education and training and improving the return on that investment.

A training committee should represent the interests of all sectors of its workforce and should consult on the implementation and monitoring of its skills development plans in terms of the relevant legislation and organisations' requirements.

3.4.4.3. Scope and objectives of the skills development committee

The scope of the committee comprises the activities in the organisation as these have been decided in consultation with staff. This scope is identified and described in the Employment Equity Act (EEA), recommended in the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 and the Skills development Levies Act of 1999 and any regulations, codes of good practice, directives and administrative guidelines published in terms of Acts. The committee is responsible for making recommendations to the leadership and management of the organisation. Furthermore, it is responsible for monitoring of the implementation of the goals and objectives of the forum. In addition, the skills development committee may not be utilised as a forum in which to raise grievances and or demands not related to its scope and objectives.

The first objective of the committee is to promote the objectives of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 within the organisation by:

- Promoting skills development, by assisting and advising on the development of competency levels of employees so that individual and team performance can be improved, and the objectives of the Employment Equity Plan (EEP) realised.
- Proposing actions to continuously enhance the skills level of employees so that technology, process and structural changes can be effectively implemented.
- Developing a WSP.
- Monitoring and reporting on the progress made in implementing the WSP and the Annual Training Report (ATR).
- Facilitating employee mobility through outcomes-based education and training.
- Assisting employees in utilising the opportunity to use workplace skills development as a mechanism to achieve nationally recognised unit standards and qualifications.
- Enhancing the organisation's quality of education and training.
- Addressing the organisation's past discrimination and imbalances.
- Contributing to the personal development of learners.
- Optimising the levy rebates, incentives and interventions funded by the Seta (FASSET, 2011).

The above listed skills development imperatives are essential for the ECDS.

3.5. CONCLUSION

In this chapter a series of training and development policy frameworks and related legislation and strategies were discussed. The chapter focused with special emphasis on the four pieces of training legislation namely the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act 58 of 1995, Skills Development Act 97 of 1998, Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999 and the National Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008. These pieces of legislation represent the legal expression of the Government's training policies. The legislation creates a framework for the funding of training, the certification of training and the establishment of multi-faceted institutions to develop, implement and maintain training initiatives and plans that are consistent with Government's policy and the needs of the economy. The Human Resource Development Strategy, National Skills Development Strategy and the Human Resource Development Strategy for the Public Service were also discussed. The next chapter focuses on the analysis of the skills development programmes within the context of human resource development: the case of ECDS: empirical study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter a series of training and development policy frameworks and related legislation and strategies were discussed. This chapter discusses the research methodology and empirical findings of the analysis of the skills development programmes within the context of human resource development within the ECDS. The research population of this study, which is the ECDS Skills Development Committee, represents members of the departmental management and organised labour. The committee is composed on an equal basis as 50% of respondents are representatives at managerial level and 50% are representatives at employee level (organised labour).

In addition, the research methodology followed to obtain, analyse and present data on the current functioning and challenges experienced in the effective implementation of skills development programmes within the context of human resource development in the ECDS is discussed in this chapter. The questions developed for the in-depth interviews were based on the theoretical principles discussed in chapters 2 and 3. By following the theoretical principles discussed in chapters 2 and 3, the researcher ensured that the interview questions focused on the topic under discussion. The semi-structured interview questions used during the interviews with the Skills Development Committee members is attached as Annexure A. The researcher compiled the questions in the form of a questionnaire in order to help him to structure the interviews and to describe the inputs from the participants in detail. The research methodology for the empirical study is discussed in the following section.

The main aim of this chapter is to analyse the current functioning of the Skills Development Committee and challenges experienced by the ECDS in the implementation of skills development programmes based on the knowledge obtained through theory and legislation.

4.2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Initially, before going into the intricacies of the research methodology followed in this study it is imperative to describe the concept of methodology within the broader context of social science research. Mouton and Marais (1996:15-16) argue that the methodological dimension of research in social sciences concerns itself with what may be called the “how” of social sciences research. In other words, how should research be planned, structured and executed

to comply with criteria of science? In fact, the meaning of methodology could be interpreted as the logic of implementing scientific methods in the study of reality. This definition becomes clearer when one bears in mind that the process of scientific research is largely a type of decision-making process. The researcher is required to make a series of decisions of the following nature: which theory or model is likely to be most appropriate for investigating a given subject? Which research hypotheses concerning the object of study may be formulated on the basis of the selected theory or model? Which measuring instruments and data-collection methods can be used? How should the collected data be analysed? What do the findings mean and how do they relate to the original formulation of the problem? Methodology, then, is defined as the logic of the application of scientific methods to the investigation of phenomena. According to this definition, methodology refers to the logic of decision-making process in scientific research (Mouton & Marais, 1996:15-16).

Bryman (2012:5) further maintains that the theories that social scientists employ to help understand the social world have an influence on what is researched and how the findings of research are interpreted. In other words, the topics that are investigated are profoundly influenced by the available theoretical foundation. Therefore, if a researcher was interested in the impact of mobile phone text messaging on sociability, it is quite likely that he or she would want to take into account prevailing theories about how technology is used and its impacts. In this way, social research is informed and influenced by theory. It also contributes to theory building because the findings of the study will be feedback into the stock of knowledge to which the theory relates.

Furthermore, as the previous point implies, the existing knowledge about the area in which the researcher is interested forms an important part of the background within which social research takes place. In practice, this means that a researcher who is planning to conduct research must be familiar with the *literature* on the topic or area of interest. The researcher has to be acquainted with what is already known about the research area in which he or she is interested in so that he or she can build on it and not risk covering the same ground as others (Bryman, 2012:5).

Grix (2001:36) explains that a research methodology is therefore concerned with the discussion of how a particular piece of research should be undertaken and can be understood as the critical study of research methods and their implementation. Research methodology refers to the choice of research strategy taken by a particular scholar as opposed to other alternative research strategies. The research methodology is driven by certain ontological and epistemological assumptions and consists of research questions or hypotheses, a conceptual framework to the topic, the methods to be used in the study and their justification, and

consequently, the data sources. All these components are inextricably linked to one another in a logical manner (Grix, 2001:36). In this study, a qualitative research approach by means of utilising the case study method was used.

4.2.1. Qualitative and quantitative research strategies

In this subsection, the researcher provides a brief account of what qualitative and quantitative research strategies entail. Although a qualitative approach is followed due to the nature of the study, it is also necessary to provide an overview of what quantitative research entails.

4.2.1.1. Qualitative research strategy

Leedy and Ormrod (2010:135) argue that the term qualitative research encompasses several approaches to research that are, in some respects, quite different from one another. Yet all qualitative approaches have two things in common. Firstly, they focus on phenomena that occur in natural settings, that is, in the real world. Secondly, they involve studying those phenomena in all their complexity. Qualitative researchers rarely try to simplify what they observe. Instead, they recognise that the issue they are studying has many dimensions and layers and so they try to portray the issue in its multi-faceted form (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:135).

In explaining qualitative research, Denzin and Lincoln (cited by Noor, 2008:1602) explain that qualitative approach implies an emphasis on processes and meanings that are not quantitative in nature. There are instances, particularly in the social sciences where researchers are interested in insight, discovery and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing through statistics. Significantly, Leedy and Ormrod (cited by Mothapi, 2014:117) point out that qualitative research normally produces descriptive (straightforward) data and the researcher draws conclusions from such data.

Likewise, Grix (2001:33) argues that qualitative research usually involves in-depth investigation of knowledge through, for example, participant observation employing the interviewing technique, archival or other documentary analyses. These methods do not rely on, but can involve, some numerical measurements. Moreover, qualitative research involves the interpretation of data, whereby the researcher analyses cases, usually a few in number, in their social and cultural context over a specific period, with the researcher positively interacting with the object of study.

Qualitative researchers acknowledge that, although objective methods may be appropriate for studying physical events such as electricity, chemical reactions and black holes, an objective

approach to studying human events – interpersonal relationships, social structures, creative products, and so on – is neither desirable nor perhaps even possible (e.g., Creswell, 2009; Eisner, 1998; Wolcott, 1994, cited by Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:135). They believe that the researcher's ability to interpret and make sense of what he or she sees is critical for understanding any social phenomenon. In this sense, the researcher is an instrument in much the same way that an oscilloscope, sociogram or rating scale is an instrument.

In addition, some qualitative researchers believe that there is not necessarily a single, ultimate 'truth' to be discovered. Instead, there may be multiple perspectives held by different individual on the same phenomenon with each of these perspectives having equal validity or truth (Creswell, 1998, 2009; Guba & Lincoln, 1998, cited by Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:135). One goal of a quality study, then, is to reveal the nature of these multiple perspectives. This study likewise made use of a qualitative approach to discover multiple perspectives on the subject under investigation.

4.2.1.2. Quantitative research strategy

According to Bryman (2012:35), quantitative research can be construed as a research strategy that emphasises quantification in the collection and analysis of data and that:

- Entails a deductive approach to the relationship between theory and research, in which the accent is placed on the statistical testing of theories.
- Has incorporated the practice and norms of natural scientific model and of positivism in particular.
- Embodies a view of social reality as a strict external, objective reality.

Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2002:46) maintain that quantitative research generates predefined observational measures through a twofold deductive process:

- Conceptualisation, that is, defining a construct (e.g., alienation) in abstract terms according to its theoretical meaning, and
- Operationalisation that is translating this theoretical definition into observable indicators of the construct.

Babbie (1998:108) explains conceptualisation by pointing out that if the researcher is going to study how college student feel about abortion and why, the first thing the researcher will have to specify is what he or she means by "the right to an abortion." Specifically, the researcher should pay attention to the different conditions under which people might approve or disapprove of abortion: for example, when woman's life is in danger, in the case of rape or

incest or simply because the woman wants to have an abortion. The researcher will find that overall support for abortion varies according to the circumstances and the results are presented in a statistical manner.

Also, with operationalisation, Babbie (1998:108) further explains that if a researcher decided to use a survey to study attitudes towards abortion rights, the researcher might operationalise his or her main variable by asking respondents whether they would approve a woman's right to have an abortion under the variety of conditions that the researcher has conceptualised: in case of rape or incest, if her life were threatened by the pregnancy, and so forth. The researcher would ask respondents to approve or disapprove separately for each situation.

Validity in quantitative research is defined by the extent to which the operational definition is a true reflection of the conceptual definition. In addition to measurement validity, quantitative research aims towards measurement reliability. Reliable measures are stable in the sense that they consistently give the same data repeatedly when used under similar conditions (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002:46). This study did not make use of a quantitative approach.

4.2.1.3. Rationale for choosing a qualitative research strategy

Peshkin (cited by Leedy and Ormrod, 2010:136) argue that qualitative research studies typically serve one or more of the following purposes:

- *Descriptive.* They can reveal the nature of certain situations, settings, processes, relationships, systems, or people.
- *Interpretation.* They enable a researcher to:
 - gain new insights about a particular phenomenon,
 - develop new concepts or theoretical perspectives of the phenomenon, and/or
 - discover the problems that exist within the phenomenon.
- *Verification.* They allow a researcher to test the validity of certain assumptions, claims, theories, or generalisations within real-world context.
- *Evaluation.* They provide a means through which a researcher can judge the effectiveness of particular policies, practices, or innovations.

Based on the above discussion of qualitative research purposes, the research objectives of the study could best be achieved by means of a qualitative research approach.

4.2.1.4. Qualitative case study methodology

As alluded earlier in this chapter, a case study method was chosen for this study. Baxter and Jack (2008) point out that qualitative case study methodology provides tools for researchers to study complex phenomena within a specific case. When the approach is applied correctly, it becomes a valuable method for social science related research to develop theory, evaluate programmes and develop interventions. In explaining what a case is, Yin (cited by Noor, 2008:1602) advocates that the term refers to the study of an event, an entity, an individual or even a unit of analysis. It is an empirical inquiry into a specific case that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence. Anderson (cited by Noor, 2008:1602) also views case studies as being concerned with how and why things happen, allowing the investigation of contextual realities and the differences between what was planned and what actually occurred. Case study is not intended as a study of the entire organisation. Rather it is intended to focus on a particular issue, feature or unit of analysis. In this study, the unit of analysis is the ECDSD Skills Development Committee. Case studies become particularly useful where one has to understand a particular problem or situation in great depth and where one can identify cases rich in information (Noor, 2008:1602-1603). Therefore, the use of case study to probe this area of interest in depth was particularly appropriate.

This study conducted empirical research at the ECDSD in King Williams Town. Data were collected using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with respondents who are members of the ECDSD Skills Development Committee. Semi-structured interviews were used to gather descriptive data to address the objectives of this study.

Next is the discussion on the research design followed in this study.

4.3. RESEARCH DESIGN

Mouton and Marias (1996:33) argue that a research design is to plan and structure a given research project in such a manner that the eventual validity of the research findings is maximised. It is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research. It is a plan that guides the arrangement of conditions for gathering and analysis of research data, in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002:29). Furthermore, Bryman (2012:45) maintains that it is a framework for the generation of evidence that is suited both to a certain set of criteria and to the research

question in which the researcher is interested. The research design in this study included a literature review, construction of a questionnaire as data collection method.

The data collection methods utilised in this chapter, include analysis of official documentation and semi-structured interviews that explored the phenomenon of skills development programmes within the context of human resource development. The utilisation of these data collection methods creates a better understanding of the phenomenon under discussion, participants, the problem under investigation and increase the validity and credibility of the outcomes. Furthermore, the utilisation of these data collection methods ensures that the phenomenon under investigation is analysed from various vantage points (Woods, cited by Mothapi, 2014:115). By using these different research data collecting methods, the researcher could adhere to the principles of triangulation. The data gathered through these methods assisted to ensure the quality of the data gathered, which also assisted in the validation of the data. These components of the research design are discussed below.

4.3.1. Literature review

Hart (cited by Cronin *et al.*, 2008:38) argue that a literature review is an objective, thorough summary and critical analysis of the relevant available research and non-research literature on the topic being studied. Its goal is to bring the reader up-to-date with current literature on a topic and form the basis for another goal, such as the justification for future research in the area. A good literature review gathers information about a particular subject from many sources.

Mouton (2013:87) explains that when talking about reviewing a body scholarship researchers are in fact interested in a whole range of research products that have been produced by other scholars. There are a number of reasons why a review of the existing scholarship is so important:

- To ensure that one does not merely duplicate a previous study.
- To discover what the most recent and authoritative theorising about the subject is.
- To find out what the widely accepted empirical findings in the field of the study are.
- To identify the available instrumentation that has proven validity and reliability.
- To ascertain what the most widely accepted definitions of key concepts in the field are.
- To save time and avoid duplication and unnecessary repetition.

A good review of available scholarship not only saves the researcher time in the sense that it helps the researcher to avoid making errors and duplicating previous results unnecessarily,

but also because it provides clues and suggestions about what avenues to follow (Mouton, 2013:87). In this study, the literature review involved secondary sources such as books, journals, policies, legislation, government documents and reports containing information related to the research. It is further significant to point out that in this study the analysis of official documentation was essential to expand on the topic of skills development within the context of human resource development. Coffy and Atkenson (cited by Mothapi, 2014:119) note that official documentation is predominantly used to contextualise the background material and facts in qualitative social research. Yet, Owen (cited by Mothapi, 2014:119) indicate that the analysis of official documents should be viewed as a data collection technique in its own right and not as a mere supportive technique compared to, for example, interviews. The analysis of official documents should constitute a fundamental part of social scientific research because official documents may in many instances form the point of departure of research in public organisations, such as the ECDS. The literature review in this study was presented in chapters 2 and 3.

4.3.2. Construction of the semi-structured questions

The study was based on interviews with 17 participants. Babbie (1998:153) argues that questionnaires are essential to and most directly associated with survey research. They are also widely used in experiments, field research and other data-collection activities. Likewise, Grix (2001:77) maintains that questionnaires are most effective when used in conjunction with other methods especially one or more varieties of interview techniques. A good way of combining questionnaires with interviews is to have a separate question on the questionnaire sheet asking if respondents would be prepared to be interviewed at a later date. In this way, the researcher will have access to and be able to mix quantitative and qualitative data (Grix, 2001:78).

In this study, the questionnaire comprised both quantitative (closed-ended statements) and qualitative information (open-ended questions). The constructed questions were simple and short questions designed in such a way that the respondents could easily comprehend. Section A sought demographic information. In Section B the researcher decided to use the dichotomous questions with either a 'yes' and 'no' answer:

1 = yes

2 = no

This type of closed-ended questioning is used in questionnaires in survey study. The advantages to a dichotomous question are that it is quick and does not allow ambivalent

answers. There is also the advantage of analysis. However, this type of questioning has its weaknesses. It can be limiting. It does not allow for any degree of sensitivity or emotional preference that is sometimes necessary to research (Anon. 2016. <http://www.pmlive.com>). Section C comprised open-ended questions.

The questionnaire was constructed in the following manner:

- Section A comprised of mandatory questions that were designed to obtain demographic data from the respondents such as gender, age, highest educational level, experience in the current role as Skills Development Committee member and designation.
- Section B comprised of questions based on the theoretical findings. The questions focused on the strategic alignment of human resource planning and human resource development with the ECDSD's departmental strategic business plan and the relevant Human Resource Development Strategy and skills development legislation.
- Section C comprised of open-ended questions designed to elicit reliable responses from Skills Development Committee members on the existence of skills development imperatives, the understanding of their role, and the existence of skills development policies or skills development programmes.

The primary objective of this questionnaire was to gather data from the participants that would assist in analysing the functioning and challenges encountered in the effective implementation of skills development programmes within the context of human resource development in the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development.

4.3.3. Semi-structured interviews

As a means of confirming the outcomes of the literature study, the researcher used semi-structured interviews which took the form of a questionnaire. The rationale for using semi-structured interviews was to gather data from participants to gain knowledge on the skills development programmes in the ECDSD. Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2002:45) argue that data are the basic material with which researchers work to come to conclusions. To draw conclusions from a research study it is essential that the researcher have sound data to analyse and interpret. Significantly, qualitative researchers argue that social phenomena are context-dependent and that the meaning of whatever it is that the researcher is investigating depends on the particular situation of an individual. Data are collected either by *interviews* or by observing and recording human behaviour in contexts of interaction. These particular

observations are then categorised into themes and a more general picture of the phenomenon under investigation is built up from particulars (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002:46).

Leedy and Ormrod (2010:137) argue that in a case study, the researcher collects data on the individual(s), programme(s) or events on which the investigation is focused, these data often include observation, *interviews*, documents (e.g., newspaper articles), past records (e.g., previous test scores) and audio-visual material (e.g., photographs, videotapes, audiotapes). In many instances, the researcher may spend an extended period of time on site and interact regularly with the person or people being studied.

Accordingly, in this case study the researcher made use of the semi-structured interviews as data collection method. Grix (2001:76) argues that in semi-structured or in-depth interviews, the interviewer has in mind a number of questions for the interviewee, but they do not follow any specific predetermined order. The advantage of this is that it allows a certain degree of flexibility and allows for the pursuit of unexpected lines of enquiry during the interview. The results and findings of such an interview can still be compared, contrasted and even converted into statistics.

Essentially, semi-structured interviews are conducted with a fairly open framework which allows for focused, conversational, two-way communication. They can be used to both give and receive information. Unlike the questionnaire framework, where detailed questions are formulated ahead of time, semi structured interviewing starts with more general questions or topics. Relevant topics are initially identified and the possible relationship between these topics and the issues, (e.g., effectiveness) become the basis for more specific questions that do not have to be prepared in advance (<http://www.fao.org/docrep/x53073/x5307e08.htm>).

Bryman (2012:471) also maintains that the researcher has a list of questions or fairly specific topics to be covered, often referred to as an interview guide, but the interviewee has a great deal of leeway in how to reply. Questions may not follow exactly in the way as outlined in the schedule. Questions that are not included in the guide may be asked as the interviewer notices things said by interviewees.

As mentioned earlier in this section, in using the semi-structured interviews in this study the researcher conducted individual interviews with each of the members of the Skills Development Committee. As the interviews were the primary source of data collection, the researcher gained the following value through the interviews:

- Knowledge, which focused on the objective of establishing the effective implementation of skills development programmes within the context of human

resource development in the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development;

- An understanding on the phenomena under study, namely skills development and human resource development in the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development;
- A skills development policy and human resource development strategy detailing the logical process flow of events in the organisation could be formulated;
- Specific, exact data and discarded irrelevant data could be obtained; and
- A scientific report with the information obtained through the interviews could be written.

The researcher did not use focus groups. Although the focus group method is a 'quick win' in terms of time and resources spent, but it can also be extremely one-sided with regard to the quality of data gathered. The data gathered is based on the perceptions of the representatives, not the actual data provided by all members of staff. Practical problems such as groupthink can skew the value of data obtained.

The sampling of the population is discussed in the next section.

4.3.4. Target population and sample group

Babbie (1998:109) describes a population as that group comprised usually of all the people about whom we want to draw information. Researchers are, however, almost never able to study all the members of the population, because in virtually all instances, they are too large. Exactly how large a sample in a particular study should be is also influenced by the complexity of the study. The aim of selecting a sample is to ensure that the sample is representative of the population. In this study, purposive sampling was used because it has essentially to do with the selection of participants with in-depth knowledge on the research under investigation. Research questions are likely to provide guidelines as to what categories of people should be the focus of attention and therefore sampled (Bryman, 2012:416).

Qualitative research depends primarily on lengthy interviews with a carefully selected sample of participants. This type of research typically does not draw large samples. Various types of purposive sampling may be used. The researcher may select a few information-rich cases. The selected sample individuals or participants have had direct experience with the phenomenon being studied. Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2002:45) confirm that types of research that are less concerned with statistical accuracy are ideal for in-depth interviews

The staff compliment of the ECDS is four thousand four hundred and sixty-one (4461). Forty (40) represent the Senior Management Services (SMS) members stratum. One hundred and

ninety-two (192) represent the Middle Management Services (MMS) stratum. Four hundred and fifty-six (456) represent the junior management stratum. Three thousand seven hundred and seventy-three (3773) represent the operational staff stratum. The department has twenty (20) Skills Development Committee (SDC) members. The committee is composed on a 50/50% basis wherein 50% are representatives at managerial level and 50% are representatives at employee level (organised labour). For this research, the target population comprised of 20 respondents who are members of the Skills Development Committee. The researcher interviewed the 20 respondents represented in the SDC. The respondents represented the entire Departmental Skills Development Committee, which is constituted by management, organised labour. The Human Resource Development (HRD) Department assisted in identifying the Skills Development Committee members. The SDC is the organisational level structure that has the responsibility for ensuring that the skills development programmes and the human resource development practices are implemented in the department. The selection of these participants was largely influenced by factors such as access to the respondents and the time available for the study. The main reason for their selection was, however, presumably their knowledge of the study. The researcher had to follow the ECDS protocol that outlines how questionnaires should be managed. Twenty questionnaires were distributed to all members of the Skills Development Committee.

4.3.5. Administrative procedure

A letter requesting permission to conduct a study in the ECDS was written and sent to the Superintendent General of the ECDS for approval. The confirmation of permission to distribute the questionnaires and conduct semi-structured interviews was granted in writing on the 14th of May 2016. Upon receipt of approval to conduct the study, a questionnaire was distributed and semi-structured interviews conducted with members of the Skills Development Committee of the ECDS for completion. The letter requesting permission from the Superintendent General to conduct the study (Annexure B) provided an explanation into the purpose of the research. The letter emphasised that the participants' contributions in responding to the questions were important, and the information gained would assist in understanding the current functioning and challenges experienced in the effective implementation of skills development programmes within the context of human resource development in the ECDS. The semi-structured interviews were conducted face-to-face in the participants' work environment.

4.3.6. Ethics

Webster (cited in Babbie, 1998:438) describes ethics as conforming to the standards of conduct of a given profession or group. It is generally agreed that it is unethical for researchers to harm anyone in the course of research, especially if it is without the person's knowledge and permission. This includes misleading a respondent about the true purpose of the study, asking respondents questions that may cause him or her extreme embarrassment or humiliation, causing emotional turmoil by reminding him or her of an unpleasant experience, causing guilt, or invading his or her privacy. Respondents may also be injured by being studied without their knowledge, or by violation of a promise of confidentiality.

Denzin and Lincoln (2000:447) argue that case studies often deal with matters of public interest but for which there is neither public scholarly "right to know." Funding, scholarly intent or a passed preliminary oral does not constitute license to invade the privacy of others. The value of the best research is not likely to outweigh injury to a person exposed. Qualitative researchers are guests in the private spaces of the world. Their manners should be good and their code of ethics strict.

Risks to well-being should be exemplified. Issues of observation and reportage should be discussed in advance. Limits to access should be suggested and agreements heeded. It is important for the targeted persons to receive drafts revealing how they are presented, quoted and interpreted and for the researcher to listen well for signs of concern. It is also important that researchers exercise great caution to minimise the risks. Even with good information, the researched cannot be expected to protect themselves against the risks inherent in participation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000:447).

In this study, the respondents were given an explanation of the research. The researcher also assured the respondents of their anonymity.

4.3.7. Problems encountered

Of the 20 targeted Skills Development Committee members for the semi-structured interviews, 17 semi-structured interviews were conducted, which represents a response rate of 85 per cent, and a rate of non-response of 15 per cent. This is considered to be a high response rate for a study of this nature (Babbie, 2007:257). The sample population and data analysis is based on the responses as provided by the ECDS Skills Development Committee members in the semi-structured interviews. Some claimed to be too busy; while some were on sick leave. Luckily, most of these new members were working in the Provincial Office, which made

it easier for the researcher to access them easily. The reaction of the respondents varied despite the fact that the questionnaire explicitly stated the purpose of the study.

4.3.8. Processing of research data

Babbie (1998:110) believes that researchers interpret the collected data for the purpose of drawing conclusions that reflect on the interests, ideas and theories that initiated the inquiry. In a qualitative case study such as this, the central task in data analysis was to identify common themes in people's descriptions of their experiences. As Creswell (cited by Leedy and Ormrod, 2010:142) argues, subsequent to transcribing the interview, the researcher typically considered the following steps:

- Identified statements that related to the topic. The researcher separated relevant from irrelevant data in the interview and then broke the relevant data into small segments (e.g., phrases or sentences) that each reflect a single, specific thought;
- Grouped statements into "meaningful units." The researcher grouped the segments into categories that reflected the various aspects ("meanings") of the phenomenon as it was experienced;
- Sought divergent perspectives. The researcher looked for and considered the various ways in which different people experienced the phenomenon; and
- Contrasted a composite. The researcher used the various meanings identified to develop an overall description of the phenomenon as people typically experienced it.

4.4. ANALYSIS OF DATA AND INTERPRETATION

Bryman (2012:624) argues that one of the commonest approaches to qualitative data analysis is undertaking a search for themes in transcripts or field notes. One possible factor that may be in operation in the identification of themes is the frequency of the occurrence of certain incidents, words, phrases and so forth that denote a theme. This suggests that a theme is more likely to be identified the more times the phenomenon it denotes occurs in the course of coding. This process may also account for the prominence given to some themes over others when writing up the fruits of qualitative data analysis. This further suggests that a kind of implicit quantification may be in operation that influences the identification of themes and the elevation of some themes over others.

Mouton (2013:108) further maintains that ultimately, all fieldwork culminates in the analysis and interpretation of some set of data, be it quantitative survey data, experimental recordings,

historical and literary texts, qualitative transcripts or discursive data. Analysis involves breaking up the data into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships. The aim of analysis is to understand the various constitutive elements of one's data through an inspection of the relationships between concepts, constructs or variables and to see if one can identify or isolate patterns or trends or establish themes in the data.

Babbie (1998:110) also argues that finally, researchers interpret the collected data for the purpose of drawing conclusions that reflect on the interests, ideas, and theories that initiated the enquiry. The results of the analyses feed back to the initial interests, ideas and theories. In practice, this feedback may very well represent the beginning of another cycle of enquiry.

Likewise, Mouton (2013:109) explains that interpretation involves the synthesis of one's data into larger coherent wholes. One interprets and explains observations or data by formulating hypothesis or theories that account for observed patterns and trends in the data. Interpretation means relating one's results and findings to existing theoretical frameworks or models and showing whether these are supported or falsified by the new interpretation. Interpretation also means taking into account rival explanations or interpretations of one's data and showing what levels of support the data provide for the preferred interpretations.

In this study, the collected data were analysed to extract valuable information. All the data that were identified as irrelevant for the research were eliminated. The remaining relevant data were for a second time analysed as a further step in the refinement process of the data. The final data were then arranged and categorised based on each question to designate the responses to each interview question. Subsequently, the responses of the interviewees to each of the interview questions were methodically compiled.

4.4.1. Presentation of the findings.

The presentation and analysis of data in this chapter is arranged as follows: section 4.4.1.1 below analyses the biographical data of the respondents. Section 4.4.1.2 evaluates the respondents' ratings on the statements contained in the research proposal, which address the research objectives and research questions on the department's compliance with relevant public service Human Resource Development and skills development legislation and regulations. In addition, this section evaluates the respondents' ratings on the statements contained in the theoretical discussions on the strategic alignment of human resource planning and human resource development with the departmental five-year Strategic Plan. Section 4.4.1.3 evaluates the extent to which the skills development imperatives are understood and complied with in the ECDS.

4.4.1.1. Section A: Biographical Information

This part of the findings presents the demographic information of the respondents to determine the following variables, namely gender, age, highest educational level, experience in the Skills Development Committee and work designation of respondents.

A.1 Gender of respondents

The graph below illustrates the gender of respondents in percentages. Of the 17 respondents interviewed, 53% were male, while 47% were female. The figures also indicate that the department is moving towards the accepted targets gender representation in relation to gender equity

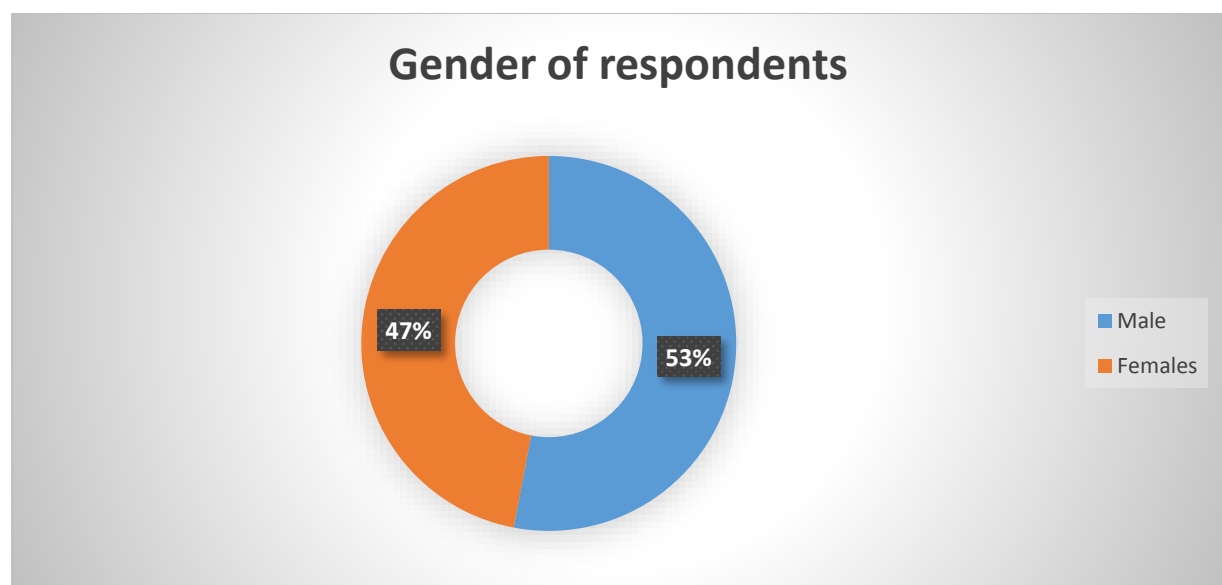


FIGURE 4.1: GENDER OF RESPONDENTS

A.2 Age group of respondents

The respondents were put into five categories, namely; 21 to 30, 31 to 40, 41 to 50, 51 to 60 and 61 and above. The results demonstrate the following:

Of the 17 respondents interviewed, 47% are between 41 and 50 years; 35% are between 51 and 60 years; 12% are between 31 and 40 years; while 6% between 21 and 30 years. There were no respondents above the age of 60. The purpose of asking the ages of respondents was to determine the age groups of the Skills Development Committee members who participated in the empirical study that could in effect be linked to their level of experience in the Public Sector (see A4 of this section also).

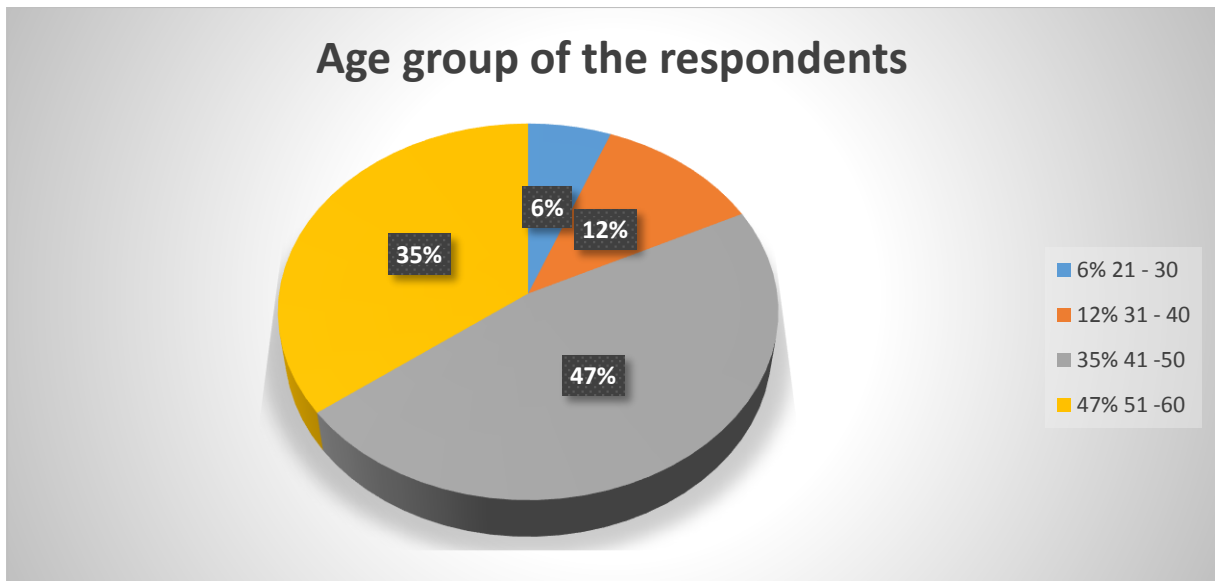


FIGURE 4.2: AGE GROUP OF THE RESPONDENTS

A.3 Highest level of formal education completed

The respondents were divided into six categories, namely; Grade 12, Certificate, Diploma, Degree, Postgraduate Degree and other.

Figure 3 depicts the highest level of formal education attained by the respondents. Of the 17 respondents interviewed, 47% had post-graduate qualifications; 29% had bachelor's degrees; while 24% had diploma qualifications. Certificates, Grade 12 qualification and other were unaccounted for.

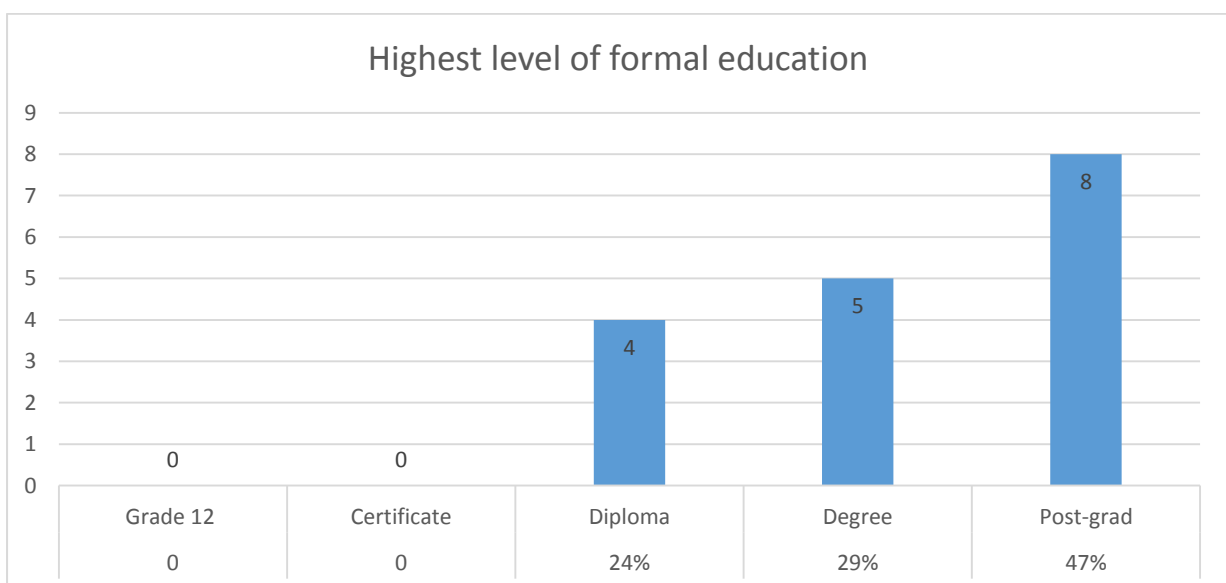


FIGURE 4.3: HIGHEST LEVEL OF FORMAL EDUCATION

A.4 Experience in the Skills Development Committee

The respondents were put into five categories, namely, 0 – 1, 2 – 5, 6 – 10, 11 – 15 and 16 and above. The experience of respondents in the Skills Development Committee is graphically illustrated in figure 4 below.

Of the 17 respondents interviewed, 41% indicated that they had 0 to 1-year experience; 24% had 2 to 5 years' experience; 24% had 6 to 10 years' experience; while 11% had 11 to 15 years' experience. 16 years of experience and above were unaccounted for.

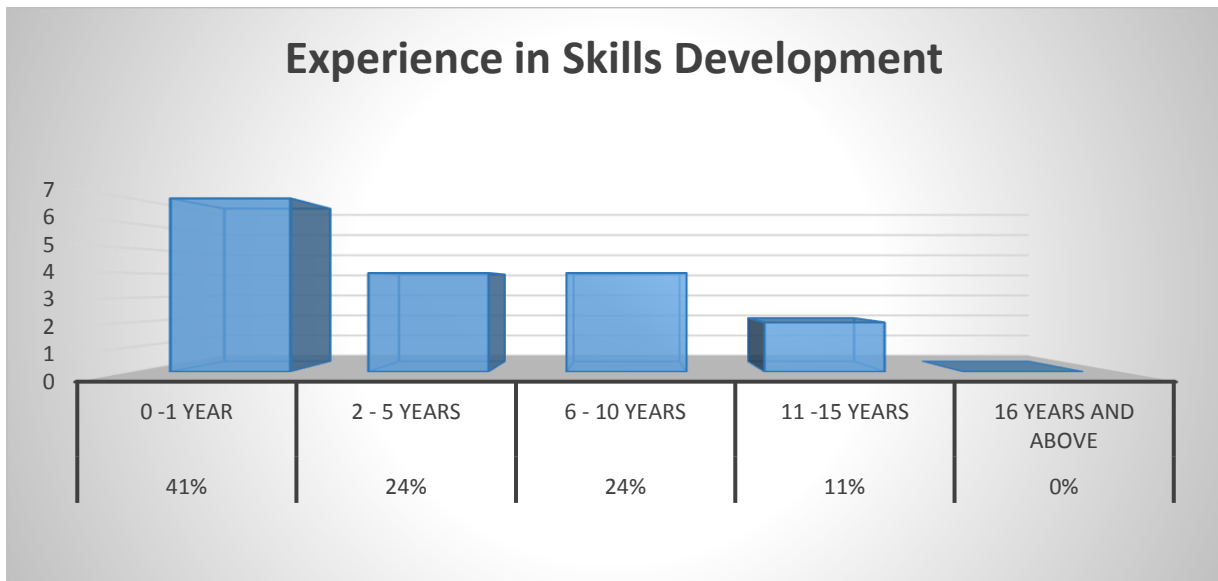


FIGURE 4.4: EXPERIENCE IN THE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

A.5 Designation of respondents in the SDC

The respondents were divided into two categories, namely senior management service (SMS) members who represent departmental management, and non-SMS members who represent employees' representation.

Figure 5 depicts the designation of the respondents in terms Skills Development Committee representation of management or employees.

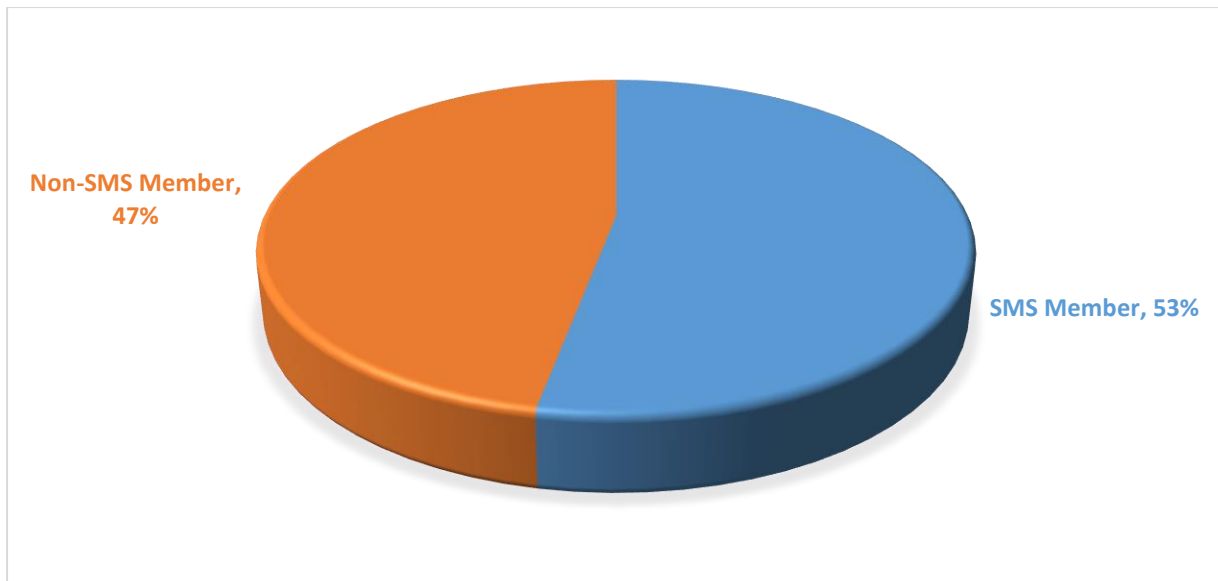


FIGURE 4.5: DESIGNATION OF RESPONDENTS

The number of employer representatives must not be more than the employee representatives. At least one employee representative must represent one of the major Organising Framework for Occupations (OFO) codes presented here below, unless there are no employees in the major OFO category:

- Managers.
- Professionals.
- Technicians and associate professionals.
- Clerical support workers.
- Service and sales workers.
- Skilled agricultural, forestry, fishery, craft and related trades workers.
- Plant and machine operators and assemblers.
- Elementary occupations.

Based on the above, the equal representation of stakeholders should be urgently addressed.

4.4.1.2 Section B: Closed-ended questions

In this section, closed-ended questions were used to evaluate the respondents' ratings on the statements contained in the research proposal. The statements formed part of the research objectives and research questions on the department's compliance with relevant public service Human Resource Development Strategy and skills development legislation and regulations. Also, these dichotomous question statements were used to evaluate the respondents' ratings on the statements contained in the theoretical discussions on the strategic alignment of human resource planning and human resource development with the

departmental five (5) year Strategic Plan. This measurement is significant to determine the understanding of the strategic role that skills development within the context of human resource development plays and occupies within an organisation.

Statement B1. Does the department have a five-year strategic plan?

The statement was meant to determine the department’s compliance with the relevant public service prescripts and regulations aimed at ensuring that public service organisations develop and implement five (5) year strategic plans.

Figure 6 below reflects that of the 17 respondents interviewed, 94% of respondents indicated that the department has a strategic plan; while 6% indicated that the department has no strategic plan in place.

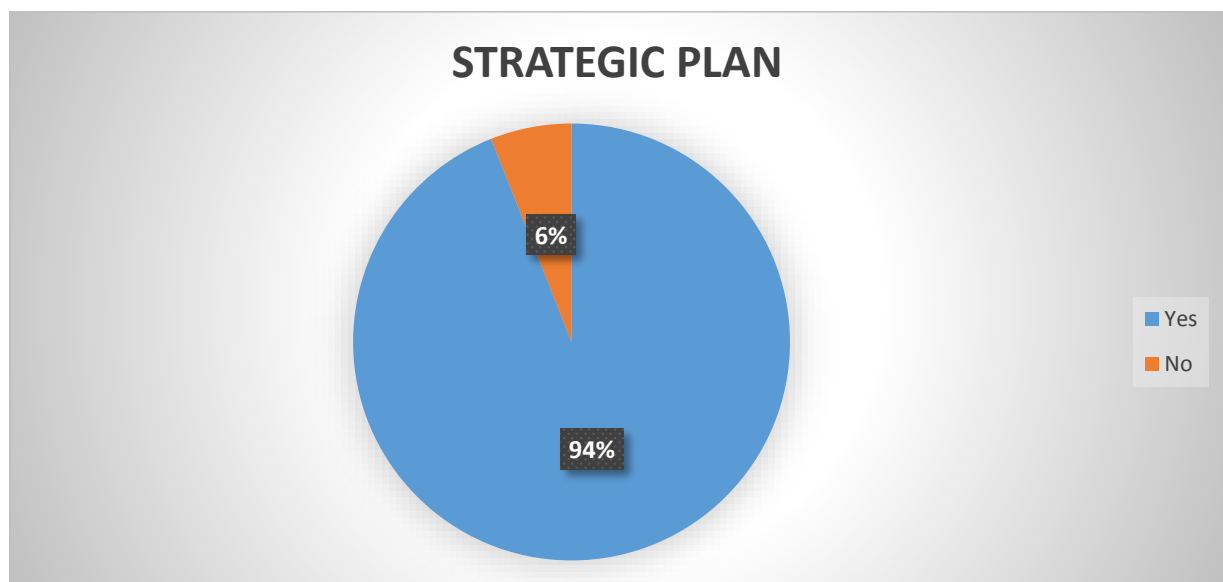


FIGURE 4.6: STRATEGIC PLAN

Interpretation of the results of question B1

Based on the findings, a high percentage of respondents indicated that the department has a five (5) year strategic plan. The Public Service Regulations, 2001, state that an executing authority shall prepare a strategic plan for her or his department -

- stating the department’s core objectives, based on Constitutional and other legislative mandates, functional mandates and the service delivery improvement programme mentioned in regulation III C;

- describing the core and support activities necessary to achieve the core objectives, avoiding duplication of functions;
- specifying the functions the department will perform internally and those it will contract out;
- describing the goals or targets to be attained on the medium term;
- setting out a programme for attaining those goals and targets;
- specifying information systems that-
 - enable the executing authority to monitor the progress made towards achieving those goals, targets and core objectives;
 - support compliance with the reporting requirements in regulation III J and the National Minimum Information Requirements, referred to in regulation VII H; and
- complying with the requirements in paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 of the Treasury Regulations.

Based on the results, the researcher draws the conclusion that the department complies with the public service prescripts and regulations aimed at ensuring that public service organisations develop and implement the five (5) year strategic plans. The importance of a strategic plan was also discussed above in chapter 2, section 2.3 of this mini-dissertation.

Statement B2. Does the department have a human resource plan?

The statement was meant to determine the department’s compliance with the relevant public service prescripts and regulations aimed at ensuring that public service organisations develop and implement five (5) year human resource plans.

The figure 7 below reflects that of the 17 respondents interviewed, 91% of respondents indicated that the department has a human resource plan; while 9% indicated that the department has no human resource plan.



FIGURE 4.7: HUMAN RESOURCE PLAN

Interpretation of the results of question B2

Based on the findings, a high percentage of respondents indicated that the department does have a human resource plan. The White Paper on Human Resource Management in the public service, 1997, with reference to human resource planning, states that national departments and provincial administrations will be required to develop human resource strategies that are integrated with their strategic and operational plans, to ensure that their future staffing needs are met. These strategies will include specific employment equity objectives and targets for achieving a representative workforce (White Paper on Human Resource Management in the public service, 1997:3).

Based on the results and the above information provided, the researcher draws the conclusion that the department complies with the public service prescripts and regulations aimed at ensuring that public service organisations develop and implement the five (5) year human resource plans.

Statement B3. Does the department have a Human Resource Development Strategy (HRD) and policy?

The statement was meant to determine the department’s compliance with the relevant public service Human Resource Development Strategy and skills development regulations aimed at ensuring that public service organisations develop and implement their own Human Resource Development Strategy.

Figure 8 below reflects that 88% of respondents indicated that the department has no Human Resource Development Strategy and policy; while 12% indicated that the department has a Human Resource Development Strategy and policy.

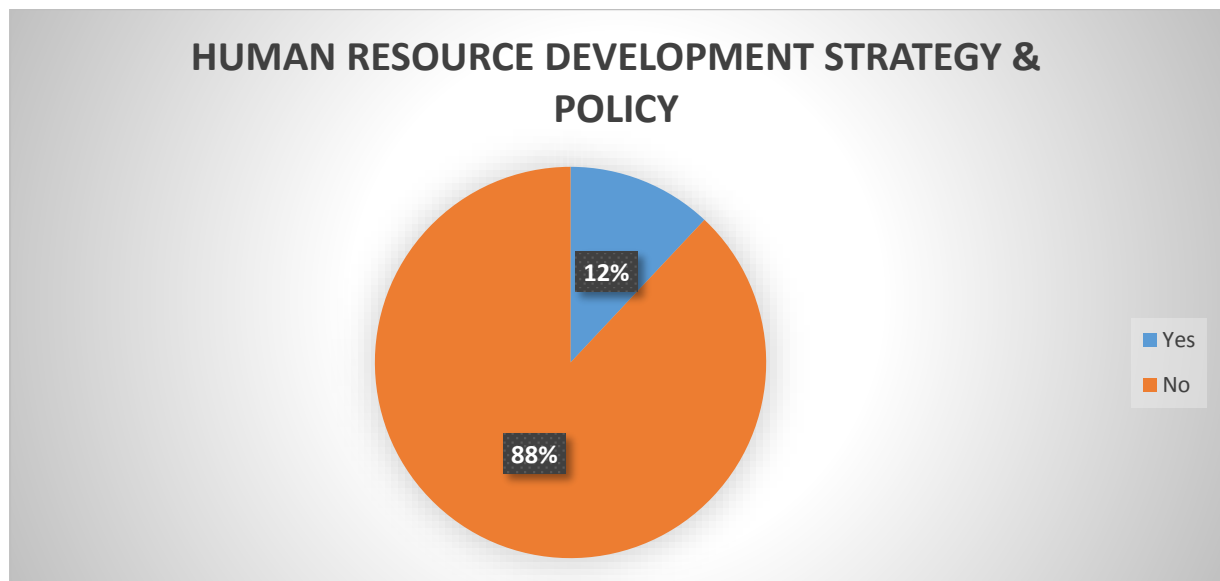


FIGURE 4.8: HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND POLICY

Interpretation of the results of question B3

Based on the findings, a high percentage of respondents disagreed that the department has no Human Resource Development (HRD) Strategy and policy. The Human Resource Development Strategy for the Public Service, 2008, states that public service is the vehicle through which the Government fulfils its promises by “securing the wellbeing of the people of the Republic”. The effective performance of public officials and the capacity of departments to deliver services are both critical to all aspects of Government’s agenda for transformation and development. The capacity to deliver lies in the ability of public servants to undertake their assigned responsibilities as public officials, with the necessary level of skill, knowledge, experience and commitment to serve and perform to the best of their ability. A Human Resource Development (HRD) Strategy is seen as central to developing this capacity, and is embraced as fundamental to the agenda of enhancing service delivery (South Africa, 2008a:5).

Based on the empirical results, the researcher draws the conclusion that the department does not comply with the public service Human Resource Development Strategy and skills development legislation aimed at ensuring that public service organisations develop and

implement a Human Resource Development Strategy. Therefore, department needs to ensure that an HRD strategy and policy is urgently developed.

Statement B4. Are the Human Resource Plan and Human Resource Development Strategy aligned to the five-year Strategic Plan?

The statement was meant to examine the respondents' views on the strategic alignment of human resource planning and human resource development with the departmental five (5) year Strategic Plan.

Figure 9 below reflects that 88%% of respondents indicated that the Human Resource Plan and Human Resource Development Strategy are not aligned to the five (5) year Strategic Plan; while only 12% of the respondents indicated that the Human Resource Plan and Human Resource Development Strategy was aligned to the five (5) year Strategic Plan.



FIGURE 4.9: HUMAN RESOURCE PLAN AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY ALIGNED TO 5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Interpretation of the results of question B4

Based on the findings, a high percentage of respondents indicated that the departmental Human Resource Plan and Human Resource Development Strategy are not aligned to the five (5) year Strategic Plan. The importance of the alignment of the HR Plan and HRD Strategy to the strategic plan was also discussed above in chapter 3, section 3.3.12, 3.3.13 and 3.3.14 of this mini-dissertation.

Based on the above results, it is safe to say that the Human Resource Plan and Human Resource Development Strategy are not aligned to the departmental five (5) year Strategic Plan.

The alignment of the Human Resource Plan and Human Resource Development Strategy is vital for implementation of a competency based training programme in SHRM and planning for relevant HRM and strategic management and planning.

Statement B5. Has the department embarked on a Skills Audit?

The statement was meant to determine whether the department has embarked on a skills audit.

The figure 10 below reflects that of the 17 respondents interviewed, 83% of respondents indicated that the department has not embarked on a skills audit; while 17% of the respondents indicated that the department has embarked on a skills audit.



FIGURE 4.10: SKILLS AUDIT

Interpretation of the results of question B5

Based on the findings, a high percentage of respondents indicated that the department has not embarked on a skills audit. The importance of a skills audit was also discussed above in chapter 3, section 3.4.2 of this mini-dissertation.

Based on the above results, it is clear that the department has not embarked on a skills audit, which is vital in ensuring that the department achieves the set strategic objectives and employees' training and development imperatives. The department should prioritise skills

audit training programmes including empowering designated human resource development practitioners and Skills Development Committee members on how to conduct skills audits.

4.4.1.3 Section C: Open-ended questions and comments

In this section, respondents were asked questions to elicit reliable responses from Skills Development Committee members on the existence of skills development imperatives, the understanding of their role, and the existence of skills development policies or skills development programmes.

Question C1. How often does the department conduct a skills audit?

This question sought to determine from respondents how often the department conducts a skills audit.

Eighty-three per cent (83%) of the respondents indicated that there has never been a skills audit in the department; while 17% indicated that a skills audit was conducted only once in the last two years but it was not completed.

Interpretation of the results of question C1

The above responses indicate that respondents have different opinions on how often the department conducts a skills audit. Based on the findings a high percentage of respondents concur that skills audit were done on an irregular basis within the department. The minority of respondents who indicated that there has been a skills audit, however, are of the opinion that it was never completed.

Based on the results, the researcher draws the conclusion that the department should urgently conduct a skills audit that will be validated or endorsed by the Skills Development Committee. A skills audit is necessary to inform the future workplace skills planning.

Question C2. What methodology was followed when conducting the skills audit?

This question sought to determine from the respondents what methodology was followed when conducting the skills audit.

Of the 17 respondents interviewed, 83% indicated that no methodology was applied as there has never been a skills audit; while 17% indicated that a questionnaire was used to conduct the skills audit.

Interpretation of the results of question C2

The Skills Development Act and the Skills Levies Act makes it mandatory for public service departments and organisations to conduct skills audits. Skills audits may be conducted in various ways. Current approaches to skills audits include the following, which was discussed above in chapter 3, section 3.4.2 of this dissertation:

- Panel approach:
A panel is normally made up of managers, Subject Matter Experts and HR experts. The skills audit form is completed through discussion, and includes one-on-one feedback with the employee.
- Consultant approach:
External consultants interview both employees and managers, and may review performance and related documentation to establish an individual's level of competence.
- One-on-one approach:
This is similar to a performance appraisal, except that an individual is rated against a pre-defined skills matrix instead of his/ or her job profile. The employee's manager will hold a discussion with the employee to agree on skills audit ratings (Author unknown).

Based on the above information provided, the researcher concludes that there is a general lack of understanding and capacity required to conduct skills audits in the department. Furthermore, there is no systematic strategy in place to address the training needs that should inform the content of the workplace skills plan.

Question C3. Does the department budget for skills development initiatives?

This question sought to determine from the respondents whether the department budgets for skills development initiatives.

One hundred per cent (100%) of the respondents indicated that the ECDSD do indeed budget for skills development initiatives.

Interpretation of the results of question C3

In line with the Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999 that regulates a compulsory levy scheme to fund education and training in business within various sectors in South Africa, in November 2012, the Cabinet approved the Directive on the utilisation of training budgets in the public service with effect from 01 April 2013 (Government Circular, 2013:1). The purpose of the Directive is to ensure that training and development interventions in the public service

are needs-based, respond to government priority skills needs, support government's development agenda and contribute to increased performance and reduction of poverty and unemployment. The Directive provides a framework for the utilisation of the departmental training budgets to ensure that each department spend the allocated training budget appropriately and in accordance with government priorities. In terms of this Directive, all departments are required to set aside a minimum of 1% of the total department's annual personnel budget for training and development of its personnel and potential employees.

Based on the above information provided, it is satisfactory to conclude that the ECDSD complies with the requirements of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 and the Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999 and related prescripts by budgeting for skills development initiatives.

Question C4. Where is the training budget of the department located?

This question sought to determine from the respondents in which department the training budget is located in the ECDSD.

The majority of respondents (64%) indicated that the training budget is decentralised throughout the departmental programmes; while only 36% indicated that the training budget is located in the Human Resource Development (HRD) unit.

Interpretation of the results of question C4

The above results suggest that the decentralisation of the training budget may create challenges in the appropriate utilisation of the training budget as different departmental programmes may utilise it without following the skills development legislative and regulatory imperatives.

Question C5. Does the department have an approved workplace skills plan?

This question sought to determine from respondents whether the department has an approved workplace skills plan.

Figure 6 below reflects that of the 17 respondents interviewed, 72% concurred that the department has a workplace skills plan; while 28% disagreed.



FIGURE 4.11: APPROVED WORKPLACE SKILLS PLAN

Interpretation of the results of question C5

The majority of respondents (72%) indicated that the department has an approved Workplace Skills Plan. This requirement is in line with the skills development legislation, which requires departments to develop and submit approved workplace skills plans to the respective Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). Annexure A of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 Regulations, Regulation Gazette No. 7091, Vol. 432, 22 June 2001 No. 22398 require employers to submit a workplace skills plan (WSP). The employer must submit the workplace skills plan by a date to be determined by the relevant SETA. The workplace skills plan is developed annually at the departmental level and it describes training and development plans that are intended to capacitate employees with skills to assist in the attainment of the overall strategic objectives of the organisation. This above was discussed in chapter 3, section 3.4.1 of this mini-dissertation.

With regard to an approved workplace skills plan, the department complied with the skills development legislation and regulations. This is a positive indicator for skills development.

Question C6. If no, what is the reason for not having an approved workplace skills plan?

This question was a follow-up to question C5 and sought to determine from respondents the reason for not having an approved Workplace Skills Plan. The 28% of respondents who indicated that the department has no approved workplace skills plan, listed some of the following reasons:

- Lack of planning.
- Lack of capacity within the Human Resource Unit of the ECDSD.

Interpretation of the results of question C6

Based on the empirical results, a mere 28% of respondents were of the opinion that an approved workplace skills plan was not in place. This concern was supported by substantive reasons and is, therefore, valid and cannot simply be ignored.

Question C7. If yes, what informs the content of the workplace skills plan?

This question sought to determine from respondents what informs the content of the workplace skills plan.

Seventy-two per cent (72%) responded positively in question C5 that a workplace skills plan was in place.

With regard to what constitutes the content of the workplace skills plan, 46% of the respondents indicated that the workplace skills plan was informed by Personal Development Plans (PDPs); while 36% indicated that it was informed by departmental unit-based training needs.

Interpretation of the results of question C7

Relevant literature indicate that at a strategic level, in compiling the workplace skills plan an organisation is required to deal with the following:

- Strategic priorities for skills development.
- Reference to sectorial/national skills plans.
- Linkages to employment equity (Erasmus *et al.* 2013:379).

Based on the above information that was discussed in Chapter 3, Section 3.4.1 of this mini-dissertation, it is evident that an intervention that would further capacitate and enhance the Skills Development Committee to be knowledgeable about what informs the content of the workplace skills plan, is required. Furthermore, the Skills Development Committee members should be trained on strategic considerations that would inform the workplace skills plan.

Question C8. How far has the department progressed with the implementation of the workplace skills plan?

This question sought to determine from respondents the progress that the department has made with the implementation of the workplace skills plan.

One hundred per cent of the respondents agreed that the current workplace skills plan for 2016/2017 financial year has not yet been implemented by the department.

Interpretation of the results of question C8

The above response confirms that the Workplace Skills Plan for 2016/2017 financial year was not operational. This is aggravated by the fact that the Skills Development Committee has not yet been trained on the skills development facilitation programme that outlines the functions or roles and responsibilities of the Skills Development Committee. By not implementing the workplace skills plan, the ECDSD is failing to satisfy the requirements of the Human Resource Development Strategy, which is to provide training and development interventions required to ensure the development of the organisation and that of its employees.

C9. Which fora participate in the prioritisation of training in the department?

This question sought to determine from respondents the different stakeholders and or role-players that participate in the prioritisation of training in the department.

Fifty-five per cent (55%) of the respondents indicated that they were not sure which fora participates in the prioritisation of training in the department; while 45% of the respondents were of the opinion that it should be the Skills Development Committee.

Interpretation of the results of question C9

Based on the above research results, it is clear that there is lack of understanding regarding the functions of the Skills development Committee that should including prioritising training in the department.

C10. When last (date) did the committee meet to prioritise training?

This question sought to determine from respondents how regular the committee meets to prioritise training.

One hundred per cent (100%) of the respondents indicated that they did not know when last the committee met to prioritise training.

Interpretation of the results of question C10

The above findings seem to suggest that the Skills Development Committee does not have scheduled meetings to prioritise departmental training. As part of its responsibilities, a Skills Development Committee should meet regularly to, among other things, develop the workplace skills plan, assess, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the departmental workplace skills plan. The above finding indicates that the department is in contravention of Annexure A of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 Regulations, Regulation Gazette No. 7091, Vol. 432, 22 June 2001 No. 22398 require employers to submit a workplace skills plan (WSP). The regulation indicates that the employer must submit the workplace skills plan by a date to be determined by the relevant SETA. The following essential details must be elucidated in the workplace skills plan:

- Details of employer and Skills Development Facilitator(s).
- Annual skills priorities.
- Proposed beneficiaries.
- Development and consultative processes.
- Authorisation.

Regarding the development and consultative process the employer is required to describe the processes used to:

- Develop the workplace skills plan.
- Explain how the plan relates to the organisation's Employment Equity Plan.
- Outline the composition of the Skills Development Committee.
- Review and consider the draft workplace skills plan.
- If no Committee exists, to please outline the steps taken to consult employees about the workplace skills plan.

The above regulation was discussed in chapter 3, section 3.4.1 of this mini-dissertation. Based on the results, the deduction can be made that although an approved workplace skills plan was in place it was implemented without proper consultation with the Skills Development Committee as required in terms of the skills development regulations.

C11. Does the department have a skills development planning/training committee?

This question sought to determine from respondents whether a Skills Development Planning/training Committee did exist.

One hundred per cent (100%) of the respondents indicated that the department has a Skills Development Committee in place. All the respondents indicated that they are appointed members of the Skills Development Committee.

Interpretation of the results of question C11

As mentioned in chapter 3, section 3.4.1 of this mini-dissertation, in terms of the skills development legislation and Human Resource Development strategies, departments are required to comply with the skills development legislation and Human Resource Development Strategies by forming a structure such as a Skills Development Committee. This committee should consist of all stakeholders that deal with training and development matters within the department.

Based on the above research results, it was positive to note that a skills development committee was in place as required by South African legislation and HRD strategies for government departments.

C12. What are the functions of this committee?

This question sought to determine from respondents what the tasks, roles and functions of the Skills Development Committee were.

Seventy-three per cent (73%) of the respondents indicated that they were not sure of the functions of the Skills Development Committee because they have not been trained in skills development facilitation. Conversely, only 27% of the respondents indicated that the functions of the committee included the following:

- The training and development of staff.
- Advises the Head of Department and Senior Management on Human Resource Development Strategies.
- Assists in development of workplace skills plan.
- Make recommendations with regard to training.
- Advises the Skills development Unit.
- Approves workplace skills plan and monitors its implementation.
- Monitors skills project and workplace skills plan budget.

- Adjudicate the training needs and the Bursary Applications.
- The terms of reference of the Skills Development Committee was discussed in chapter 3, section 3.4.4.3 of this mini-dissertation.

The draft Skills Development Committee Terms of Reference are attached as Annexure C of this thesis.

Interpretation of the results of question C12.

The establishment of a Skills Development Committee is essential to arrange meetings and prioritising the workplace skills plan, training and development programmes and the bursary applications that need to be assessed, adjudicated and recommended for approval in consultation with all stakeholders. The Skills Development Committee also serves as an advisory body to departmental Senior Management on Human Resource Development related matters. Therefore, in addition to appointing the Skills Development Committee members, the department further has to capacitate the Skills Development Committee members to be knowledgeable about the functions Skills Development Committee.

Due to the fact that 73% of respondents were unsure about the role and functions of the Skills Development Committee was enough reason to worry whether members serving on this committee were indeed capacitated to fulfil their roles.

C13. How frequently does the Committee meet?

This question sought to determine from respondents how frequently the committee met.

Sixty-four per cent (64%) of the respondents indicated that the committee meets quarterly; while 36% indicated that there is no schedule of meetings for the Skills Development Committee.

Interpretation of the results of question C13

Ordinarily, the skills development committee should meet a minimum of four times a year, and additional meetings may be called due to the urgency of critical matters or when necessary. It is essential for the Skills Development Committee to formally agree on a schedule of its meetings in order for the committee regularly monitor and evaluate its performance in relation to its roles and responsibilities. Committee members are expected to participate fully, candidly and constructively in all committee discussions and other activities, sharing their particular knowledge, skills and abilities with the committee.

Based on the results, the researcher draws the conclusion that there is a lack of general understanding on how frequently the meetings of the skills development committee should meet.

C14. When last did the Committee convene?

This question sought to determine from respondents when last the committee has convened.

Of the 17 respondents interviewed, 64% indicated that the committee last convened May 2016; while 36% highlighted that they did not know when the last the committee has met.

Interpretation of the results of question C14

Ordinarily it is the role of the HRD Unit in consultation with the Skills Development to develop an annual schedule for the activities of the Skills Development Committee including meetings. The Skills Development Committee must coordinate its activities to fulfil its strategic roles and responsibilities effectively and efficiently.

The results indicate that there is a lack of clearly defined administrative mechanisms to facilitate and coordinate the effective functioning of the Skills Development Committee.

C15. At what rank/level is the chairperson of the committee?

This question sought to determine from respondents at what designation of the respondents is the chairperson of the committee.

Forty-six per cent (46%) of the respondents indicated that the chairperson of the committee is appointed at a Director's level; 18% of the respondents indicated that the chairperson of the committee is at a Chief Director's level; while 36% indicated that they are not certain about the rank or level of the chairperson of the committee.

Interpretation of the results of question C15

Based on the findings, it appears that in spite of the fact that all the respondents are appointed members of the Skills Development Committee, they, however, provided differing responses to the question. The responses highlight differences in interpretation and understanding on the part of members of the Skills Development Committee regarding its functionality.

Based on the results, the deduction can be made that the department's Skills Development Committee has inconsistent views on who is the chairperson of the Skill Development Committee.

C16. How does the department assess the relevance of training in relation to the work of employees?

This question sought to determine from respondents whether the department assesses the relevance of training to the work of the employees.

Seventy-three per cent (73%) of the respondents indicated there is no tool in place to assess the relevance of training in relation to the work of the employees, while 27% indicated that the relevance of training is assessed through the Personal Development Plans (PDPs) and competency assessments.

Interpretation of the results of question C16

Based on the above results, it is clear that employees' training should be planned and delivered in such a way that they are interested in the subject matter and willing to get the most out of it. An effective training on performance management and development system is essentially required for officials in the department.

C17. How does the department conduct impact assessment of the training provided?

This question determined from respondents on the manner of conducting training impact assessments in the ECDS.

Of the 17 respondents interviewed, 100% of the respondents indicated that there is no instrument in place to conduct impact assessment of training provided.

Interpretation of the results of question C17

The empirical results in this case signify that the department should develop a training impact assessment tool that can be systematically used to assess the impact of training on the departmental officials. A training impact assessment tool that incorporates pre-training and post-training assessment measures needs to be designed in line with the established scientific and systematic training impact assessment models.

C18. How many employees within the HRD unit have been trained as skills development facilitators?

This question sought to determine from respondents how many employees within the HRD Unit have been trained as skills development facilitators. Skills development officers facilitate

the planning, implementation and reporting of training in an organisation, with Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETA) related duties.

Eighty-two per cent (82%) of the 17 respondents indicated that none of the HRD unit employees have been trained as skills development facilitators; while 18% of the respondents indicated that all the HRD employees have been trained in non-accredited skills development short courses.

Interpretation of results of question C18

The department should provide skills development facilitation training to the HRD employees to empower them with the overall knowledge of skills development facilitation.

C19. Have you received training on skills development facilitation?

This question sought to ascertain from respondents whether they have received training on skills development facilitation.

One hundred per cent (100%) of the respondents indicated that they have never been trained on skills development facilitation.

Interpretation of the results of question C19

Training regarding skills development facilitation was discussed in chapter 3, section 3.4.3 of this study. To reiterate, skills development facilitation not only empowers Skills Development Facilitators, Human Resource Practitioners and Education, Training and Development Practitioners, but also Skills Development Committee members with foundational knowledge and skills in the practice of skills development facilitation.

The empirical results provided above make clear that providing the necessary skills development facilitation training to the Skills Development Committee members will create an overall knowledgeable team of committee members.

C20. Does the department have the following skills development policies/programmes in place?

This question sought to determine from respondents if the department has skills development policies or programmes in place. These policies or programmes include the following:

- Learnership.
- Internship.

- Mentorship.
- Skills development.
- Bursary

The respondents were requested to indicate if the department has each of the above skills development policies, in place. A hundred per cent of the respondents (100%) indicated that the department has a bursary policy or programme. Forty-one per cent (41%) indicated that the department has an internship policy or programme. Twenty-nine per cent (29%) indicated that the department has a learnership policy or programme while 29% also indicated that the department has a skills development policy or programme. Only 6% indicated that the department has a mentorship policy or programme in place.

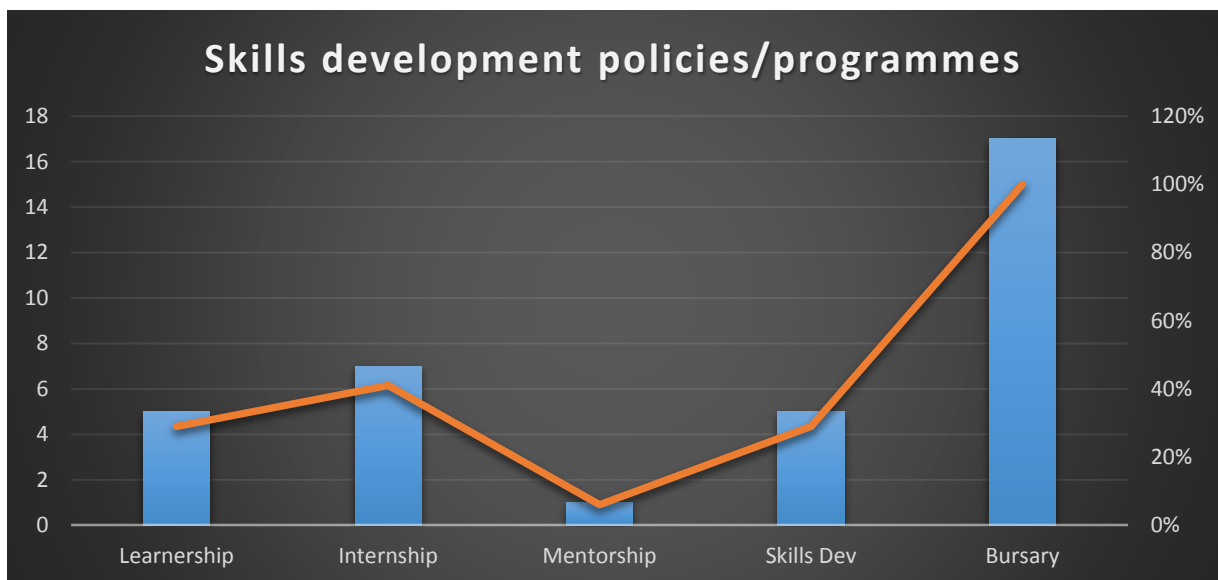


FIGURE 4.12: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT POLICIES/PROGRAMMES

Interpretation of the results of question C20

The aim of skills development and human resource development initiatives is to create a more skilled and capacitated workforce to meet service delivery demands effectively and efficiently. These types of policies or programmes are also a means to retain staff specifically in the scarce and critical fields where the public service is lacking and to ensure that the public see the public service as an Employer of Choice. It is pleasing and encouraging to note that 100% of the respondents indicated that a bursary policy were in place. However, it is discouraging that the mentorship programme is the least understood and implemented programme in the

department. These training programmes are discussed in chapter 3, section 3.3.6.2 and section 3.3.10.

Regular training and development to enhance the provision of skills development and human resource development is important and it ensures that all staff members at least have exposure to training and development initiatives.

4.5 SUMMARY OF STATEMENTS AND THE RESPONSES FROM THE OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

In this chapter, the researcher analysed the data gathered from respondents and relevant interpretations were made. In section A, the demographic data were analysed and interpreted. In section B, dichotomous statements were evaluated and interpreted. Section C contained the open-ended questions whereby the respondents provided their views about the skills development imperatives within the context of human resource development in the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development. The information was necessary to determine the perceptions of the respondents. The chapter dealt with the extent of the implementation process regarding the various skills development and human resource development policies and programmes in the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Department. Evidently, and to a certain degree, the department has complied with the public service prescripts and regulations aimed at ensuring that public service organisations develop and implement five (5) year departmental Strategic Plans, Human Resource Plans, and Human Resource Development Plans. However, it also became evident that the alignment of these strategic plans has not been successful. Furthermore, the implementation process has not been successful as various challenges still actually persist, as indicated in this chapter.

4.6. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher analysed and interpreted the empirical findings from the semi-structured interviews and responses to questions asked for the members of the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development Skills Development Committee. Furthermore, the aims and objectives of this study, the methodology used, and the primary and secondary sources of data and the data collection processes were discussed. The chapter also provided an analysis and interpretation of data collected by using bar charts, graphs and pie charts.

The next chapter concludes the study with a summary of the findings.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the summary and overview of the study followed by recommendations and conclusion. The previous chapter outlined the research methodology and design including the data collection, data analysis and interpretation of findings in relation to the research objectives. The central outcomes of the empirical investigation, together with the literature review form the basis on which the recommendations were made. The recommendations made in this chapter concentrate on the possible solutions to the research problem identified by the researcher during the research.

5.2. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The study was constructed into five (5) chapters, each focussing on a specific aspect as highlighted, to achieve the research objectives.

Chapter 1 introduced the orientation and background to the study, research objectives, research questions, central theoretical arguments, research methodology, research methods used for the research and procedures, ethical considerations, significance of the study and the organisation of the study. This chapter also establishes a breakdown of the actual study.

In Chapter 2, the first research objective was addressed namely to investigate the theories and principles of human resource development (HRD) and skills development programmes. The chapter comprised firstly, of an overview of Public Administration, secondly a theoretical orientation of human resource development and skills development in South Africa and within the South African public service, in particular. A comprehensive literature review on the varying but interrelated human resource development approaches, models and theories was also undertaken in this chapter to strengthen and motivate the research problem.

Chapter 3 addressed the second research objective namely to examine the compliance of the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development with legislation and regulations pertaining to human resource development practices, and skills development programmes in particular. Firstly, the chapter investigated and analysed the history of skills development and human resource development policy and legislative framework in South Africa. Secondly, the

chapter investigated and analysed the existing legislative and regulatory framework governing skills development and human resource development practices in the South African public services, and the relevant and related strategies affecting the skills development and human resource development practices, in terms of role players, support structures, benefits, components and so forth. Among the most important pieces of legislation discussed and explained were the following:

- Public Service Act 103 of 1994.
- South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act 58 of 1995.
- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996.
- Skills development Act 97 of 1998.
- Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999.
- National Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008.

The following policy frameworks were also discussed and explained:

- White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995.
- The White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, 1997.
- White Paper on Public Service Training and Education (WPPSTE), 1998.

Furthermore, skills development and human resource development strategy documents were discussed and explained. These included:

- A human resource development strategy for South Africa (2010-2030).
- The Human Resource Development for the Public Service Strategic Framework Vision 2015
- The Framework for the National Skills Development Strategy 2011/12 – 2015/16.
- The National Skills Development Strategy III

The discussion in this chapter sought to outline the skills development and human resource development imperatives including legislation, proper strategies, policies, processes and procedures necessary to effectively manage and guide the skills development, training and capacity building of employees within the public service.

Chapter 4 addressed the third research objective namely to analyse the current functioning and challenges experienced by the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social

Development in the implementation of skills development programmes based on the knowledge obtained through theory and legislation discussed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. The chapter presented in detail the research methodology and the empirical findings concerning the analysis of the skills development programmes within the context of human resource development in the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development. Furthermore, Chapter 4 provided a comprehensive description and explanation of the data collection methods and data obtained through the semi-structured interviews. The research techniques and instruments were discussed and explained with the prime objective of exploring the current functioning and challenges experienced in the effective implementation of skills development programmes within the context of human resource development in the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development. The findings were scientifically analysed and presented.

To a certain degree, respondents indicated that the department has complied with the public service prescripts and regulations aimed at ensuring that public service organisations develop and implement five (5) year departmental Strategic Plans, Human Resource Plans, and Human Resource Development Plans. It also became evident that the alignment of these strategic plans has not been successful. Furthermore, the respondents indicated that the skills development and human resource development implementation processes of policies and programmes have not been successful as various challenges still actually persist, as reflected in the previous chapter.

Chapter 5 presents the summary and conclusion of the study based on the results of the empirical study. Recommendations for effective implementation of skills development programmes within the context of human resource development in the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development are provided as well.

5.3. FINDINGS WITH REGARD TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

This section indicates if the research questions and objectives of this study were achieved. This will be done by analysing each of the research questions and objectives.

The primary objective of this study was to analyse the skills development programmes within the context of human resources development (HRD) in the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development, with a view to improve skills development processes in the future.

Objective 1 was to find answers regarding the question: **“What do human resources development practices and the skills development programmes of government in particular entail?”**

This objective was achieved in Chapter 2 by discussing an overview of Public Administration, the theoretical orientation of human resource development and skills development in South Africa and within the South African public service, in particular. Furthermore, a comprehensive literature review on the varying but interrelated human resource development approaches, models and theories was also presented to achieve the research objective.

Objective 2 was to find answers regarding the question: **“Does the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development comply with the legislative and regulatory framework pertaining to human resource development and skills development in particular?”**

This objective was achieved in Chapter 3 by, firstly, discussing the history of skills development and human resource development policy and legislative framework in South Africa. Secondly, by discussing the existing legislative and regulatory framework governing skills development and human resource development practices in the South African public services and the relevant and related strategies affecting the skills development and human resource development practices in terms of role players, support structures, benefits, components and so forth.

Objective 3 was to find answers regarding the question: **“What is the nature and extent of skills development in the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development?”**

This objective was achieved through the utilisation of a research questionnaire as part of the empirical study conducted in Chapter 4 and through conducting personal interviews with members of the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development Skills development Committee by presenting closed and open-ended questions to respondents. The respondents expressed their opinions regarding the effective implementation of skills development programmes within the context of human resource development in the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development.

Objective 4 was to find answers regarding the question: **“How can the skills development approaches and practices of the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development be improved to ensure more effective HRD functioning?”**

This objective was achieved by making recommendations extrapolated from the research findings on the effective implementation of skills development programmes within the context of human resource development in the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development. Recommendations are presented in the next section.

The research findings were arrived at through the utilisation of the semi-structured questionnaires as part of the empirical study and conducting personal interviews with research respondents who are members of the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development.

5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are specific recommendations extrapolated from the research findings that are made to address the outcomes of this study. Furthermore, the below mentioned recommendations are made as a contribution to improve the overall functioning of the Skills Development Committee of the ECDSD:

- The department should comply with the legislative and policy frameworks necessary for and relevant to skills development and human resource development by ensuring that it has the necessary skills development and human resource development strategies and policies in place.
- A skills audit needs to be conducted in order for the department to know the current skills that exist and the skills gap that has to be addressed by targeted and directed recruitment and or training interventions.
- The department should ensure that skills audits form the basis of the Workplace Skills Plan and should not rely only on an individual employee's Performance Development Plan (PDP).
- A scientific tool has to be developed which can be utilised to assess the relevance and impact of training on the individual and on the organisation in meeting the service delivery imperatives.

- Through performance agreements of departmental management, the department must provide for the assessment of the extent to which Human Resource Development unit is supported.
- Resources must be provided by the department to ensure that the training and development monitoring and evaluation systems are in place to measure the returns on training investments.
- The Human Resource Development unit personnel and the members of the Skills Development Committee should be capacitated on the skills development facilitation. A training programme by an accredited training provider must be sourced to capacitate both the HRD unit personnel and members of the Skills Development Committee.
- The training budget should be centralised to the Human Resource Development unit. The Human Resource Development unit must implement the training programmes as budgeted for and must account for the spending of the training funds.
- The department has to comply with the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) and relevant line Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) in utilising the existing training and development expenditure monitoring and reporting tools for the department to be more accountable for the 1% skills levy and the entire training and development budget.
- The Human Resource Development unit should provide an extensive expenditure report to departmental Skills Development Committee, Top Management, DPSA and relevant line SETAs or Treasury on the training conducted within the department for each financial year on a quarterly basis.
- The Human Resource Development unit must provide reasons for non-expenditure of the 1% skills levy and the entire training budget.
- Departmental management should play a more visible and developmental role within the department and should monitor whether training as outlined in the departmental Workplace Skills Plan is actually conducted by the department.

5.5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study was conducted to analyse the skills development programmes within the context of human resource development in the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development. The analysis has focused at the ways in which the department identifies individual employees' and strategic core departmental competencies, development, monitoring, implementation and reporting on the departmental WSP as well as on the compliance with the skills development legislation. Although strategic HR plans have been in place and there has been limited agreement on the existence of HRD policy frameworks, many challenges still remain for the department to make a significant contribution to skills development and human resource development imperatives. Furthermore, a greater sense of lack of development, monitoring, implementation and reporting on the departmental WSP by the department remains a matter of serious concern.

It is evident that if the challenges that are highlighted in this study are not urgently attended to and addressed, the ECSDS will continue to invest on training and development interventions that are yielding fewer or no results on the departments' strategic objectives and leading to service delivery being compromised.

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ANNEXURE A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO PARTICIPANTS FROM THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The researcher gave the following information to each participant before he started with each interview.

Dear Sir / Madam

My name is Mninawa Hobo and I am pursuing studies for the Master of Public Administration at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University. I am currently doing research for the partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master's degree. The title of my research is: "An analysis of the skills development programmes within the context of human resource development: The case of the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development." The study will involve members of the Skills Development Committee of the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development.

The research seeks to solicit your assistance in completing the questionnaire below.

Participation is voluntary. Please note that all answers are confidential and will be used for research purposes only. Participants will remain anonymous. Your gender and position within government is only required for our records, in order to ease the process of data analysis. You are kindly requested to be open in responding to each of the questions asked during this interview.

Before we commence with the interview, I would like to provide a background of the study.

Annexure A of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 Regulations, Regulation Gazette No. 7091, Vol. 432, 22 June 2001 No. 22398 require employers to submit a workplace skills plan (WSP). The employer must submit the workplace skills plan by a date to be determined by the relevant SETA. The following essential details must be elucidated in the workplace skills plan:

- Details of employer and Skills Development Facilitator(s).
- Annual skills priorities.
- Proposed beneficiaries.
- Development and consultative processes.
- Authorisation.

Regarding the development and consultative process the employer is required to describe the processes used to:

- Develop the workplace skills plan.
- Explain how the plan relates to the organisation's Employment Equity Plan.
- If a Skills Development Committee has been established, to please outline its composition.
- Whether the draft workplace skills plan was reviewed and considered by the Committee?
- If no Committee exists, to please outline the steps taken to consult employees about the workplace skills plan.

The primary objective that this study aims to fulfil is to analyse the skills development programmes within the context of human resources development (HRD) in the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development, with a view to improve skills development processes in the future.

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The following personal information is compulsory and necessary for statistical purposes only as well as to summarise the conclusion of the study in a proper manner and to reflect the opinions of a diverse group of people involved in the effective functioning of the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Skills Development Committee (SDC).

Please indicate with a **cross (X)** the following general questions in the appropriate box.

A1.

Gender	Male	1	Female	2
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A2.

Age	21 – 30	1	31 - 40	2	41 - 50	3	51 - 60	4	61 - +	5
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A3.

Highest Qualification	Grade 12	1	Certificate	2	Diploma	3	Bachelor Degree	4	Post-graduate Degree	5	Other	6
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A4.

Experience in SDC	0 -1 year	1	2 – 5 yrs	2	6 – 10 yrs	3	11 – 15 yrs	4	16 - + yrs	5
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A5.

Senior Management Service (SMS) Member	1	Non-SMS Member	2
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SECTION B: CLOSED-ENDED QUESTIONS

This section focuses on the ***skills development planning imperatives and the human resource development strategy, human resource planning and the alignment of these strategic documents to the departmental strategic plans***. This information is necessary to determine the challenges faced in the skills development planning within the context of human resource development.

Please answer whether you agree/disagree with the following questions by indicating a “yes” to agree or “no” to disagree by marking the appropriate box with an x.

B1. Does the department have a five-year Strategic Plan?

Yes	1	No	2
-----	---	----	---

B2. Does the department have a Human Resource Plan?

Yes	1	No	2
-----	---	----	---

B3. Does the department have a Human Resource Development Strategy (HRD) and Policy?

Yes	1	No	2
-----	---	----	---

B4. Is the Human Resource Plan and HRD strategy aligned to the five-year Strategic Plan?

Yes	1	No	2
-----	---	----	---

B5. Has the department embarked on a Skills Audit?

Yes	1	No	2
-----	---	----	---

SECTION C: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Information in this section is necessary in order to elicit reliable responses from Skills Development Committee members *on the existence of skills development imperatives, the understanding of their role, and the existence of skills development policies or skills development programmes.*

C1. How often does the department conduct a skills audit?

C2. What methodology was followed when conducting the skills audit?

C3. Does the department budget for skills development initiatives?

C4. Where is the training budget of the department located?

C5. Does the department have an approved Workplace Skills Plan (WSP)?

Yes	1	No	2
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C6. If no, what is the reason for not having an approved WSP?

C7. If yes, what informs the content of the WSP?

C8. How far has the department progressed with the implementation of the WSP?

C9. Which fora participate in the prioritisation of training in the department?

C10. When last (date) did the forum(s) meet to prioritise training?

C11. Does the department have a skills development planning/training committee?

Yes	1	No	2
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C12. What are the functions of this committee?

C13. How frequently does the Committee meet?

C14. When last did the Committee convene?

C15. At what rank/level is the Chairperson of the Committee?

C16. How does the department assess the relevance of training in relation to the work of the employees?

C117. How does the department conduct impact assessment of the training provided?

C18. How many employees within the HRD unit have been trained as skills development facilitators?

C19. Have you received training on skills development facilitation?

--

C20. Does the department have the following skills development policies/programmes in place?

Policy/Programme	Yes	No (please provide reasons for not having them in place)
Learnership	1	2
Internship	1	2
Mentorship	1	2
Skills Development	1	2
Bursary	1	2

Thank you for your cooperation and honest response to the questions. If you have any further enquiries, please contact me at the following telephone numbers: 0781702561 OR Mninawa.hobo@ecdsd.gov.za

ANNEXURE B



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
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18 May 2016

Mr S Khanyile
Superintendent General
Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development
King Williams Town
5607

Dear Sir

RE: Request to use the Skills Development Committee of the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development as unit of analysis in a Master's Degree Research

The above matter refers.

Mr. Mninawa Hobo is pursuing research towards fulfilment of the requirements for a Masters Degree in Public Administration at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University, and therefore kindly requests permission to administer semi-structured interview questionnaires to members of the Skills Development Committee of the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development.

The topic of Mr M Hobo's research is "**An analysis of the skills development programmes within the context of human resource development: The case of Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development**". The research objectives of the study *inter alia* include to:

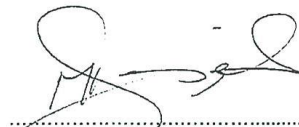
- Investigate the theories and principles of human resource development (HRD) and skills development programmes as well as relevant legislation and policies.
- Examine the compliance of the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development with legislation and regulations pertaining to human resource development practices, and skills development programmes in particular.

- Analyse the current functioning and challenges experienced by the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development in the implementation of skills development programmes based on the knowledge obtained through theory and legislation.
- Provide recommendations regarding best practices that can be adopted and implemented within the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development to improve the implementation of skills development programmes.

Completion of the semi-structured interviews should be as brief as possible and anonymity of participatory results and confidentiality are guaranteed.

If there are any further enquiries, please contact myself, as supervisor, at the above-mentioned contact details, or the researcher at the following numbers 078170 2561 or e-mail: Mninawa.hobo@ecdsc.gov.za

Kind Regards



.....
Dr. M Diedericks
 Study Supervisor



.....
Mr. M Hobo
 Master's Researcher

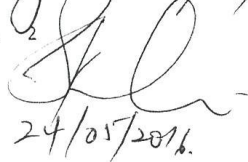
I..... (Superintendent General) hereby grant/does not grant permission to Mr. M Hobo to conduct his research using Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development Skills Development Committee as a unit of analysis for his Master's Degree study.



.....
Mr. S Khanyile
 Superintendent General
 Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development

Date..... 24/05/2016.....

The research to be only for purposes of study only and not to be used for any other purposes other than academic.



24/05/2016.

ANNEXURE C

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

1. INTRODUCTION.

These terms of reference seek to outline the roles and responsibilities of officials within the department of Eastern Cape Department of Social Development Skills Development Committee regarding the processes associated with education, training and development. The responsibilities and accountability of the role-players identified below vary in nature and intensity, but all are striving towards the achievement of the same output namely; skills development and improved performance. The Terms of Reference are designed to enable and cater for the representatives of both the employer and employees to pursue and achieve the objectives of relevant Skills Development legislation and strategies.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT LEGISLATION AND STRATEGIES.

The objectives of the Skills Development legislation and strategies entail the provision of a clear framework and guidelines on the implementation of and thus effecting legislation on transformation, training and education through building capacity in the department. The following become the major objectives Skills Development Legislative framework and strategies:

- Assist in the developing the professional capacity of employees, thus promoting service delivery;
- Promote an integrated strategic approach in addressing education, training and development needs;
- Enable effective consultation with all stakeholders to determine the optimal fit between the development needs of an employee, project teams, the job, the organisation and the environment;
- Enable the coordination, monitoring and evaluation of development activities through a representative Skills Development Committee;
- To address areas of skills shortages or lack thereof;
- Contribute to the full personal development of every employee in the department from the day on which he or she assumes duty until the end of his or her career in the department;
- Facilitate access to training, thus ensuring mobility and progression within every employee's career path; and
- Promote fair and transparent education, training and development practices.

These initiatives shall also contribute to the attainment of employment equity in the department as will be spelt out in the department's Employment Equity Plan

3. ACCOUNTABILITY

The Skills Development Committee is accountable and reports to the Head of Department and Accounting Officer.

4. SCOPE OF WORK OF THE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE.

The Skills Development Committee shall be responsible for the overall coordination of all training in the department and the allocation of funds for that purpose. Its responsibilities will include:

- Advising the Head of Department and Accounting Officer on training and related matters;
- Prioritising identified needs;
- Aligning training needs with an allocated training budget;
- Recommending the new formal training programmes;
- Recommending the annual departmental Workplace Skills Plan;
- Recommending annual training budget;
- Annually, and when necessary, revising the departmental Human Resource Development Strategy, Skills Development Policy or Guidelines and the Bursary Policy;
- Identifying, prioritising, approving and allocating bursaries to deserving applicants;
- Overseeing the implementation of the Internship Programmes in the department;
- Recommending the implementation of learnership programmes in the department; and
- Recommending the skills audit report to top management.

5. COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE AND PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

The Skills Development Committee shall comprise and be constituted by the following members:

- Chairperson: General Manager: Corporate Services / or an appointed General Manager or DDG;
- Deputy Chairperson (to be appointed by the Committee):

- All eight (8) District Managers and three (3) Senior Managers representing Programme 1, Programme (2, 3, & 4 inclusively) and Programme 5:
- Senior Manager: Human Resource Management and Development (HRD Secretariat):
- Human Resource Development Team (Secretariat): and
- Representatives of organised employee organisations.

5.1. CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson shall be appointed by the Head of Department & Accounting Officer and will act as a facilitator of the meetings of the Committee.

5.2. THE COMMITTEE

- The Committee members shall actively endorse and promote the departmental Skills Development Programmes;
- The Committee members shall act as leaders and advocate skills development in their respective Programmes;
- The Committee members must possess sufficient skills and experience as to be able to contribute effectively to the work of the committee;
- The Committee members shall have regular contact with each other on matters of skills development in the department.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- The Committee members shall participate in all discussions of the committee;
- The Committee members shall undertake a fair share of reasonable tasks and responsibilities as is appropriate for the functioning and progress of the committee;
- The Committee members shall communicate and solicit feedback from co-workers in their respective Programmes on issues being discussed by the committee to ensure their Programme's/District concerns are adequately represented during committee deliberations;
- The Committee members shall make decisions in the best interests of the departmental Skill Development Programmes and not necessarily their own personal interests;
- The Committee members shall declare conflict of interests; and

- The Committee members shall actively promote the departmental Skills Development initiatives.
- The Committee members shall endeavour to resolve any outstanding differences resulting from objections and strive for consensus.

7. PROTOCOL

In order to carry on with the business of the committee, at least 12 members including the Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson of the committee must be at the committee meeting.

8. MEETINGS

The timing and frequency of the ordinary SDC meetings will be set by the Secretariat at the discretion of the Chairperson with input(s) from the committee but will be on a quarterly basis. Special SDC Meetings may be called only when necessary to do so.

9. FINANCES

No member of the committee shall receive remuneration for participating on the committee. Any expenditure of funds necessary to the functioning of the committee shall be approved by the Head of Department & Accounting Officer.

10. CONFLICT OF INTERESTS REPORTING

All committee members shall declare at the start of a discussion, to the committee, any personal conflict of interest. This includes any situation in which he or she has competing professional or personal interests that makes it difficult to fulfill his or her duty impartially.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

The Committee members shall respect the confidentiality of any confidential information or materials to which they have access. Any disclosure shall be limited to those who have to know.

12. NOTES

The Secretariat will take minutes on the discussions, details, results, decisions made and actions recommended by the committee. The minutes of the meeting will be circulated to the committee members within two weeks of the meeting.

Furthermore, the Secretariat shall maintain suitable records of concern, complaints, findings, recommendations, decisions and actions that shall then be accessible to the committee representatives and the individuals to whom these records apply.

.....

DATE.....

MR S KHANYILE

SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL

ANNEXURE D



Director: CME Terblanche - BA (Pol Sc), BA Hons (Eng), MA (Eng), TEFL
22 Strydom Street
Baillie Park, 2531
Tel 082 821 3083
cumlaudelanguage@gmail.com

DECLARATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING

I, Christina Maria Etreca Terblanche, hereby declare that I edited the following research study:

An analysis of the skills development programmes within the context of human resource development: the case of the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development

for Mninawa Hobo for the purpose of submission as a dissertation for examination. Changes were suggested in track changes and implementation was left up to the author.

Regards,

CME Terblanche

Cum Laude Language Practitioners (CC)

SATI accreditation nr: 1001066

Registered with PEG