AN ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION IN THE NORTH WEST PROVINCIAL DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Kearabetswe Grace Seabelo hereby declare that this mini-dissertation for the Master of Business and Administration Degree, submitted at the Graduate School of Business and Government Leadership in the Faculty of Commerce and Administration at the North West University, Mafikeng Campus, has not previously been submitted for a degree at this university and that it is my own work, design and execution. All the references material contained therein have been duly acknowledged.

Ms KG Seabelo

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ABSTRACT

The Public Service Commission (PSC) is Constitutionally vested with the mandate to promote good governance in the Public Service. In terms of the mandate, the PSC is empowered to investigate, monitor and evaluate the organisation, administration and personnel practices of the public service and to advice national and provincial organs of state, as well as to promote a high standard of professional ethics.

In 2000, the PSC initiated the transversal public service monitoring and evaluation system (PSM&ES). This system looks at the extent to which Departments comply with the nine values and principles for public administration prescribed in chapter 10, section 195(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. The research involves analysing departmental performance against a performance indicator for each principle, using a specially designed assessment framework.

The research, to assess the extent to which good governance is being practised, was first conducted in the Department of Finance during the 2003/2004 financial year by the PSC, with specific reference the Department's performance for the 2002/2003 financial year.

The main objective of this study was to assess the level of implementation of and compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles in the North West Provincial Department of Finance and the impact that M&E has in improving service delivery and therefore good governance. At least five financial years had passed since this research was conducted in the Department of Finance and a report presented to the Head of Department.

Data was collected by means of a questionnaire which was developed and administered by the researcher. The questions asked in the questionnaire were informed by the aim and objectives of the study.

This study has revealed that whilst most of the senior managers acknowledge the importance of monitoring and evaluation and the fact that good monitoring and evaluation does contribute to ensuring that the objectives of the Department are achieved, they however have little or no knowledge and understanding of the PSC's M&E framework. The findings of the study further reveal that communication is key as most of the senior managers (56.25%) confirmed not being aware of the M&E report issued by the PSC, nor the findings and recommendations contained in it.

Over and above improving on internal communication by the Department, it is critical that the PSC engages vigorously with Departments and create awareness through advocacy work. Furthermore, in order to deal with the finding that research reports are simply filed away without being put into practice, the PSC may need to consider conducting frequent follow-ups with departments on the actual implementation of recommendations contained in their reports.

Given the low level of awareness about the nine Constitutional values and principles, it may also be important to consider institutionalizing these, for example, by including them in the performance agreements of all senior managers.

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CHAPTER ONE:
INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) are terms that are often used in the same breath or interchangeably. Whilst the two share many similarities, the most notable being the collection and analysis of data, they are in fact two distinct processes. According to The Plymouth Monitoring and Evaluation Development Group (PMEDG: 2005:13), **monitoring** is a continuous process which charts progress towards change whilst **evaluation** is a periodic process that helps to determine whether change has actually occurred.

M&E is an essential tool that is used in managing government programmes. It is used for accountability, decision making and programme improvement. It involves looking at the appropriateness, efficiency and effectiveness of a programme and can identify where a programme is heading, whether it is heading in the right direction, how it will get there and whether it is using resources in the most cost effective manner.

This study paper provided a general background to the study and moved in to discuss the Public Service Commission (PSC) as one of the South African Constitutional oversight body and in particular the current PSC's M&E system, which was set up to measure and promote good governance. It then outlined the processes used and the challenges experienced in implementing this system. Through the process of data collection and analysis, the study demonstrated the level of impact or the effectiveness of this system towards improving service delivery and therefore good governance in the public service and in the Department of Finance, in particular.

The following are discussed in this chapter:

Background to the study, background and theoretical overview of monitoring and evaluation, definition of key concepts, research problem, research questions, aim and objectives of the study, significance of the study, the assumptions of the study, research design and methodology, scope of the study, ethical considerations, description of how the research findings will be disseminated/used, time frames, organisation of the study, and conclusion.

1.2 Background to the study

During the apartheid era in South Africa, government was mainly concerned with control. It was run as a centralised bureaucratic entity, with all components using the same processes, procedures and operating according to centrally prescribed norms and standards. This meant that work processes were standardized, rules were the same across the board in all situations as well as in all contexts. Bureaucratic approach gave rise to a rule-based public service culture that discouraged flexibility and made obeying orders more important than meeting citizens' needs (red tape syndrome).

1994 saw a shift to a more modern approach to public administration while still maintaining a more solid administrative base. The public service was then best understood as a network of separate organizations, including national and provincial Departments, each responsible for its own planning, budgeting, system controls based on a sophisticated, shared policy framework that requires each Department to have certain policies and functions in place. For example, conducting own recruitment and appointments of Chief Financial Officers accountable for resource use or requiring Departments to adopt their own versions of major public service policies such as human resource development.

According to a workshop presentation made by the PSC (2004), the restructuring of the public service in this manner has both its positive as well as its negative sides. On the positive, instead of Departments applying centrally determined rules, they can be more flexible, dynamic and citizen oriented. Also, Departments can adjust and adapt according to the needs of the people they serve and the nature of the service they provide.

However, on the negative, this approach may result in the demands on individual Departments being greater because the public service management framework is now much less prescriptive, which implies that many support services are no longer centrally provided. There is also a greater possibility that weak or struggling Departments may neglect the implementation of key elements of the public service policy framework.

Now that Departments operate according to their own procedures and processes, M&E is more important than ever before. It is therefore essential that central coordinating Departments (e.g. National Treasury and the Department of Public Service and Administration) and oversight agencies (e.g. the Auditor-General and the PSC) consistently assess whether departments properly apply important policies and frameworks (Sing; 2004: 4). It is also important that this is done regularly and rigorously so that an early warning can be raised as problems emerge, before they can become acute.

As one of the oversight bodies in the public service, the PSC made an observation that whilst all of its work is M&E oriented, projects are mostly discreet, separate initiatives to investigate or research specific issues in certain public service organizations. Also, while valuable, projects do not provide broad and strategic information on the performance of public service organizations. Furthermore, since the projects do not involve repeat studies, they are of limited use in assessing changes that might be occurring in Departments.

Since one of the key purposes of M&E is accountability, learning and development as expressed in the www.ces-vol.org.uk/index.cfm, the PSC then came up with a monitoring and evaluation system which was made unique by its transversal nature. This system looks at the same issues in all Departments in order to:

- draw comparisons;
- identify and promote areas of good practice; and
- identify and provide additional support in areas in which departments may be struggling.

In carrying out the above functions, the PSC sees its strategic obligation as the generation of evidence (i.e. technical), to enable Parliament in turn to exercise its political oversight role and to advice the Executive on good administration. The PSC furthermore regularly reports to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Public Service and Administration.

It is important to understand that the PSC is not the only role-player in the attempt to build a culture and capacity for M&E in the country. There are a number of legislative measures, policies and procedures that have been developed by the South African Government involved in the implementation of elements of the contemporary public management framework, including a commitment to monitoring and evaluation.

The growth of M&E units in government together with an increased supply of M&E expertise from the private sector calls for a common language around M&E. This is needed in the country given that M&E is relatively a new practice which tends to be informed by varied ideologies and concepts.

According to Kusek and Rist (2004:225), the two terms, Monitoring and Evaluation, are defined in the OECD Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management as follows:

Monitoring: "A continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indicators of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds"

Evaluation: "The systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors.

They further indicate that:

Evaluation also refers to the process of determining the worth or significance of an activity, policy or programme. An assessment, as systematic and objective as possible, of planned, on going, or completed development intervention.

Note: Evaluation, in some instances, involves the definition of appropriate standards, the examination of performance against those standards as well as the assessment of actual and expected results and the identification of relevant lessons".

NTEAP (2005:5) seem to be in agreement when they define monitoring as the collection and analysis of data about project activities and evaluation as being concerned with the results and effects of a component's activity. According to the NTEAP (ibid), good monitoring can be seen as consisting of the following:

- **Use of participatory monitoring mechanisms to ensure commitment, ownership, follow-up and feedback performance** – these include outcome groups, stakeholder meetings, steering committees as well as focus group interviews.

- **Regular communication by the project coordinator or manager** – the project coordinator or manager should be dedicated to assessing progress, looking at the big picture and analysing problem areas. They should ensure continuous documentation of the achievements and challenges as they occur and avoid having to try to remember the events some time later.

- **Ways to objectively assess progress and performance based on clear criteria and indicators stated in the logical framework matrix of the project document** – the project team should agree on a performance measurement system by developing indicators and baseline.

- **Active generation of lessons leaned** - ensuring learning through monitoring tools, adapting strategies accordingly and avoiding repeating mistakes from the past.

- **Regular analysis of reports** – the project coordinator or manager should review project-related reports, including financial reports by the implementing partners to serve as a basis for their analysis.

- **Focus on results and follow-ups** - it looks for "what is going well" and what is not progressing" in terms of progress towards the intended results.

On the other hand, the UNFPA (2004:2) sees the process of evaluation as inclusive of the following steps:

- **Defining standards** against which programmes are to be evaluated, through the use of programme indicators;

- **Investigating the performance** of the selected activities/process/products to be evaluated based on these standards. This is done by an analysis of selected qualitative or quantitative indicators and the programme context;

- **Synthesizing the results** of this analysis;

- **Formulating recommendations** based on the analysis of findings; and

- **Feeding recommendations and lessons learned back** into programme and other decision-making processes.

From the above definitions, it is clear that the two terms are intimately related. Both are necessary management tools to inform decision-making and demonstrate accountability. However, neither is a substitute for the other. They both use basically the same steps but produce different kinds of information. It should also be noted that these distinctions are not absolute and continue to be debated widely among M&E practitioners. Of importance to note is that monitoring and evaluation depends largely on the purpose for which it is intended.

Monitoring and Evaluation is a powerful public management tool that can become useful to decision and policy makers in tracking work progress and demonstrating the impact of a programme, policy or project. According to Du Mhango (1998:25), the performance of any development programme or project is judged through the actual results achieved. This means that a programme or project is planned and implemented to achieve certain results which can be known through ongoing checking of work progress and performance, through monitoring and evaluation.

In terms of the UNDP (2001:1), M&E provides a strong and coherent system of learning and performance measurement, where programme and project managers are expected to monitor progress towards the systematic achievement of results. Such monitoring is meant to report on those results as well as to integrate lessons learned into management decisions and future programming initiatives. Monitoring therefore helps to improve performance and achieve results by ensuring effectively managed results and outputs through measurement and assessment of performance.

The table below further illustrates the different but complementary characteristics/roles of monitoring and evaluation, as explained in The UNFPA Tool Number 2 (2004:3) as follows:

Table 1.1: Characteristics of Monitoring and Evaluation

MONITORING	EVALUATION
• Continuous.	Periodic: • at important milestones such as the mid-term of programme implementation; • at the end or a substantial period after programme conclusion.
• Keeps track; • oversight; • analyses; and • documents progress.	• In-depth analysis; • compares planned with actual achievements.
• Focuses on inputs, activities, outputs, implementation processes; • continued relevance; • likely results at outcome level.	• Focuses on outputs in relation to inputs; • results in relation to cost; • processes used to achieve results; overall relevance; • impact; and • sustainability.

MONITORING	EVALUATION
• Answers what activities were implemented and results achieved.	• Answers why and how results were achieved. • Contributes to building theories and models for change.
• Alerts managers to problems and provides options for corrective actions.	• Provides managers with strategy and policy options.
• Self-assessment by programme managers, supervisors, community stakeholders and donors.	• Internal and/or external analysis by programme managers, supervisors, community stakeholders, donors and/or external evaluators.

Source: UNFPA Tool 2 (2004:3)

1.3 Definitions of key terms

- Process - method of doing or producing something (Collins: 2002:599).
- Impact - strong effect (Collins, 2002:382).
- Departments - specialised division of a large organisation.
- System - method or set of methods (Collins, 2002:760)

- Monitoring - is a continuous process which charts progress towards change whilst (PMEDG, 2005:13)

- Evaluation - is a periodic process that helps to determine whether change has actually occurred (PMEDG, 2005:13)

- Good governance- it is about transparency, accountability and equality in ways that are responsive to the needs of people. It is composed of the mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups can articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences (Green Paper on transforming service delivery).

- Service Delivery- a complete change in the way that services are delivered. A shift away from inward-looking, bureaucratic systems, processes and attitudes, towards new ways of working which put the needs of the public first, is better, faster and more responsive to meet those needs (www.developmentgateway.com/au)

- Assessment - Appraisal (Collins, 2002:45).

1.4 Research Problem

The study focused on the assessment of the implementation and compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles in the North West Provincial Department of Finance and the impact that M&E has in improving service delivery and therefore good governance.

Since the PSC's M&E system has been implemented in Departments, there has not been a study of this nature to assess whether Departments do act on the recommendations of the findings as contained in the reports by the PSC. As a result of continuing media reports on allegations and complaints related to poor service delivery in the public service, complaints and allegations which are sometimes referred to the PSC for investigation, this study was therefore conducted to test whether M&E is achieving its intended results in the Departments where the research was conducted.

1.5 Research questions

Based on the background to the study as well as the research problem as discussed above, the following questions are raised in order to asses the impact of monitoring and evaluation in improving service delivery and good governance in the Department of Finance in the North West Provincial Government (NWPG), with specific reference to the nine Constitutional values and principles, using the PSC's M&E system.

- are senior managers in the Department are aware of the M&E report issued by the PSC?
- does the Department implements the recommendations made in the report and the challenges experienced (if any)?
- what type of impact does M&E have on the Department's performance?
- are there other strategies that can be implemented to ensure compliance with the Constitutional values and principles?
- are the chosen indicators useful in addressing the specific information needs of particular decision makers? and
- should M&E should be used for accountability purposes or for learning purposes.

1.6 Aim and objectives of the study

The aim of this study was to assess whether M&E, based on the nine Constitutional values and principles, result in the improvement of service delivery as well as good governance in the North West Provincial Department of Finance.

The objectives that are of interest in the present study, in relation to the impact of M&E (based on the nine Constitutional values and principles) in the Department of Finance were to:

- establish whether senior managers in the Department are aware of the M&E report issued by the PSC;
- assess whether the Department implements the recommendations made in the report and the challenges experienced (if any);
- measure the level and type of impact that M&E has on the Department's performance;
- establish whether there are other strategies that can be implemented to ensure compliance with the Constitutional values and principles;
- assess the usefulness of the chosen indicators in addressing the specific information needs of particular decision makers; and
- establish whether M&E should be used for accountability purposes or for learning purposes.

1.7 Significance of the study

Knowledge is power. This study is therefore relevant because no previous studies relating to the assessment of the impact of the PSC's M&E system, using the nine Constitutional values and principles, was conducted.

Unlike in the past, management in the public sector is now faced with new challenges. This is confirmed by Kusek and Rist (2004:2), when they state that governments are increasingly being called upon to demonstrate results. Stakeholders are no longer solely interested in organizational activities and outputs, they are now more than ever interested in actual outcomes.

Therefore, with the findings made by this study, the North West Department of Finance will be able to assess whether its service delivery is improving, deteriorating or staying the same. Likewise, the findings will assist the PSC to make important decisions on whether the process applied and the manner in which feedback is given to Government Departments do meet with the ultimate intensions of the system, which is to guide and offer advice to the Departments towards compliance with the nine constitutional values and principles for improved service delivery and good governance.

Furthermore, both the PSC and the NWPG will be able to use the findings of the research to make proposals for a better response to the processes of M&E. The results of the study will also create awareness to senior managers in the North West Department of Finance about the importance of the M&E reports produced by the PSC as a self assessment tool on the level of the Department's performance against the set standards for improved service delivery and good governance (the current assessment framework/questionnaire designed by the PSC to monitor and evaluate compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles explain in detail, the expected standards of performance for each principle).

Knowing how it performs with regards to compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles, the North West Department of Finance will be in a better position to give account on its programmes and policies to the very clients and stakeholders it must serve.

1.8 The assumptions of the study

The importance of processes in our country, as well as adequate communication during the key phases of implementing the PSC's M&E system, cannot be overemphasised. Therefore, if feedback is given to Departments that have been subjected to the process of monitoring and evaluating compliance timeously and in a manner that is easy to understand, then the assumptions that can be made are that Departments:

- should generally maintain a high standard of professional ethics;
- that stay within their budget perform efficiently and effectively and are able to account to stakeholders with ease;
- behave in a just and impartial manner;
- are responsive to the needs of the public; and
- are transparent in how they operate and they can be accessed.

1.9 Research design and methodology

Research design, according to (Bless and Craig-Higson; 2000:63), relates directly to the testing of hypothesis. Whilst Mouton (2001:55) states that research design is a plan or blueprint of how you intend conducting the research (and can therefore be used in both quantitative and qualitative studies), Biess and Craig-Higson (2000:63) purport that it is a specification of the most adequate operations to be performed in order to test specific hypothesis under given conditions. Furthermore, research designs have two essential components which are:

- **Observation** – at some point in every research project, the researcher must observe and measure variation in the different variables involved in the research.

- **An analysis of the relationships between the variables** – this may be done by manipulating certain variables in order to observe the effect of the other variables, or by observing corresponding changes in more than one variable.

There are three categories of research designs which will be discussed in more detail in chapter three. These are: Pre-experimental designs; Quasi-experimental designs; and Experimental designs.

There are many different methods of collecting data, hence Macmillan and Schumacher (2003:8) define research methodology as a means of collecting and analysing data. According to Reid (1984:9), the different means of collecting data are through questionnaires, interviews, observations of direct interaction and using available materials such as case records, statistical data and literature review.

The following methods of collecting data were utilised for purposes of this study:

- Document study or Literature review
- Questionnaires; and

- Interviews

Since this study is about assessing impact, data will be analysed using mainly the qualitative approach, which will also be dealt with in more detail in chapter three.

1.10 Scope of the study

The North West Province is situated centrally and to the North of South Africa. Its neighbouring province to the north is the Limpopo Province, Gauteng to the east, the Free State to the south west, Northern Cape to the west and Botswana to the west and north. Altitude ranges from one to two thousand above sea level.

The NWPG comprises of eleven Departments and employs about seventy thousand public service employees.

Although the findings of the study should provide valuable information on the process and impact of M&E in the North West Provincial Departments, the following limitations have been identified:

- the scope of the study was limited to the nine basic values and principles that govern the public service as contained in chapter 10 section 195(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996;

- the study was more of an explorative type in which no experimentation was done;

- the fact that Departments differ in terms of the citizens they serve as well as the nature of the service they provide, all of which impact on the amount of budget allocated, makes possible generalizations to other provincial Departments limited;

- out of the eleven Departments in the NWPG, the researcher limited the study to using respondents (and in particular, all senior managers) from only one provincial Department, the Department of Finance.

The choice of this provincial Department was informed by the fact that a reasonable period of time had lapsed (i.e. four years) since the PSC's M&E research to assess compliance with the nine Constitutional principles was last conducted in the Department of Finance.

At the time of conducting this study, the PSC's M&E research had already been conducted in nine Departments in the North West Province, with the last two Departments to be researched during the 2008/2009 research cycle. Reports with recommendations for the researched Departments were finalized and made available to the relevant Departments.

Due to the procedures that the researcher had to follow to request approval before formally conducting the study, as well as the fact that the researcher's target population (i.e. members of the Senior Management Service - SMS) are not always available due to their usually tight work schedules, a period of at least seven calendar months was allocated as the reasonable lifespan for the completion and production of an approved mini dissertation.

1.11 Ethical considerations

The researcher maintained a high standard of competence and integrity throughout the research process. This extended further to the relationship the researcher had with the respondents as well as the general public. Furthermore, at the introduction of the research, the participating Department and in particular the respondents were informed of the following rights to:

- anonymity of every respondent;
- hold confidential all information obtained;
- expect a complete report with findings and recommendations; and
- expect a research which is unbiased and scientifically sound.

1.12 Description of how the research findings will be disseminated/used

In terms of the Programme Manager's Planning on Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit (2004:8), it is not sufficient to merely conduct evaluation as an information gathering activity. It is also important to disseminate and communicate evaluation results to key stakeholders and other audiences as soon as possible and in forms that are easy to understand and use. The toolkit further guides that the results must first be disseminated to those with a direct interest in the programme being evaluated, especially to those with the responsibility for making important decisions about the programme, and then to other potential users.

Based on the above, the findings will first be made available to all SMS members of the Department of Finance, through their Head of Department (HoD), as well as to the Director-General (DG) of the province. These will hopefully assist the said Department to assess the level of their organizational performance with regards to compliance to the requirements of good governance as prescribed by the Constitutional values and principles and therefore give guidance in important decision-making processes and to be able to account to stakeholders.

In order to be informed as to whether the recommendations that are made by the PSC in its report to the Department of Finance are implemented and effective in improving the level of compliance and therefore performance, the findings of this study will also be made available to the PSC. Part of the submission will be to make a proposal to the PSC that the study be replicated in other national and provincial Departments where the PSC's M&E research was conducted, if agreeable with the findings of this study. It is the belief of the researcher that this will benefit the PSC in that it will have fully complied with its Constitutional mandate and at the same time, ensure improved service delivery and therefore good governance.

1.13 Time frames

Timing of any study is important so that the results can at identified intervals, be used to take important programme related decisions. Based on the process requirements, the researcher anticipates completing the mini dissertation at least within seven calendar months. The following draft work plan will be used by the researcher as a guide in monitoring progress:

Activity	Jan. 08	Jan. 08	Feb. 08	Mar. 08	Apr. 08	Apr. 08	May 08	May 08	Jun. 08	Jul. 08
Letter to the OPSC DG requesting permission to conduct the research.										
Letter to the NW Provincial DG and the selected HoDs requesting permission to conduct the research.										
Request for a list of all senior managers in the Department of Finance.										
Literature review										
Drafting and approval of the questionnaire.										
Field work – visiting respondents in the department of Finance to further give background to my study and deliver questionnaires.										
Field work – receiving questionnaires back & follow ups on any the outstanding.										
Capturing of data										
Analysis of data										
Writing of main findings and first draft of the mini dissertation.										

1.14 Organisation of the study

This study is divided into five chapters in the following manner:

Chapter one : Introduction and orientation of the study

The main focus in this chapter is on the background to the South African M&E system and in particular, the PSC M&E system, as well as what the objectives of the study are. Other headings covered in this chapter are background to the study; definition of key concepts used in the study; research problem and questions; aim and objectives of the study; significance of the study; the assumptions of the study; scope of the study; ethical considerations; description of how the research findings will be disseminated/used; time frames and the organisation of the study.

Chapter two : The theoretical overview and literature review on monitoring and evaluation

This chapter gives the reader a theoretical overview and review of literature on monitoring and evaluation, its tools, methods and approaches. It will further explain the importance and benefits of literature review.

Chapter three: Research design and methodology

This chapter includes discussion on the type of study undertaken (research design) and how data will be collected and analysed (research methodology).

Chapter four: Data presentation, analysis and interpretation

The data is presented first, analysed and then interpreted in this chapter.

Chapter five : Summary, discussion of findings, conclusion and recommendations

In this chapter, the summary of the study is presented and the findings are discussed. There will be a reflection on the conclusion and finally, recommendations based on the findings.

1.15 Conclusion

Chapter one introduced the study by dealing with such important areas like the background to the study; definition of key concepts used in the study; research problem and questions; aim and objectives of the study; significance of the study; the assumptions of the study; scope of the study; ethical considerations; description of how the research findings will be disseminated/used; time frames and the organisation of the study. In chapter two, a theoretical overview and review of literature on monitoring and evaluation, its tools, methods and approaches will be discussed.

CHAPTER TWO:

THEORETICAL OVERVIEW AND LITERATURE REVIEW ON MONITORING AND EVALUATION

2.1 Introduction

Chapter one gave a background to the South African M&E system and in particular, the PSC's M&E system, introduced the reader to an understanding of the objectives of the study by dealing with the importance, scope and environment of the study. The problem statement was formulated in general terms and then in the form of research questions in line with the objectives. Certain key concepts where defined and the chapter ended with the organisation of the study. In chapter two, a theoretical overview and review of literature on monitoring and evaluation, its tools, methods and approaches are discussed. Furthermore, the importance and benefits of literature review are explained.

2.2 Purpose of literature review

In order to conceive the research topic in a way that permits a clear formulation of the problem and hypothesis, some background information is necessary. This is obtained mainly by reading whatever has been published that appears relevant to the research topic (Bless and Higson-Smith; 2000:20). This is confirmed by Babbie (1992:11) when he defines the review of literature as the systematic identification, location and analysis of documents containing information related to the research problem. As such, it involves extensive and critical examination of publications relevant to the research project. Literature review focuses only on the information that has direct relevance to the present study. It is for this reason that it is important that when conducting literature review, the following three broad categories are borne in mind (Bless and Higson-Smith; 2000: 20):

(i) **the purpose of the literature** (why is a literature review necessary?). There are may different reasons for this like the following:

- to sharpen and deepen the theoretical framework of the research;
- to familiarise the researcher with the latest developments in the area of research;
- to identify gaps in knowledge, as well as weaknesses in previous studies;
- to discover connections, contradictions or other relations between different research results;
- to identify variables that must be considered in the research; and
- to study the advantages and disadvantages of the research methods used by others in order to adopt or improve on them in one's own research.

(ii) **the literature sources** (i.e. where is the information to be found?). This seems to be the most common problem when starting a literature review. The procedure which is suggested by Bless and Higson-Smith (op.cit: 21) is to consult with the following:

- information centres, subject abstracts, indexes or reviews;
- professional journals;
- the internet; and
- have discussions with those who have experience in the area of the research problem.

(iii) **the reviewing techniques** (how does one review and abstract relevant literature?). Reviews and abstracts should contain the following information:

- full reference, including topic or title, name(s) of author(s), name of journal or book in which the publication appears, date and place of publication;

- purpose and hypothesis, which should include a summary of the problem, indicate the hypothesis to be tested and the variables to be included;

- methodology, comprising a description of the population, the sample, the design, the instruments of measurement and the method(s) of data analysis; and

- findings and conclusion which should incorporate a summary of the results and their interpretation(s).

2.3 Purpose of M&E

In terms of the PSC (2008:4), monitoring and evaluation is used for many different purposes and the purpose for which it is used has an impact on how it is used, that is, its particular orientation. There is no "one size fits all" monitoring or evaluation template to put against a variety of questions. It is therefore important that managers and other stakeholders have an understanding of what they want to know from M&E. In most instances, the main purpose of undertaking monitoring and evaluation activity boils down to the following key areas:

- **Accountability:** this involves the provision of information to decision-makers. It is the responsibility of managers to justify expenditures, decisions or the results of the discharge of authority and official duties, including duties delegated to a subordinate unit or individual. In government for example, public officials have an obligation to account for how they spend public money. Accountability in the government is in fact very important and is governed by the Constitution and legislation such as the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) and is further supported by institutions like the PSC and the Auditor-General (AG). Often, failure to adhere to meeting accountability requirements is met by sanction.

- **Organisational learning and development:** this happens when the purpose of monitoring and evaluation is to enhance institutional performance. It builds organisational capability in certain evaluative areas. This can however, be a bit tricky as it presupposes that M&E results and findings assist in creating learning organisations.

  M&E is also a research tool to explore what programme design or solution to societal problems will work best and why and what programme design and operational process will create the best value for money. M&E should provide the analysis and evidence to do the trade-offs between various alternative strategies. The information gathered should be translated into analytical, action-oriented reports that facilitate effective decision-making (PSC report, 2008:5).

- **Management decision-making:** M&E can never replace good management practices. What is true is that M&E systems do augment managerial processes and provide evidence for decision-making. It is however, important to ascertain, before making decisions, whether the quality of the information provided through M&E systems is appropriate and how well it feeds into existing managerial processes. Examples of critical management decisions could be on policy, programme design and implementation or resource allocations.

2.3.1 Other uses and benefits of M&E

Apart from the main purposes of M&E discussed above, Kusek and Rist (2004:130) also purport that the findings produced through monitoring and evaluation can also be used across a broad audience in order to:

- promote understanding – enhancing understanding of policies, projects and programmes;
- document – recording and creating institutional memory;
- involve – engaging stakeholders through a participatory process;
- gain support – demonstrating results to help gain support among stakeholders; and
- To convince – using evidence from findings.

2.3.2 Benefits of project monitoring

Monitoring provides the basis for minimising or preventing schedule and cost overruns while ensuring that required quality standards are achieved. According to Hosein (2003:5), the benefits of monitoring are that it:

- identifies flaws in the design and execution plan;
- establishes whether the project is carried out according to plan;
- continually reviews the project assumptions thereby assessing the risk;
- establishes the likelihood of output achievement as planned;
- verifies that project outputs continue to support the project purpose;
- identifies recurrent problems that need attention;

- recommends changes to the project implementation plan;
- helps identify solutions to problems;
- identifies supplements to project required to enhance its effectiveness;
- provides a basis for projecting the completion schedule and costs based on current performance;
- supports the use of Earned Value Analysis;
- identifies the situations necessary for activating contingency plans;
- establishes links between the performance of operations in progress and future needs and requirements; and
- provides performance information within projects, across complementary

2.3.3 Benefits of programme evaluation

Programme evaluation generates information to help managers to:

- improve the economic performance of new and on-going programmes;
- choose among various development alternatives;
- learn about practices in a given field;
- determine the extent to which the project justification was achieved;
- enhance the sustainability of the programme deliverables; and
- make decisions on the identification and implementation of supplementary and complementary programmes.

2.4 Methods and approaches for M&E

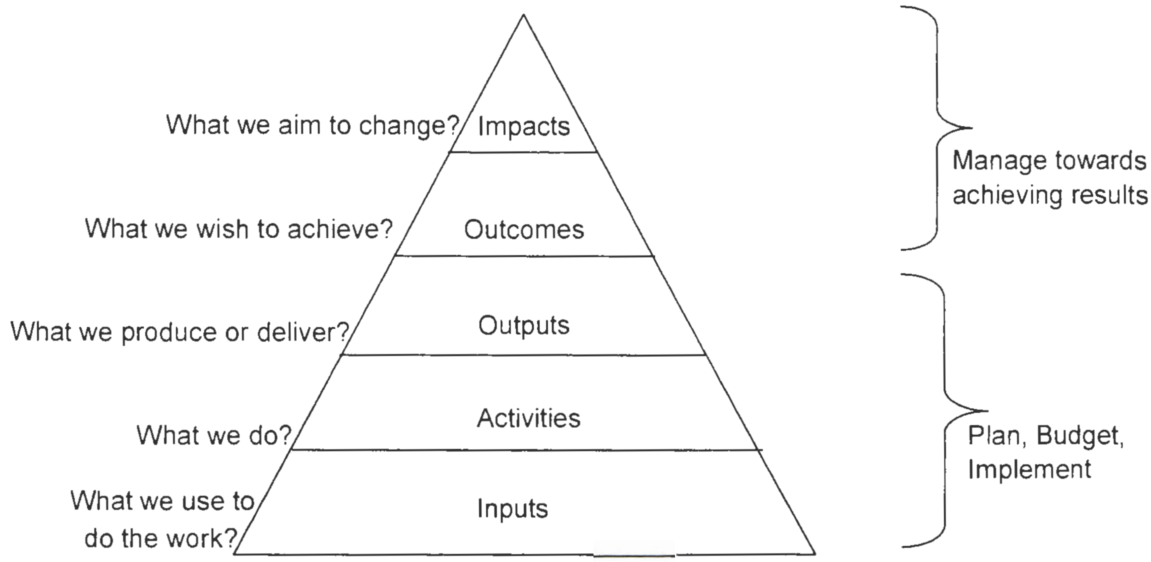
The methods and approaches for monitoring and evaluation are complementary. Some have broad applicability while others are quite narrow in their uses. What is important is the uses for which M&E is intended as well as the main stakeholders who have an interest in the M&E findings (World Bank, 2004:5). Examples of these methods and approaches include the following:

- **The logical framework approach** – according to the World Bank (2004:8), the logical framework (LogFrame) helps to clarify objectives of any project, programme or policy. It aids in the identification of the expected causal links in the following results chain – inputs, process, outcomes and impact. Used dynamically, the LogFrame is an effective tool to guide implementation, monitoring and evaluation. However, if not updated during implementation, it can be a static tool that does not reflect changing conditions.

In government, the effective evaluation of its programmes requires careful analysis of the key factors that are relevant to the successful delivery of the programme and how these relate to each other. The PSC (2008:39) seems to confirm the above explanation by the World Bank that in order to do this, a logic model, which is an analytical method to break down a programme into logical components to facilitate its evaluation, is utilised. The logic model helps to explain the relationship between means (were the means to achieve the objectives appropriate and were they competently implemented?) and ends (have the objectives of the programme been achieved?) and it consists of the hierarchy of inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts.

(PSC, 2008:42) figure 2.1 depicts the components of the logic model and therefore the flow of monitoring and evaluation activities:

Figure 2.1: Components of the logic model



Source: (PSC, 2008:42)

Based on the concepts used in the logic model at figure 2.1 above, it therefore follows that it would be impossible to effectively carry out monitoring and evaluation without including the following key concepts:

- **Goal or objective** – a description of the aim or purpose of an activity.

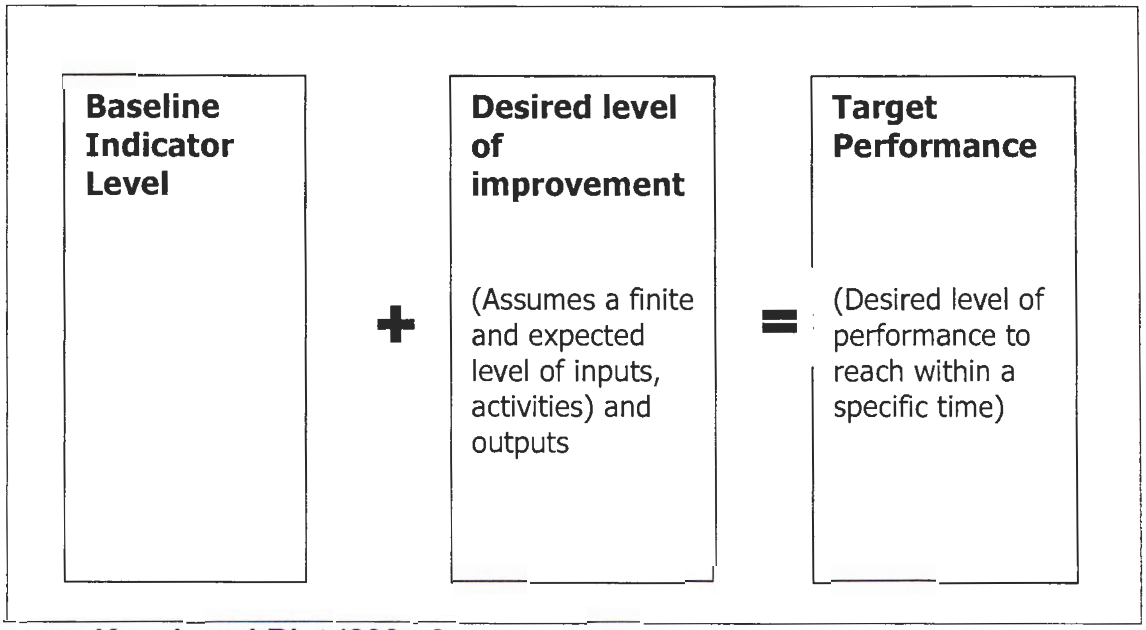
- **Indicator** – qualitative or quantitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention or to help assess the performance of a development factor (Kusek and Rist, 2004:226). It is also important that an indicator is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time bound (SMART) (www.bond.org.uk)

- **Target** – whilst the indicator defines how performance will be measured along a scale or dimension, targets express a specific level of performance that the institution, programme or individual aims to achieve within a given period (PSC, 2008:49). Kusek and Rist (2004:90) seem to be in agreement when they define a target as a specified objective that indicates the number, timing and location of that which is to be realised. Targets are the quantifiable levels of the indicators that a country, society or organisation wants to achieve by a given time.

- **Baseline** – the current performance levels that an institution aims to improve when setting performance targets. A baseline is also a measurement of the current societal conditions that a government programme of action aims to improve (PSC, 2004:49).

It is postulated by Kusek and Rist (2004:91) that one method to establish targets is to start with the baseline indicator level and include the desired level of improvement (taking into consideration available resources over a specific time period) to arrive at the performance target. Figure 2.2 below shows the process for devising performance targets:

Figure 2.2: The process for devising performance targets



Source: Kusek and Rist (2004:91)

According to Kusek and Rist (2004:91), there are a number of important factors to consider when selecting performance indicator targets. One factor is the importance of taking baselines seriously. There must be a clear understanding of the baseline starting point, i.e. previous performance should be considered in projecting new performance targets.

Another consideration in setting targets is the expected funding and resource levels – existing capacity, budgets, personnel, funding resources, facilities and the like – throughout the target period. Finally, other than being aware of the political games that are sometimes played, it is equally important that a certain level of flexibility is exercised in setting targets because internal and external resources may be cut or diminished during budgetary cycles (Kusek and Rist, 2004:92).

The other methods and approaches, as explained by the World Bank (2004:22) are discussed hereunder:

- **Impact evaluation** – is defined as the systematic identification of the effects caused by a given development activity such as a programme or project. These are good in that lessons for improving designs and the management of future activities can be drawn from impact evaluations. They also assist in strengthening accountability for results.

- **Participatory methods** – seeks to actively involve all those with a stake in a project, programme or strategy in decision-making and it therefore generates a sense of ownership in the M&E results and recommendations (World Bank, ibid: 16). This method enhances learning, management capacity and skills. It furthermore provides timely, reliable information for management decision-making. However, the World Bank (ibid) is quick to point out that the method has the potential for domination and misuse by some stakeholders to further their own interests.

- **Results-Based Management** – whilst Kusek and Rist (2004:19) purport that M&E is a powerful public management tool that can be used by government and stakeholders for formulating and justifying budgetary requests, the PSC (2008:44) quickly points out that the emphasis in programme evaluation is not only on whether government Departments have undertaken their mandated activities, accountable spending of the budgets associated with those activities and whether all applicable laws have been complied with, but on the results achieved by those activities in relation to government objectives like safety, employment and development. The PSC report (ibid) further defines results-based management as a management strategy focussing on performance and achievement of outputs, outcomes and impacts.

  Results-based M&E has in fact been successfully designed and used to monitor and evaluate projects, programmes and policies at all levels. Furthermore, the information and data collected can be analysed at any and all levels to provide feedback at many points in time (Kusek and Rist, 2004: 17). In this way, the information can be used to better inform key decision-makers, the general public and other stakeholders.

  In short, with the growing need for accountability and demonstrable results, the use and applications for results-based M&E systems have also grown to include internal and external applications, knowledge capital, transparency and accountability, the technical side of M&E (i.e. building institutional capacity), as well as the political side of M&E.

- **Theory-based evaluation** – has similarities to the LogFrame approach but allows a much more in-depth understanding of the workings of a programme or activity. By mapping out the determining or causal factors judged important for success and how they might interact, it can then be decided which steps should be monitored as the programme develops. This allows for the identification of the critical success factors and where the data shows that these factors have not been achieved, a reasonable conclusion may the reached that such a programme is less likely to be successful in achieving its objectives.

According to the World Bank, whilst one of the advantages of the theory-based evaluation is that it provides the basis to assess the likely impacts of programmes, it can easily become overly complex if the scale of activities is large or if an exhaustive list of factors and assumptions is assembled.

2.5 M&E in South African institutions and their roles

Cabinet has mandated the Governance and Administration (G & A) Cluster of the Forum of South Africa's Directors-General to construct an overarching government wide M&E System (PSC report, 2008:11). The system is envisaged to function in two ways:

- It should provide an integrated, encompassing framework for M&E principles, practices and standards to be used throughout government; and
- It should function as an apex-level information system which draws from the component systems in the framework to deliver useful M&E products for its users.

According to the PSC (2008:13), many institutions have overlapping roles to play in M&E and these include the following:

- **The Presidency** – the Presidency supports the President to give central direction to government policy. In this regard, the Presidency is a key role player in compiling the Medium Term Strategic Framework and the Government Programme of Action. The Presidency then monitors the implementation of key government priorities.

- **National Treasury** – the National Treasury supports the Minister of Finance to determine fiscal policy and it must therefore closely monitor a range of economic indicators. Specific strategic objectives, indicators and targets are set in the Estimates of Expenditure and the National Treasury plays a key role in monitoring performance against the set objectives, including whether expenditure has achieved value for money

- **Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA)** – responsible for the macro-organisation of the public service and for the development of policy on the functioning of the public service. It is further responsible for Human Resource Management (HRM) policy, the determination of conditions of service for the public service, the development of regulations, norms and standards for information promotion of a public service that conforms to all values governing public administration listed in section 195 of the Constitution. As such, DPSA must monitor and evaluate the performance of the public service, especially from the perspective of sound HRM.

- **Department of Provincial Local Government and Housing (DPLG) –** The Department develops policy on the structure and functioning of provincial and local government and as such, monitors and evaluates the performance of provincial and local government.

- **Statistics South Africa (Stats SA)** – it manages the national statistics system that collects, analyses and publishes a range of demographic, social and economic statistics hence it is critical that it has a sound and sophisticated base of reliable statistics, planning of government services and M&E.

- **South African Management Development Institute (SAMDI)** – providers of training in monitoring and evaluation for the public service.

- **Provincial Departments** – these are the offices of the Premier and provincial Treasuries. Key strategic objectives for the province are set in the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy as well as in the Provincial Government Programme of Action.

- **Constitutional Institutions** – these institutions conduct M&E independently from government and do not report to the Executive but to Parliament. As a result, they may arrive at different conclusions about the performance of government and the public service and therefore may bring different analyses and insights to bear on public policy. These institutions are:

  - **Auditor-General (AG)** – its role is to audit the accounts and financial statements of national and provincial Departments, including municipalities and any other government institution or accounting entity. The AG does financial, regulatory and performance audits.

  - **Human Rights Commission** – it monitors and evaluates the extent to which human rights are observed in South Africa.

  - **Public Service Commission (PSC)** – it has the constitutionally prescribed function to promote the values and principles governing public administration, listed in section 195 of the Constitution, in the public service. It must further monitor and evaluate the organisation and administration of the public service and can propose measures to improve the performance of the public service. It must also provide Parliament with an evaluation of the extent to which the values and principles governing public administration have been complied with.

2.6 Background and theoretical overview of the Public Service Commission's M&E System

Most of the projects run by the PSC were specially commissioned studies. Whilst useful and valuable, they did not provide broad, strategic information on the performance of public service organisations. Also, since they usually do not involve repeat studies, they are of limited use in assessing whether the situation in Departments is improving, deteriorating or staying the same.

Furthermore, because the PSC projects mainly look at specific issues in particular Departments, it is difficult to compare and contrast performance across Departments and to therefore get a sense of how they are being managed in comparison to each other.

Based on the above and in pursuit of its Constitutional mandate, the PSC staff agreed to investigate the need for a monitoring system that would look at the same issues in all Departments, in order to draw comparisons, identify and promote areas of good practice and that areas in which Departments may be struggling could be identified and additional support provided (Sing, 2004:3).

The PSC derives its mandate from sections 195 and 196 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). Its functions are, amongst others to:

- promote the values and principles of public administration as set out in the Constitution;
- investigate, monitor and evaluate the organization, administration and personnel practices of the Public Service;
- propose measures to ensure effective and efficient performance within the public service.

As a result of this mandate, the dynamic relationship between M&E as a field and the environment within which the PSC operates has shaped the particular approach that the PSC has taken towards its M&E programme.

2.7 PSC's M&E Criteria

Chapter 10 section 195(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, lists nine values and principles that govern the public service. Section 196(4) (a) gives the PSC powers to monitor and evaluate the extent to which public service Departments comply with these values and principles. A brief explanation of these Constitutional values and principles is given below:

- **A high standard of professional ethics** – this principle is pivotal to build ethical conduct and inspires confidence in the public service as an institution competent for executing government policy and the objectives of a developmental state.

- **Efficient, economic and effective use of resources** – Departments must utilise resources effectively and economically to deliver a service (i.e. for Departments to perform in this area, their expenditure must be in accordance with their budget and their objectives must be achieved).

- **Development-oriented public administration** – Individual Departments must ensure that within their respective mandates they drive a development orientated programme, thus contributing to the national effort of government to alleviate poverty.

- **Provision of services in an impartial, fair, equitable and unbiased manner** – by introducing a key transformative legislation, the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, Act 3 of 2000, this principle goes to the heart of the decision-making process of government. It calls for Departments to act in a procedurally fair and just manner and therefore account for any administrative action they make. People are given the right to ask for reasons for Departmental actions and the right to have such decisions reviewed in court.

- **Participation in policy-making and responsive to people's needs** – in terms of this principle, policy-making is a participative and consensus model that also takes into cognisance the fact that public participation is more likely to produce solutions that are sustainable. This principle therefore requires that the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making processes.

- **Accountability** – for Departments to perform in this area, adequate internal control measures must be exerted over all Departmental financial transactions and fraud prevention plans based on thorough risk assessment must be in place and implemented. This principle, just like the one on transparency as well as the one on impartiality and fairness, serves to entrench a culture of accountability in the public service. By ensuring accountability, citizens are able to exercise their democratic rights in keeping the institution of public service honest and competent.

- **Transparency** – this principle requires of Departments to provide the public with timely, accessible and accurate information. Departments' annual reports are the key documents by which transparency can be enhanced, provided that they comply with the key requirement of annual reporting on actual achievement against pre-determined objectives as well as the provisions of the Promotion of Access to information Act, Act 2 of 2000 (PAIA).

- **Good human resource management and career development practices to maximise human potential** – it is required of Departments to adhere to this principle in order to ensure a competent public service corps which is essential to supporting the policies of government.

- **Public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people** - for Departments to perform in this area, their employment practices must be based on ability, objectivity, fairness and the need to redress the imbalances of the past in order to achieve broad representation. This principle is critical to the South African context to ensure that the public service reflects the demography of the country and the richness of its diversity.

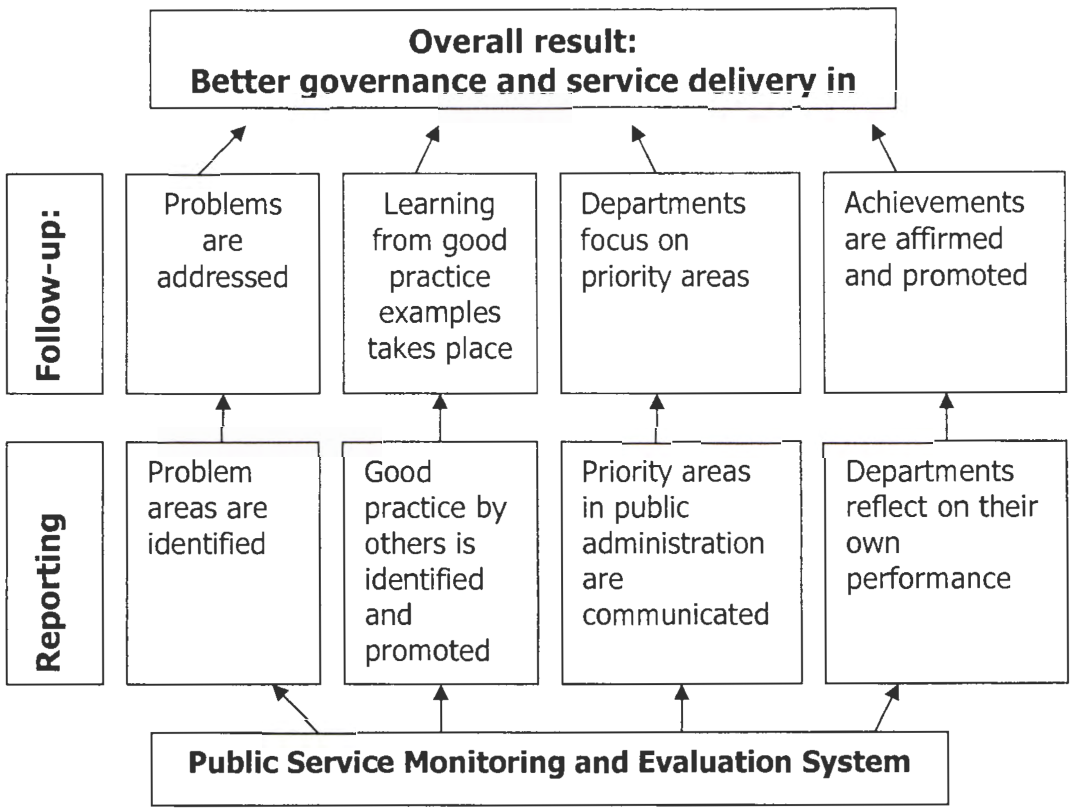
The PSC had, over the years, noted with concern a common mistake made by many government structures when designing and installing new systems. These are often approached in a highly technical way with very ambitious plans being driven too far, too fast and often based on unrealistic expectations of what information technology can achieve. These projects then often fail to deliver their intended results, usually as a result of a lack of clarity regarding outputs, outcomes as well as underlying business processes.

Having gone through a number of different phases (e.g. a readiness assessment, identification of performance indicators, designing an assessment framework, getting Cabinet approval), the PSC's M&E system was then set up in such a manner that, using the nine Constitutional values and principles, it gathers information that can be used to identify areas needing attention and to therefore achieve a specific set of intended objectives, thereby ultimately contributing to improved public service delivery and good governance.

2.7.1 PSC's M&E process

The figure below is a logic model which demonstrates how the results explained above are to be achieved.

Figure 2.3: The logic model of the PSC's M&E system



Source: Levin and Naidoo (2006:4)

2.8 The PSC's M&E system framework

Depending on the intended focus of the monitoring, different monitoring frameworks may be designed. For example, monitoring from a financial management perspective may include monitoring of expenditure against budget or whether financial prescripts and controls are adhered to. On the other hand, monitoring from the perspective of programme or service delivery performance involves the monitoring of performance against pre-set objectives, indicators and targets, which is the approach of the PSC M&E system or framework.

This framework uses the nine values and principles listed in section 195 of the Constitution. The approach that is currently being utilized by the PSC is to define a performance indicator for each of the nine Constitutional values and principles and then assess performance in terms of that indicator. A key element of this system is the choice of the performance indicator used to illustrate how a Department is performing in terms of a particular principle (Diphofa and Naidoo, 2005:4).

The current indicators are an outcome of a pilot study of this compliance M&E system in the Northern Cape Province during the 2001/2002 financial year. The pilot phase proved to be particularly instructive. It showed among other things that trying to have many indicators for each principle has its weaknesses in that the process becomes too long, cumbersome and obscure. As a result, it was agreed that as a start, there would be a single performance indicator for each principle and a scoring system by which Departmental performance could be quantified.

The indicators chosen are quantifiable, easily researched and offer insight into practices more broadly. The table below shows the indicators used for each of the Constitutional principles:

Table 2.1: Constitutional Principles and Performance Indicators

CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLE	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
1. A high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained.	• Cases of misconduct are dealt with effectively and promptly
2. Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted.	• Expenditure is according to budget and programme objectives are achieved.
3. Public administration must be development oriented.	• The Department effectively implements development programmes that aim to alleviate poverty.
4. Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and	• The Department is making a concerted effort to move towards compliance with

CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLE	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
without bias.	the Provisions of the Administrative Justice Act (PAJA).
5. People's needs must be responded to and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy making.	• The Department facilitates public participation in policy making.
6. Public administration must be accountable.	• Adequate internal control is exerted over all Departmental financial transactions. • Fraud prevention plans, based on thorough risk assessments, are in place and are implemented.
7. Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information.	• The Departmental annual report meets the required standard and thereby facilitates transparency.
8. Good human resource management and career development practices, to maximize human potential, must be cultivated.	• Vacant posts are filled in a timely and effective manner. • The Department complies with the provisions of the Skills Development Act (SDA).
9. 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.	• Departments are representative of the South African people and diversity management measures are implemented.

Source: M&E presentation to the North West Province (2004:3)

Both Diphofa and Naidoo (2005:5) state that the indicators were selected on the basis that:

- the area illustrated by the indicator is critically important and issues in the management need to be noted (i.e. researching the area sends a clear message to Departments about its importance in public service management and administration); and

- while the performance indicated through the research cannot lead to a simple generalisation to the rest of the public service, it is at least indicative of important patterns of performance in terms of the particular principle it focuses on.

The following example explains how the indicators are applied in practice.

The first Constitutional principle states that "a high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained". For this principle, the chosen indicator is: "Cases of misconduct are dealt with effectively and promptly." The manner in which cases of misconduct are handled is very illuminating. Departments that allow these cases to drag on for long periods of time, or that have low incidences of pursuing cases and are lenient on 'wrongdoers' can be seen to be insufficiently addressing professional ethics in the workplace. The manner in which these cases are addressed is also a matter that is covered by regulations and records should be easily accessible, making it an easily researched performance indicator. The system checks that:

- a procedure is in place for reporting, recording and managing misconduct cases;

- cases are responded to promptly and finalised; and

- the Department has adequate capacity to handle misconduct cases.

Choosing performance indicators is a challenge, and is a contested terrain. In the PSC's M&E system, it should be noted that the indicator is **not the principle, but points to the principle**. In other words, while the indicator conveys certain information about the principle, it does not equal the principle.

Another important step was to identify and list the assumptions that underpin the conceptual chain linking principles to indicators and indicators to standards. This ensures that researchers understand why they are looking for certain things and why they are important (Sing, 2004:6).

Following a successful piloting of this M&E system in three Departments in the Northern Cape Province, it has now been implemented annually in both national and provincial Departments. In the North West Province in particular, the system has already been implemented in nine Departments between 2003 and 2007 financial years, in the following order:

Table 2.2: PSC M&E evaluation conducted in the North West provincial departments

Name of Department	Year reviewed	Research Cycle
1. Finance 2. Office of the Premier	2002/2003	2004/2005
1. Social Development 2. Health	2003/2004	2004/2005
1. Developmental Local Government & Housing 2. Transport, Roads and Community Safety	2004/2005	2005/2006

Name of Department	Year reviewed	Research Cycle
1. Economic Development and Tourism	2005/2006	2006/2007
1. Public Works 2. Sport, Arts and Culture	2006/2007	2007/2008

2.9 Process for implementing the PSC's M&E System

Just as building must begin with a foundation, constructing an M&E system must begin with a foundation of a readiness assessment. Without an understanding of the foundation, moving forward may be fraught with difficulties and, ultimately, failure (Kusek and Rist, 2004:23).

The ten-step model to designing, building and sustaining a results-based M&E system as recommended by Kusek and Rist (ibid: 24) is presented below:

- Conducting a readiness assessment
- Agreeing on outcomes to monitor and evaluate
- Selecting Key Indicators to monitor outcomes
- Baseline data on indicators – Where are we today?
- Planning for improvement – Selecting results targets
- Monitoring for results
- The role of evaluations
- Reporting findings
- Using findings
- Sustaining the M&E system within the organisation

The above steps can be used for projects, programmes and policies. Also, one can move back and forth along the steps, or work on several simultaneously.

The first three phases followed by the PSC have already been explained above. Since the framework has been approved, Diphofa and Naidoo (2005:7) that the process for implementing the PSC's M&E system, which has been used for a number of years now, is as follows:

- forwarding of letters to introduce the researchers and the system;
- meeting with or workshop senior officials of participating departments to explain and introduce the system;
- data collection and preparation of draft report;
- submission of draft report to department for comments;
- incorporation of comments
- finalisation and submission of report

The steps outlined above led to a situation where participation was being reduced in some instances, to a formalistic exchange of letters and in others, to debates with Departments about how the scores were arrived at. In some instances, Departments would refuse to own up to the findings of the research. Based on this experience, two important steps have been added (to be effected during the 2006/2007 phase) to the process viz:-

- workshopping of draft report; and
- presenting the report to an appropriate forum of the Department that was evaluated.

The addition of these two steps is informed by the need to ensure that the process of M&E (and not just the output) is given due attention. Previously, the process did not provide for enough active engagement between the researcher and Department. The process, it is hoped, will provide for a rich engagement with Departments and thus promote the building of a rapport between the Commission and Departments.

There is a need by the PSC to introduce a phase where there is follow-up with Departments where M&E has already been conducted to check whether these Departments do implement the recommendations made by the PSC and whether these result in the improvement of service delivery. In this manner, there will be sustainability of the system within an organisation.

Used properly, M&E systems can lead to greater accountability and transparency, improved performance and generation of knowledge, which are the intended results for better governance and service delivery in South Africa.

2.10 Key problems and challenges in implementing M&E practices

South Africa faces a number of challenges in developing and implementing M&E systems and practices. One of these relates to post evaluation usage. Use, as Patton (1997:20) has argued, is not an “abstraction”, but “concerns how real people in the real world apply evaluation findings”. The imperative to become utilisation oriented and useful should not override the recognition that evaluation causes tension and uncertainty in organisations, because it is “an intervention that causes ripples in the life of an institution”.

Treading the delicate balance between imposition and providing ‘developmental advice’ has been a huge challenge for the PSC in exercising its mandate. The tensions have been exacerbated by the PSC’s history as the erstwhile overarching public administration policy-maker and implementation agency. Moreover, the culture of utilisation-oriented monitoring and evaluation to help organisations learn has not yet been entrenched (Levin and Naidoo, 2005:1)

In addition to developing a public service M&E system, the PSC also undertakes a variety of evaluation research in order to provide advice to national and provincial organs of state on public management and administration. In effect, the PSC has established a differentiated M&E programme, which addresses various evaluation needs from a diverse group of users. Both quantitative and qualitative data is produced, and several innovative methodologies, including participation and appreciative inquiry, are used. This differentiated approach recognises that it will be some time before a standardised data set covering all aspects of government performance can be produced.

According to Levin and Naidoo (op.cit:2), the PSC has, for example, undertaken in-depth qualitative evaluations on the national housing subsidy as well as the structure and organisation of the national department of Transport and the creation of alternative transport agencies and reports have been produced. Examples of the reports that have been produced by the PSC are:

- Report on the evaluation of Housing Subsidy Scheme (2003);
- Report on the evaluation of the Department of transport and its agencies (2003); and
- Report on evaluation of service delivery innovation of the creation of agencies at the Department of Transport (2003).

The response to these and other evaluations as well as the uptake of recommendations has varied. According to the report, in the case of the housing subsidy, many of the recommendations were in fact echoed in the results of a PSC-driven citizen satisfaction survey. There has, however, been little interaction post-evaluation between the PSC and the Departments, making it difficult to gauge the extent to which the evaluation findings were used.

In the case of the Department of Transport evaluations, follow up activities suggest that the Department did embrace some of the recommendations pertaining to organisational structure. This included a suggestion for the establishment of a monitoring capacity within the department to assess policy impact. Recommendations on accountability of alternative service delivery agencies created within the transport sector are in line with broader proposals on state-owned enterprises and public entities, being handled by the Governance and Administration cluster (Levin and Naidoo, 2005:2).

According to Levin and Naidoo (ibid:2), these examples suggest that South Africa still has some way to go in embracing a culture that facilitates high quality M&E. They suggest that there is an uneven response to evaluation, as well as a need for greater coordination of effort. At any given time, it is likely that there will be a number of initiatives that coincide and that would have greater impact if better coordinated. Coordination and integration in government is a global challenge for all states, affecting a range of programmes, services and activities.

Other challenges relate to the building of state capability and capacity for M&E. Capability refers to the appropriate alignment of institutions, systems and procedures, while capacity refers to the development of the necessary human resources to implement evaluation. Levin and Naidoo (ibid:2) are of the opinion that each government Department should ideally develop both evaluation capability and capacity. This involves appropriate internal institutional arrangements as well as developing the requisite skills for M&E. In addition, it is necessary to develop a national capability and capacity to implement government-wide monitoring and evaluation systems.

2.11 Main drivers of the evaluation agenda within and outside government

As stated in the background, there has been a growing emphasis on the importance of M&E since 1994. This is based on the understanding that in order for democracy to work, support is needed for processes and institutions that promote transparency, accountability and efficiency. Various pieces of legislation, for example the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000 and the Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000, supported this shift from a largely secretive and regulated past, towards a more open and flexible system of governance (Levin and Naidoo, 2005:3).

The two further purport that within civil society, many of the institutions and organs of society that provided a critique of apartheid, including Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and universities, were faced with the challenge of providing constructive policy advice. In several instances key personnel from these organisations assumed senior positions in government, whilst the new democratic state also began to work more formally with some of these organisations. From 1995 government began to establish M&E components within Departments. These components had to identify their roles and develop systems, in some cases supported by donors who provided funding and skills. Progress was uneven across departments and limited by the absence of a coherent and overarching M&E framework.

The Department of Provincial and Local Government commissioned a study in 2000 that looked at the status of monitoring in the South African anti-poverty programmes. The study is now outdated, but its major findings and observations remain valid. It acknowledges widespread recognition of the need for effective M&E and noted that most national departments had newly established monitoring systems. Staff had in many instances also recently been appointed to work on these systems although concern was expressed about the adequacy of the training provided to them (Levin and Naidoo, ibid:3). It emphasized that few provincial officials involved in M&E are properly trained. Even though paradoxical in some instances, provincial M&E is more sophisticated than that undertaken in national Departments.

Most government Departments have designed their own M&E systems, often using consultants and also drawing on support from other government structures.

This makes it advisable to develop a national framework drawing on the existing systems already in place rather than to attempt the creation of a single national system. However, the level of sophistication of Departments' systems is related to the strength of the political will driving M&E in departments. SAMEA (2005:26) gives the following synopsis of three main categories of national Departments:

- **Departments with a strong orientation towards M&E**

  - **Department of Housing** – has a statutory requirement to establish a data bank. It has done so by means of the Housing and Urbanisation Information System (HUIS), as well as other data bases.

  - **Department of Land Affairs** – there is a strong political commitment to learn from the lessons drawn from the monitoring of ESTA, the Land Data Base and Quality of Life report.

  - **Department of Public Works** – has recently invested a lot of time and effort in piloting a monitoring programme, which will be rolled out to provincial levels soon.

  - **Department of Labour** – there is a strong political will in the Department to use information yielded by the LMSDP system and to enhance the "uptake" of information in management decisions. The Ministry's 15-point Programme of Action stipulates that the Department will improve its capacity to monitor the impact of its policies.

  - **Department of Provincial and Local Government** – there is a strong political will to learn from the lessons in the Local Economic Development (LED) and Consolidated Municipal Infrastructure Programmes (CMIP). CMIP is a high priority programme and senior decision-makers take an active interest in its progress.

- **Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism** – the Project Management Unit and the monitoring system are driven from the top, showing strong support for the monitoring system. it is seen as critical for project success. Resources will continue to be made available.

- **Department of Trade and Industry** – the data system for the SMME Development Programme is regarded as both reliable and useful and the Department is expected to ensure continued support for it.

- **Department of Water Affairs and Forestry** – information on progress in delivering physical infrastructure is regarded as very effective and is extremely used. The Department however, is grappling with monitoring impacts on communities, including intangible community benefits (e.g. entrepreneurship and leadership)

- **Departments with inadequate M&E systems but a growing commitment to improvement**

  - **Department of Health** – the Department is only just beginning to implement a coherent monitoring system that will eventually link all the directorates together and thereby allow for a far more systematic approach to monitoring in the Department. At present, mountains of reports are generated on a monthly basis and so it is not surprising that monitoring within the Department of Health is not as efficient as it should be.

  - **Department of Education** – there is a strong political will to improve both monitoring and evaluation. However, a great deal will depend on provincial capacity to implement this.

- **Department of Social Development** – consultants have been commissioned to develop a set of monitoring instruments for the R203m Poverty alleviation fund allocation.

- **Departments with weak or no M&E systems.**

  - **Department of Agriculture** – at present, there is virtually no monitoring. However, there is a strong political will to introduce a monitoring and evaluation system at national level and AUSAID is set to assist the Department.

  - **Department of Transport** – there is no capacity to verify or process data received from independent agencies.

Building alignment with provincial M&E systems remains a challenge, while the task of integrating with local government systems has not even been considered yet. Given that local authorities will soon become part of the public service, integration and coordination of systems and the standardization of key features such as performance indicators, performance standards, all need to be addressed.

Monitoring is generally undertaken to promote financial accountability but there is a widespread failure to address issues of impact or effectiveness. Where programme content is reflected in monitoring systems, it usually takes the form of records of events undertaken, rather than reporting on outputs or outcomes. Measuring impact is one of the more sophisticated and difficult aspects of M&E. There is still inadequate awareness of the need to carefully measure the impact of Departmental work on service users and to critically assess what the overall benefits are. The South African Treasury and the Auditor-General appear to have succeeded in ensuring that Departments monitor financial expenditure, and this needs to be extended to performance management and impact assessment (Levin and Naidoo, 2005:4).

Monitoring activities are often not integrated into programme and project management activities and project level staff still often see monitoring as a burden, required by senior levels who want forms filled in, rather than as a useful implementation management tool. The people responsible for M&E are often not those responsible for implementation and this division will have to be overcome in time. An exacerbating factor is that M&E is rarely budgeted for, so project staff members are often reluctant to spend more than the minimal time inputting data and operating systems.

There does however, still appear to be a growing awareness of the importance of effective M&E and a growing commitment to addressing the shortcomings of existing systems. Within civil society, academic institutions have had to respond to the country's transformation agenda. New policies required skills, which could not be provided within the framework of existing institutional structures and programmes. Accordingly, new courses on public management have been developed that include modules on M&E.

The South African media has also played a role by raising public consciousness about evaluation, through the production of several report cards and assessments. This has promoted a public awareness and discourse on evaluation. A further development outside government is that of the Evaluation Network (EVALNET). This focuses mainly on training. According to Levin and Naidoo (op.cit:4), several key trainers have been brought in offering exposure to both government officials and university personnel. The EVALNET also serves as a forum for networking and discussion. A WebSite and Listserve helps to keep a growing evaluation community within the country informed. The Development Bank of Southern Africa and the World Bank are other institutions that have actively promoted M&E and they do this, amongst others, with on-going training programmes.

The cluster on Governance and Administration remains the key driver of the M&E agenda within the South African government at present. This structure brings together the key role players in the broad governance area. These include the Presidency, the Department of Public Service and Administration, National Treasury, Statistics South Africa, the Department of Provincial and Local Government and the Public Service Commission.

In his 2003 State of the Nation address to Parliament, the President identified M&E as a government priority. Accordingly, the Governance and Administration cluster had to prioritise M&E for the second decade of freedom and began developing a strategy to implement a government-wide framework.

2.12 Conclusion

Chapter two looked at the theoretical overview and review of literature on monitoring and evaluation, its tools, methods and approaches. It then introduced the reader to the monitoring and evaluation system that is utilised by the Public Service Commission in measuring the Departments' level of compliance with the nine constitutional values and principles as enshrined in chapter 10, section 195 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa,1996. The chapter ended by giving a synopsis of the level of sophistication of Departments' M&E systems and a discussion of the main challenges experienced by Departments in the implementation of M&E. Chapter will focus on the definition of research; research design; research methodology and the different sampling techniques.

CHAPTER THREE:

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter gave a theoretical overview and review of literature on monitoring and evaluation, its tools, methods and approaches. In this chapter, the research design as well as the methodology or procedure that were utilised to accomplish the aims and objectives of this study, are be discussed. The chapter in particular, covers the following areas: definition of research; research design; research methodology (i.e. the different techniques for collecting data) and the different sampling techniques.

3.2 Research defined

Whilst research has been defined by different authors in many different ways, there appears to be agreement with the definition by Hussey and Hussey (1997:1) that research is a process of enquiry and investigation, it is systematic, methodological and it increases knowledge. This definition is expanded by other authors like Leedy and Ormrod (2005:4) when they define research as the systematic process of collecting and analysing information (data) in order to increase our understanding of the phenomenon about which one is concerned or interested. Often, researchers use a systematic approach when they collect and interpret information to solve the small problems of daily living.

What is important to remember at all times is that the research process is not a clear-cut sequence of procedures following a neat pattern but a messy interaction between the conceptual and empirical world. Furthermore, Bechhofer (1979:54) purports that both management and research activities require decisions on what to do, followed by a planning stage concerned with making judgements about ways of collecting valid information to address issues. Finally, information gathered will need to be analysed, assessed and then action must be taken.

3.3 Research design

Research design refers to the overall plan which includes every aspect of a proposed research study from the conceptualisation of the problem right through to the dissemination of the findings (Grinnell, 1988:219). It is a plan of how to proceed in determining the nature of the relationship between variables. This process, according to Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:65), is often described as research management or planning and constitutes the backbone of exploratory research.

Cooper and Schindler (2005:126) define research design as the plan and structure of investigation so conceived as to obtain answers to research questions. They propose the following as the essentials of research design:

- An activity and time-based plan;
- Outlines procedures for every research activity;
- A framework for specifying the relationships among the study's variables;
- Always based on the research question(s); and
- Guides the selection of sources and types of information.

A research design is, according to Hussey and Hussey (1997:20), a plan which specifies how research participants will be obtained and what is going to be done to them with a view to reaching conclusions about a research problem or research question. The research design constitutes the blueprint for the collection measurement and analysis of data and encompasses the research problem questions emanating from the problem itself. The investigative questions would then follow from the main question. In this study, the researcher endeavoured to select a research design that would answer the research questions as accurately, objectively and as validly as it is possible.

3.4 Types of research designs

Every project requires a research design that is carefully tailored to the exact needs of the researcher as well as the problem. Of the many different designs that have been developed by social scientists over the years, there are only a few of those that are most frequently used. Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:67) cites three categories of research designs which can be distinguished and classified by the level of scientific rigour in proving the cause-and-effect relationship. These categories are:

- **The pre-experimental designs** – these are the least adequate in terms of scientific rigour and are thus least likely to establish a clear cause cause-and-effect relationship.

- **Quasi-experimental designs** – designs which do not meet the exacting criteria of experimental designs but which manage to approximate experimental conditions. Although these designs have fewer requirements than the experimental designs, they can achieve a similar level of scientific rigour.

- **Experimental designs** – these are the most rigorous of all the designs and have strict requirements. They are rigorous in that they are strictly exact and accurate. They were developed prior to quasi-experimental designs and were developed to accommodate the constraints of social reality that would be accounted for, for using quasi-experimental designs. Furthermore, all experimental designs are characterised by their use of randomisation in order to create two or more equivalent groups.

3.5 Research methodology

Methodology is the science of finding out (Babbie, 2002:6). It involves the assumptions and values that serve as a rationale for the research and the standards or criteria the researcher used for interpreting data of research conclusions. Methodology includes the method of data collection, sampling analysis and analysis of data.

There are many different methods of collecting data. According to Reid (1984:9), data may be collected through questionnaires, interviews, observations of direct interaction and using available materials such as case records and statistical data. In addition, literature review and experience surveys can also be used to gather available data.

In collecting primary data, the researcher has a choice of using different research instruments. In this study, the following **data collection methods** were implemented in gathering data:

- **Document study or Literature review**

A literature review is a summary of previous research on a topic. Literature reviews can be either a part of a larger report of a research project, a thesis or a bibliographic essay that is published separately in a scholarly journal (www.library.ncat.edu/ref).

The purpose of a literature review is to convey to the reader what knowledge and ideas have been established on a topic and what are the strengths and weaknesses of that topic. The literature review allows the reader to be brought up to date regarding the state of research in the field and familiarizes the reader with any contrasting perspectives and viewpoints on the topic. There are good reasons for beginning a literature review before starting a research paper. These reasons include:

- To see what has and has not been investigated;
- To develop general explanation for observed variations in a behavior or phenomenon;
- To identify potential relationships between concepts and to identify researchable hypotheses;
- To learn how others have defined and measured key concepts;
- To identify data sources that other researches have used;
- To develop alternative research projects; and
- To discover how a research project is related to the work of others.

- **Questionnaires**

A questionnaire is a common research instrument which comprises a series of questions that are filled by all participants in a given sample. It is defined by Payne and Payne (2004:186) as the printed set of questions to be answered by respondents, either through face-to-face interviews or self-completion, as a tested, structured, clearly presented and systematic means of collecting data. The use of a questionnaire as a means of collecting data is preferred because according to Mogotsi (1996:10), data lie buried deep within the minds or within the attitudes, feelings or reactions of men and women and a questionnaire is an instrument that could, be used to observe beyond physical reach.

In this study, a questionnaire was developed and administered by the researcher as a means of collection of data. The questions asked in the questionnaire were informed by the aim and objectives, as well as the assumptions of the study as discussed in chapter one.

A combination of close-ended as well as open-ended type of questions was used in designing the questionnaire. Data triangulation was used to enhance the validity of the data sources used such as Departmental policy documents. In this data triangulation, different types of data (both written and oral) were used in order to improve the validity of the data. This method of triangulation was preferred over other methods due to its ability to analyse data with much ease (i.e. from the close-ended questions, one can immediately get the statistics and at the same time, from the open-ended questions one is able to give a narration to the statistics). This is confirmed by Flick (2006:24) when he says that triangulation combines several methods and gives them equal relevance.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections. The first section was about the biographical details of the respondents and was therefore be very short. The last three sections were designed in such a manner as to measure the participant's level of understanding of what M&E is all about (in relation to the nine Constitutional principles), its impact and how it can add value to improved service delivery and lead to good governance. Once the target group was systematically randomly selected from the senior managers' list which will be obtained from the Department of Finance, the participants will be given introductory letters of the study as well as the questionnaire to complete, with a specified time frame. Since there was a serious disadvantage that not all questionnaires were returned, the researcher made follow-ups with the participants in order to ensure a 100% response rate and to therefore make a meaningful assessment.

As part of the follow-up, quality assurance was also conducted as questionnaires were received. In order to ensure quality, the researcher:

- Checked that questionnaires were fully completed (i.e. all items are filled out);

- Checked whether answers were clear, legible and answered to the full extent possible; and

- Made follow-up on any noticeable problems on the questionnaire.

Where there was a need, follow-up interviews were conducted so as to obtain more clarity on issues that may come up as answers in the questionnaires.

- **Interviews**

Interviewing is data collection in face-to-face settings, using an oral question-and-answer format which either employs the same questions in a systematic and structured way for all respondents, or allows respondents to talk about issues in less directed but discursive manner (Payne and Payne, 2004:129). According to Patton, the purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in and on someone else's mind. Since interviews involve direct personal contact with the participant who is asked to answer questions relating to the research problem, people are therefore interviewed to find out from them those things that cannot be directly observed (Greenfield, 2002:109).

Questionnaires and interviews are two of the most commonly used data collection techniques (Birley and Moreland, 1999:45). Each of these techniques has its many advantages and disadvantages, some of which include the following:

Table 3.1: Advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires and interviews

Questionnaires	Interviews
Useful for simple topics	Useful for more complex topics
Possible to have large numbers of respondents	Time consuming
Respondents can remain anonymous	Not suitable for embarrassing issues
Often poor response rate	Usually good response rate
Emphasis on writing ability	Less emphasis on writing ability

Source: Birley and Moreland (1999:45)

There are, according to Emroy and Cooper (1991:34) two primary types of interviewing techniques which are:

- Personal interviewing; and
- Telephone interviewing.

For purposes of this study, personal interviews were used (once the questionnaires had been received back) as it allows for the identification of issues from the interviewees which issues may not be readily identifiable from purely using a questionnaire. This therefore implies that it may not be all respondents who are interviewed but only those where there appears to be a need.

3.6 Types of research methods

Since this study used a combination of various methods to realise the envisaged end-product, it is at this point, important to first briefly discuss the different types of research methods and how these are used differently. The combination of approaches employed in this study straddles the divide between empirical and non-empirical research methods. According to Moody (2002:1), empirical research method typically uses primary data like surveys, case studies, evaluation research, and ethnographic studies or existing data. Non-empirical research methods on the other hand rely on discourse analysis, content analysis, textual criticism, historical studies as well as secondary data analysis.

Moody (op.cit:1) further explains the two categories of empirical research methods which are:

- **Quantitative research methods** – such methods collect numerical data and analyses it using statistical methods;

- **Qualitative research methods** – such methods collect qualitative data drawn from observations, interviews and documentary evidence. Such data is then analysed using qualitative data analysis methods.

Moody (2002:2) further explains that qualitative methods tend to be more appropriate in the early stages of the research (i.e. exploratory) and for theory building. On the other hand, quantitative methods tend to be more appropriate when theory is well developed, and for purposes of theory testing and refinement. However in practice, no research method is entirely quantitative or qualitative hence a combination of research methods may be most effective in achieving a particular research objective. When used together, the two methods can build on each other to offer insights that neither one alone could provide.

The approaches that were used in this study included unstructured interviews, literature reviews as well as primary data.

3.6.1 Data analysis procedure

Pre-coded questionnaires make data collection, capturing and analysis easy and efficient. The data analysis follows an explanation data analysis technique with emphasis on visual representation and graphical techniques for data analysis. Emroy and Cooper (1991:20) stressed the fact that when numerical summaries are used exclusively and accepted without visual inspection, the selection of confirmatory models may be precipitous, based on flawed assumption and may consequently produce erroneous conclusions. Legotlo (2000:57) seems to concur with the above by stating that instruments used for data collection have a great deal of influence in the outcome of its analysis in terms of validity and reliability. For these reasons, preliminary analysis started with visual inspection and not with numerical summaries. Data from the study were then analysed using frequencies and percentages in tables. However, the qualitative data analysis method is the most appropriate and was the main method used.

3.7 Sampling techniques

A sample is a part of a target population under a given study, carefully selected to represent such a population, which is less than the sum of the total of the targeted population (Sprinthall, 1990:462). On the other hand, sampling is defined by Payne and Payne (2004:209) as the process of selecting a sub-set of people or social phenomena to be studied, from the larger 'universe' to which they belong, in one of several ways so as to be either non-representative or representative.

Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:84) point out the main advantages of sampling which are the following:

- Less time consuming;
- Less costly;
- In most studies, sampling may be the only practical method of data collection, for example, in studies were the property under investigation necessitates the

destruction of the object (like when testing the lifespan of an electric light bulb); and

- Sampling is a practical way of collecting data when the population is extremely large.

Sampling theory distinguishes between probability and non-probability sampling. According to Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:86), probability or random sampling occurs when the probability of including each element of the population can be determined. In this case, the researcher can estimate the accuracy of the generalisation from sample to population. On the other hand, non-probability sampling occurs where the probability of including each element of the population in a sample is unknown. In this instance, it is difficult to estimate how well the sample represents the population, making generalisation questionable.

Since it was not possible to cover all the Departments where the M&E research was conducted using the PSC system, for simple convenience, the Department of Finance was identified for purposes of conducting this study. The findings of this study therefore remain relevant to the Department of Finance only and will not apply to all other Departments in the Province.

Whilst there are many different sampling techniques that may be used in a research which would be classified either as probability or non-probability sampling techniques as explained above, the sampling technique deemed most relevant in this study is the **purposive or judgemental sampling method.** The sampled participants/respondents were a particular group of staff members who are knowledgeable about matter under study. In this case, all senior managers in the Department of Finance were used as the researcher's research population and therefore as respondents in completing the questionnaire.

Senior managers in this case refer to all employees in the Department of Finance employed between salary levels 13 – 17 (i.e. from the level of director to the level of Deputy Director General). In terms of the list provided to the researcher by the Director responsible for Human Resource Management in the Department, the Department had 20 senior managers at the time this study was conducted. Given this small number of senior managers in the Department, it was decided by the researcher that in order to get reliable findings, all the 20 managers will be used as respondents.

Huysamen (1994:44) argues that the purposive sampling technique is the most important kind of a non-probability sampling. Here, researchers rely on their experience, ingenuity and/or previous research findings to deliberately obtain participants in such a manner that the sample obtained may be regarded as representative of the relevant population.

The respondents or target population within the Department of Finance were limited to members of the senior management service (SMS) only. The choice of senior managers is informed by their level of authority and their knowledge of public service prescripts relevant to their respective Department and the public service as a whole.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the different types of research designs applied in this current study. The chapter also introduced the reader to the research methodologies and ended on the sampling technique that was used for purposes of this study. The main focus of the next chapter, i.e. chapter four, is on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data collected.

CHAPTER FOUR:

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the research design and methodology followed in this study were dealt with. In this chapter, the collected data will be presented, analysed and interpreted. The data presentation will be done according to the themes in the questionnaire (Annexure).

4.2 Response rate

The initial approach by the researcher was to identify respondents from a list of SMS members (i.e. senior managers) that was provided by the Department, using the systematic random sampling approach. However, given the small number of senior managers in the Department, i.e. 20, it was decided by the researcher that all the 20 managers would be used as respondents. A total of 20 questionnaires were distributed to all the respondents (i.e. senior managers) in the Department of Finance. Out of a total number of these 20 questionnaires that were distributed, 16 (80%) were completed and returned. Whilst this was an excellent response rate, this clearly indicates the need for persistent follow-up in future considerations.

Due to time constraints, the questionnaire was not pilot-tested. This would have possibly assisted the researcher in reviewing and restructuring the questionnaire.

4.3 Data presentation

The tables and graph below depict the responses by the participants/respondents:

4.3.1 Section A: Biographical details of respondents

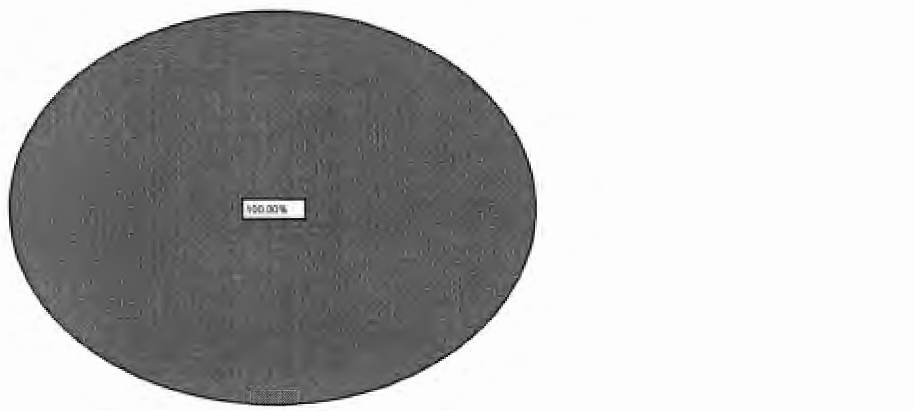
Table 4.1: Section/Division

Section/Division	Frequency	Percent
Information Technology	3	18.75
Financial Governance	3	18.75
Internal Audit	1	6.25
Sustainable Resource Management	3	18.75
Communication	1	6.25
Accounting	1	6.25
Supply Chain Management	1	6.25
Not completed	3	18.75
Total	16	100

The majority of respondents, 9 (56.25%), had three different categories specified being Information Technology (IT – 18.75%), Financial Governance (18.75%), and Sustainable Resource Manager (18.75%). The minorities of respondents 4 (25%) were spread across different sections such as the Internal Audit (6.25%) , Communication (6.25%), Accounting (6.25%) and Supply Chain Management (6.25%), whilst the other 3 (18.75%) of the respondents did not specify the section/division they work in. In this respect, the study does not have an over-representation of a particular division/section.

Figure 4.1: Job Title

Job Title	Frequency	Percent
Senior Managers	*16*	*100.0*



This study was specifically for the senior managers only, hence 100% turnout.

Table 4.2: Date you joined the department

Date	Frequency	Percent
Jan 2002	2	12.5
Jan 2000	4	25
June – Dec 2005	3	18.75
Jan 2006	1	6.25
Jan 1993	2	12.5
Jul 1986	1	6.25
Not Completed	3	18.75
Total	16	100

The figures in table 4.2 demonstrate the number of senior managers joining the Department in a particular year. Most senior managers 4 (25%), joined the

Department in January 2000 and in January-December 2005 3 (18.75%) respectively. 2 (12.5%) joined the Department between January 2002 and January 1993 and the other 2 (12.5%) respondents joined the Department in July 1986 (6.25%) and January 2006 (6.25%) respectively.

4.3.2 Section B – Awareness of and implementation of the PSC recommendations

This section of the questionnaire sought to establish from the target population, their level of understanding of the PSC's M&E System as well as whether the Department has implemented the recommendations in the report issued by the PSC. The findings of the objectives specific to this section, as discussed in chapter one are the following:

- To establish whether senior managers in the Department are aware of the M&E report issued by the PSC; and

- To assess whether the Department implements the recommendations made in the report and the challenges experienced (if any)

Research question: What is your understanding of the monitoring and evaluation system utilized by the PSC?

Table 4.3: Understanding of the monitoring and evaluation system utilized by the PSC

Evaluation	Frequency	Percent
None	11	68.75
Not completed	5	31.25
Total	16	100

The majority of respondents, 11 (68.75%), have little or no knowledge of the monitoring and evaluation system utilized by the PSC while only about (31.25%) of the respondents have a good understanding about the system.

Research Statement: I am aware that the PSC has conducted the monitoring and evaluation research in my department.

Table 4.4: Awareness of the monitoring and evaluation research conducted by the PSC in the department

Monitoring Results	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	2	12.5
Agree	4	25
Uncertain	2	12.5
Disagree	3	18.75
Strongly Disagree	5	31.25
Total	16	100

Whereas the respondents (12.5%) strongly agree and about (25%) of respondents agree that they are aware that the PSC has conducted the monitoring and evaluation research in the Department, (31.25%) strongly agree and (18.75%) of the respondents disagree about being aware of that the PSC has conducted the monitoring and evaluation research in the Department. Lastly, (12.5%) of the respondents are uncertain about whether or not they have been exposed to the monitoring and evaluation conducted by the PSC.

Research statement: **I am aware of and have read the report issued by the PSC resulting from this research.**

Table 4.5: Awareness of the report issued by the PSC resulting from the M&E research

PSC Results	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	1	6.25
Agree	1	6.25
Uncertain	3	18.75
Disagree	3	18.75
Strongly Disagree	8	50
Total	16	100

The majority of respondents (50%) strongly disagree that they are aware of and have read the report issued by the PSC resulting from this research. Secondly, there are respondents (18.75%) who disagree that they are aware of and have read the report issued by the PSC. On the other hand, (18.75%) of the respondents are uncertain about whether or not they have read or are aware of the report by the PSC. Lastly, only (6.25%) of the respondents agree and the other (6.25%) strongly agree that they are aware and have read the PSC report.

Research question: **Has your department implemented any of the recommendations issued by the PSC?**

Table 4.6: Implementation of the recommendations in the PSC report

Implementation	Frequency	Percent
Yes	2	12.5
No	2	12.5
Uncertain	12	75
Total	16	100

The majority of the respondents at 75% (12%) are not sure if the Department has implemented any of the recommendations contained in the report issued by the PSC. The respondents (12.5%), some are agreeing that the Department has implemented the recommendations in the report issued by the PSC and some are disagreeing that the Department has actually implemented the recommendations in the PSC report. Only 2 (12.5%) of the respondents agree that the Department has implemented the recommendations in the report issued by the PSC whilst the other 2 (12.5%) disagree that the Department has implemented any of the recommendations in the report issued by the PSC.

Research statement: There are constraints experienced in the implementation of the recommendations in the PSC M&E report.

Table 4.7: Existence of constraints in the implementation of the recommendations in the PSC M&E report

PSC, M&E Report	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	2	12.5
Agree	3	18.75
Uncertain	11	68.75
Total	16	100

The majority of respondents (68.75%) are uncertain whether there were constraints experienced in the implementation of the recommendations in the PSC's M&E report. Secondly, the respondents (18.75%) agree and a minority (12.5%), strongly agree that there are constraints experienced in the implementation of the recommendations in the PSC's M&E report.

4.3.3 Section C – Impact of M&E on performance

This section of the questionnaire sought to assess the level of impact that M&E has on improving performance in the Department. The relevant objective, discussed in chapter one, are the following:

- To measure the level and type of impact that M&E has on the Department's performance

Research statement: My department has systems in place to monitor its performance

Table 4.8: Availability of systems to monitor performance in the department

Monitoring Performance	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	5	31.25
Agree	9	56.25
Uncertain	2	12.5
Total	16	100

The majority of respondents (56.25%) agree that the Department has systems in place to monitor its performance. Then (31.25%) of the respondents strongly agree that the Department has systems in place to monitor its performance. The minority of respondents at (12.5%) are uncertain whether the Department has any systems in place to monitor its performance.

Research statement: The department has a monitoring and evaluation unit.

Table 4.9: Existence of a monitoring and evaluation unit in the department

Monitoring & Evaluation	Frequency	Percent
Agree	3	18.75
Uncertain	4	25
Disagree	7	43.75
Strongly Disagree	2	12.5
Total	16	100

The majority of respondents (43.75%) disagree that the Department has a monitoring and evaluation unit. Some respondents (18.75%) agree and the other respondents (12.5%) strongly disagree that the Department has a monitoring and evaluation unit in place. (25%) of the respondents are uncertain as to whether the Department has a monitoring and evaluation unit in place or not.

Research statement: Monitoring and evaluation of performance of the department will assist in improving service delivery.

Table 4.10: Monitoring and evaluation of performance of the department will assist in improving service delivery

Improvement Service Delivery	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	11	68.75
Agree	4	25
Uncertain	1	6.25
Total	16	100

The majority of respondents (68.75%) strongly agree that the monitoring and evaluation of performance of the Department will assist in improving service delivery. The other (25%) agree that the monitoring and evaluation of performance of the Department will assist in improving service delivery. Lastly (6.25%) respondents are uncertain whether or not the monitoring and evaluation of performance will assist in improving service delivery.

4.3.4 Section D – The usefulness of and compliance levels M&E

The aim of this section was to establish whether senior managers in the Department thought M&E was useful or not and if so, in what way, as well as the level of compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles. The objectives which are relevant under this section are:

- To establish whether there are other strategies that can be implemented to ensure compliance with the Constitutional values and principles;
- To assess the usefulness of the chosen indicators in addressing the specific information needs of particular decision makers; and
- To assess whether M&E should be used for accountability or for learning purposes

The issues raised in the questionnaire to address the above objectives are:

Research question: Briefly outline other strategies or systems that may be helpful in monitoring and evaluating compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles.

Table 4.11: Other strategies or systems that may be helpful in monitoring and evaluating compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles

Constitutional Values and Principles	Frequency	Percent
Current system is okay and very effective.	4	25
PFMA, Treasury Regulations, SITA Act and other related acts.	1	6.25
Departmental & Premier awards, Internal Audit and Auditor General.	1	6.25
The one currently utilised by the PSC is fine. There just needs to be more awareness about it.	1	6.25
By implementing quality standards that are used in industry, like the ISO quality standard.	3	18.75
None	1	6.25
Not completed	5	31.25
Total	16	100

The majority of the respondents (31.25%) did not respond to this research question, (25%) say that the current system is fine and in fact, very effective. (18.75%) say other strategies like implementing quality standards that are used in the Department, like the ISO quality standard may be helpful in monitoring and evaluating compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles and the other (18.75%) respondents had different opinions regarding the monitoring and evaluating compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles.

Research question: In your opinion, how best can the Public Service Commission improve on the current M&E system to ensure compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles, and to therefore improve service delivery?

Table 4.12: Opinions on how best the PSC can improve on the current M&E system to ensure compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles and to improving service delivery

Public Service Commission	Frequency	Percent
PSC should make their strategy more vigorously and frame work.	2	12.5
More presentations and engage with SMS in the different Departments	1	6.5
More presence, input and guidance in departmental strategic planning sessions.	1	6.5
By institutionalizing the constitutional values and principles	1	6.5
By doing a lot of advocacy work	1	6.5
More awareness creation and more follow-ups	1	6.5
PSC must ensure that the M&E units and service delivery	1	6.5
More visibility especially with senior managers	4	25
Better communication of improvements accomplished	1	6.5
Not completed	3	18.75
Total	16	100

The above table shows the opinions given by respondents regarding how best the Public Service Commission can improve on the current M&E system to ensure compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles and to therefore improve service delivery. The majority of the respondents (25%) say they want more visibility from senior managers. Other respondents have differing opinions which include more advocacy work by the PSC. Just like the Batho Pele

Principles, the respondents are of the view that the values and principles should also be institutionalized, amongst others.

Research statement: The indicators used at each of the nine principles in the PSC M&E system framework are helpful in addressing the needs of decision-makers.

Table 4.13: The indicators used at each of the nine principles in the PSC M&E system framework are helpful in addressing the needs of decision-makers

PSC M&E System	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	1	6.25
Agree	4	25
Uncertain	11	68.75
Total	16	100

The majority of respondents (68.75%) are uncertain that the indicators used at each of the nine principles in the PSC's M&E system framework are helpful in addressing the needs of decision–makers. The other (25%) agree whilst the minority respondents (6.25%) are the ones that strongly agree that the indicators used in the framework are helpful in addressing the needs of decision-makers.

Research statement: M&E should be used for learning purposes.

Table 4.14: M&E should be used for learning purposes

M & E for Learning Purposes	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	4	25
Agree	8	50
Uncertain	3	18.75
Strongly Disagree	1	6.25
Total	16	100

The majority of respondents (50%) agree that M&E should be used for learning purposes. The other respondents (25%) strongly agree that M&E should be used for learning purposes. While (6.25%) of the respondents strongly disagrees that M&E should be used for learning purposes, (18.75%) of the respondents are uncertain about this.

Research statement: M&E should be used for accountability purposes.

Table 4.15: M&E should be used for accountability purposes

Accountability Purposes	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	9	56.25
Agree	6	37.5
Not completed	1	6.25
Total	16	100

The majority of respondents (56.25%) strongly agree that M&E should be used for accountability purposes. The minority of respondents (37.5%) agree that M&E should be used for accountability purposes and only (6.25%) of respondents did not respond to this question.

4.4 Data analysis and interpretation

Data analysis is an effort by the researcher to interpret data to address the problem question. The exercise is conducted immediately after data has been collected. Data collected was used to assess the impact of monitoring and evaluation on service delivery and therefore the qualitative method was used to analyse and interpret data.

Research question: What is your understanding of the monitoring and evaluation system utilized by the PSC?

The majority of respondents, 11 (68.75%), have little or no knowledge of the monitoring and evaluation system utilized by the PSC while only about (31.25%) of the respondents have a good understanding about the system (Table 4.3).

Research Statement: I am aware that the PSC has conducted the monitoring and evaluation research in my department.

8 (50%) of respondents, which is the majority (i.e. 18.75% disagree and 31.25% strongly disagree) report not being aware that the PSC has conducted the monitoring and evaluation research in the Department while 6 respondents (37.5% - 12.5% strongly agree and 25% agree) are aware that the PSC has conducted the monitoring and evaluation research in the Department. Lastly, only 2, representing 12.5% of respondents are uncertain about whether the PSC monitoring and evaluation research has been conducted in the Department (Table 4.4) .

It is clear from the above analysis that the reasons why the majority of the respondents disagree with the statement that the PSC has conducted M&E research in the Department is because at the time it was conducted, some of the senior managers had not joined the Department. For those who were with the Department, it was never brought to their attention, especially the findings and recommendations contained in the report.

Research statement: I am aware and have read the report issued by the PSC resulting from this research.

The majority of respondents at 68.75% (11), with 8 strongly disagreeing and 3 agreeing, have not read the report issued by the PSC resulting from this M&E research. A worrying 3, representing only (18.75%) of respondents, report being aware of and having read the PSC's M&E report. The other 3 (18.75%) of the respondents are uncertain about whether or not they have read or are aware of the report by the PSC. It would also appear that the findings and recommendations contained in the report were never discussed at senior management meetings for implementation (Table 4.5).

Just like with the research statement raised above - awareness that the PSC has conducted the monitoring and evaluation research in the Department - the above analysis confirms that the reasons why the majority of the respondents (68.75%) are not aware of the PSC report on M&E is because some of them joined the Department after the report had long been issued whilst with other senior managers, the report was not made available to them after it was presented to the Head of Department.

Research question: Has your department implemented any of the recommendations issued by the PSC?

The majority of the respondents at 75% (12) are not sure if the Department has implemented any of the recommendations contained in the report issued by the PSC. Only 2 (12.5%) of the respondents agree that the Department has implemented the recommendations in the report issued by the PSC whilst the other 2 (12.5%) disagree that the Department has implemented any of the recommendations in the report issued by the PSC (Table 4.6).

The fact that about 75% of the respondents are not sure if the Department has implemented the recommendations in the report issued by the PSC is an indication that the recommendations might not have been implemented at all as the senior managers would otherwise know the source of the recommendations. Furthermore, those respondents who report that the Department has implemented the PSC recommendations are not able to specify which recommendations have been implemented and what kind of impact this has had for that particular programme, despite a request to do so in the questionnaire.

Research statement: There are constraints experienced in the implementation of the recommendations in the PSC M&E report.

The majority of the respondents at 68.75% (11) are uncertain whether there were constraints experienced in the implementation of the recommendations in the PSC's M&E report. On the other hand, 5 (31.25% - 18.75% agree and 12.5% strongly agree, respectively) respondents agree that there are constraints experienced in the implementation of the recommendations in the PSC's M& E report (Table 4.7).

The fact that 31.25% respondents agree that there are constraints experienced in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the PSC's M&E report could be as a result of the majority of senior managers not even being aware of the report in the first place, resulting in proper systems not being put in place to assist in the implementation of such recommendations.

Research statement: My department has systems in place to monitor its performance

The majority of respondents 9 (56.25%) agree that the Department has systems in place to monitor its performance. Then 5 (31.25%) of the respondents strongly agree that the Department has systems in place to monitor its performance. The minority of respondents at 12.5% (2) are uncertain whether the Department has any systems in place to monitor its performance (Table 4.8).

The 87% of respondents who agree that the Department has systems in place to monitor its performance and they give the following example of such systems:

- Performance Management Development System;
- Departmental Strategic Plans or Annual Performance Plan;
- Monthly/quarterly management meetings held chaired by the HoD;
- Staff meetings in the different units;
- Project Management Office and System;
- Financial Management System; and
- Customer Relation Management System.

It is evident from the above that the Department has good systems in place to monitor performance where all staff members, from the HoD to the lowest level, are engaged in the monitoring of departmental performance.

Research statement: The department has a monitoring and evaluation unit.

Whereas the majority of respondents 9 (56.25% – 43.75% disagree and 12.5% strongly disagree) disagree that the Department has a monitoring and evaluation unit, only a minority, 3 (18.75%), of respondents agree and 4 (25%) are uncertain as to whether the Department has a monitoring and evaluation unit or not (Table 4.9).

Of the (18.75%) respondents who agree that the Department does have a monitoring and evaluation unit in place, it is of concern that the location of the unit and the level of the official responsible are reported differently. Two respondents report that the unit is located in the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, at the level of Chief Director whilst the third respondent reports that it is located in the Offices of Human Resource and Internal Audit, at Director level.

Research statement: Monitoring and evaluation of performance of the department will assist in improving service delivery.

The majority of respondents, 15 (93.75% - 68.75% strongly agree and 25% agree), agree that the monitoring and evaluation of performance of the Department will assist in improving service delivery. Only 1 (6.25%) respondent reported being uncertain whether the monitoring and evaluation of performance will assist in improving service delivery or not. Whilst the respondents were requested elaborate on their response, no explanation was provided by the respondent who reported being uncertain whether monitoring and evaluation of performance will assist in improving service delivery (Table 4.10).

Those respondents who strongly agree that the monitoring and evaluation of performance of the Department will assist in improving service delivery do so because:

- It ensures that track is kept on the level of achievement of plans set at the beginning of the financial year;

- It guides successes, improve on failures, implement remedial steps and congratulate excellent performance;

- it eliminates or drastically reduce fruitless and wasteful expenditure;
- projects will be implemented according to what was planned.

From the above analysis, it is clear that senior managers in the Department thoroughly understand and appreciate the importance of M&E and the positive impact it has on service delivery.

Research question: Briefly outline other strategies or systems that may be helpful in monitoring and evaluating compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles

Whilst the majority of the respondents at 5 (31.25%) did not respond to this research question, 4 (25%) of the respondents say that the current system is fine and in fact, very effective. 3 (18.75%) respondents say implementing quality standards that are used in the Department like the ISO quality standard may be helpful in monitoring and evaluating compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles and the last 3 (18.75%) respondents had different opinions regarding the monitoring and evalUating compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles (Table 4.11).

Whilst it is clear that some of the respondents (25%) appreciate the current strategies and believe that they are in fact helpful, the other 18.75% of respondents identified other strategies or systems that may also be helpful. These are:

- Departmental and Premier awards, Internal Audit and the Auditor –General;

- Since the Constitution makes provision for good governance, setting guidelines for relationships between all spheres of government, these spheres of government should meet frequently to discover each other's needs and problems. This will assist in the achievement of goals and objectives;

- PFMA, Treasury Regulations; and SITA Act; and

- Integrated Departmental strategic plans thus eradicating a silo type of approach by provincial Departments and thus addressing all national and provincial priorities in a systematic and focussed manner with positive results and impact.

Research question: In your opinion, how best can the PSC improve on the current M&E system to ensure compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles, and to therefore improve service delivery?

The majority of the respondents, 4 (25%), say they want more visibility from senior managers. On the other hand, respondents came up with other very important and different opinions which included for instance more advocacy work by the PSC. Also, just like the Batho Pele Principles, the respondents are of the opinion that the Constitutional values and principles should also be institutionalized (Table 4.12).

Other opinions shared by the respondents include:

- Since the values and principles are an important tool to ensure service delivery and to maintain standards in the public service, there should be more workshops with government managers and officials on these values and principles;

- PSC should market their strategy more vigorously and the framework should be well known to managers;

- More presence, input and guidance in Departmental strategic planning sessions as well as in assisting with the evaluation of these Departmental long, medium and short term plans;

- PSC must ensure that M&E units in all Departments are functional and M&E must be seen as an integral part of service delivery;

- M&E must be included in the MMS and SMS members questions during interviewing process;

- Regular checking with the Departments about the implementation of the recommended solutions and if necessary, to take disciplinary steps with the Head of Department (HoD) for non-compliance;

- PSC must do a lot of presentations and engage with SMS members in the different Departments; and

- The commission can play an active role in monitoring government projects and to ensure that the projects are completed on time and within budget.

Research statement: The indicators used at each of the nine principles in the PSC M&E system framework are helpful in addressing the needs of decision-makers.

The majority of respondents 11 (68.75%) are uncertain that the indicators used at each of the nine principles in the PSC's M&E system framework are helpful in addressing the needs of decision–makers. This may be as a result of 68.75% of the respondents reporting earlier that they have little or no knowledge of the monitoring and evaluation system utilized by the PSC (4.13).

The other 5 (31.25% - 6.25% strongly agree and 25% agree) respondents who agree that the indicators used in the framework are helpful in addressing the needs of decision-makers, do so because:

- they provide guidance and help to set a standard across functions and the public sector;
- indicators guide the process and keep stringent measures in place to maintain consistency in delivery; and
- they give an idea of other important elements that would be applicable under each principle and what may need to be improved and where not to put much emphasis.

Research statement: M&E should be used for learning purposes.

The majority of respondents 8 (50%) agree that M&E should be used for learning purposes. The other respondents, 4 (25%), strongly agree that M&E should be used for learning purposes. While 3 (18.75%) of the respondents are uncertain about this, it was interesting to note that 1 (6.25%) respondent strongly disagrees that M&E should be used for learning purposes but rather, be used as an improvement mechanism (4.14).

12 (75%) of the respondents are of the opinion that M&E should be used for learning purposes because:

- Mistakes and shortcomings observed through the monitoring process are useful to avoid the recurrence of the same mistakes in the future;

- There are sometimes failures that occur, not deliberate but sometimes one thinks certain deliverables are needed just to find that the real need within the communities were not addressed. Thus allowing Departmental re-thinking, re-planning and re-alignment of future plans or objectives which serve to the success of the Departments, communities and tax-payers;

- It assists in the building of future management capacity;

- An understanding of the framework will equip managers better to perform their duties and to provide a healthy working environment; and

Research statement: M&E should be used for accountability purposes.

Almost all the respondents, 15, representing 93.75% (56.25% strongly agree and 37.5% agree respectively) agree that M&E should be used for accountability purposes (Table 4.15) in that:

- Shortcomings identified through M&E, audit queries, risk managers and internal control units must be linked to the PMDS of responsible officials. The officials must be held accountable for shortcomings that are not corrected and they should not be given any performance rewards;

- It is only through monitoring of performance that managers are able to account to different institutions like SCOPA, PSC, Auditor-General, etc.;

- Without accountability, it will be very difficult for any official to do his/her work well. For example, it ensures that budget is used for the purpose it was meant for;

- Accountability will ensure good governance in Departments;

- Accountability entails owning up to the outcomes of one's performance. However, the outcomes must be measurable and M&E involves measuring outcomes;

- With proper M&E systems in place coupled with the necessary support from both juniors and seniors, any manager can keep track of what is happening in their respective units and would therefore be able to account for performance;

- M&E when fully accepted will result in improved service delivery, which result in accountability by responsible managers and officials and with ownership, one will observe the positive spin-offs; and

- If you are directly involved in a process, you own it and you are able to monitor it and it is therefore easy to account for performance in your section.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the findings of the study conducted to examine the impact that the Public Service Monitoring and Evaluation research has had towards service delivery and good governance in the Department of Finance. The responses were carefully presented by means of tables.

The main thrust of the analysis has provided for the extent of the implementation of PSC recommendations by the Department, understanding of the PSC M&E framework as well as the perception by Officials towards the system.

It has come out clearly that most of the senior managers do not have an understanding of the PSC's M&E framework. They are also not aware of the findings and recommendations by the PSC because such findings were never communicated to them. Furthermore, whilst most of the senior managers acknowledge the importance of monitoring and evaluation and the fact that good monitoring and evaluation does contribute to ensuring that the objectives of the Department are achieved, they also admitted that they were not aware if the PSC recommendations were implemented.

In chapter five, a brief summary of the study is given, conclusions are drawn and recommendations are also made.

CHAPTER FIVE:

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, LIMITATIONS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In chapter one, the main focus was on the background to the South African M&E system and in particular, the PSC M&E system, as well as what the objectives of the study were. Chapter two gave the reader a theoretical overview and review of literature on monitoring and evaluation, its tools, methods and approaches, including the importance and benefits of literature review. Chapter three was about the research design and research methodology whilst chapter four presented the results of the study, analysed data and discussed the findings. Finally in chapter five, gives a brief summary of the first four chapters, gives a conclusion of the study and the chapter will close with recommendations.

5.2 Summary of the study

Chapter one introduced the reader to the study by dealing with such important areas like the background to the study; definition of key concepts used in the study; research problem and questions; aim and objectives of the study; significance of the study; the assumptions of the study; scope of the study; ethical considerations; description of how the research findings were disseminated/used; time frames and the organisation of the study.

In chapter two, a theoretical overview and review of literature on monitoring and evaluation, its tools, methods and approaches were discussed. It then introduced the reader to the monitoring and evaluation system that is utilised by the Public Service Commission in measuring the Departments' level of compliance with the nine constitutional values and principles as enshrined in chapter 10, section 195 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. The chapter ended by giving a synopsis of the level of sophistication of departments' M&E systems and a discussion of the main challenges experienced by Departments in the implementation of M&E.

Chapter three gave an overview of the different types of research designs applied in this study. The chapter also discussed the research methodologies or data collection methods and ended on the sampling technique that was used for purposes of this study.

The main focus of chapter four was on the analysis and interpretation of the data collected. It gave an outline of the findings of the study on the impact that the Public Service Monitoring and Evaluation research has had towards service delivery and good governance in the Department of Finance. The responses from the respondents were carefully analysed and presented by means of tables.

The analysis gave and indication of the level of understanding of the PSC's M&E framework, including a very low level of communication amongst senior managers in the Department regarding the findings and recommendations contained in the PSC M&E report. It was also discussed in this chapter that whilst most of the senior managers acknowledge the importance of monitoring and evaluation and that fact that good monitoring and evaluation does contribute to ensuring that the objectives of the Department are achieved, they were not aware if the PSC recommendations were implemented.

5.3 Limitations of the study

There are factors that impact on any study and these factors pose limitations that may adversely affect the nature and outcome of the study. The following limitations were identified:

- Since the study was conducted at the Department of Finance only, the findings of this study are therefore largely relevant to the Department of Finance.

- The target population was very small as the research was targeted only at a specific group within the Department of Finance;

- The unavailability of some of the possible respondents due to work pressure commitments resulted in delays in returning of questionnaires;

- There was reluctance by some respondents to complete certain parts or the whole questionnaire due to lack of knowledge of the PSC report;

- The findings were based on self reporting data from respondents. The respondents' responses were therefore, limited to the questions that were posed to them; and

- Due to time constraints, the pilot test was not conducted. This would have possibly assisted the researcher in reviewing and restructuring the questionnaire.

5.4 Discussion of the findings

The discussion of the findings is based on the questions and/or statements posed to the respondents through a questionnaire and the responses received, with particular reference to the research objectives.

5.4.1 Findings on research objective one: To establish whether senior managers in the Department are aware of the M&E report issued by the PSC.

5.4.1.1 An understanding of the monitoring and evaluation system utilized by the PSC.

Discussion

Based on the data presented, the finding that the majority of senior managers in the Department have little or no knowledge of the monitoring and evaluation system utilised by the PSC is of serious concern considering the fact that the system has been approved by cabinet and in utilized by the PSC since 2000.

5.4.1.2 Awareness that the PSC has conducted the monitoring and evaluation research in the Department.

Discussion

The finding that the majority of the respondents report not being aware that the PSC has conducted M&E research in the Department may be understandable because at the time the research was conducted, the majority of the senior managers (50%) had not joined the Department. Some of the senior managers reported in an interview that the first time they heard that the PSC has conducted the monitoring and evaluation research in the Department, was when the researcher contacted them about it. This is very concerning because the respondents were contacted by the researcher for the first time in August 2008, requesting them to complete a questionnaire, whereas the PSC conducted its research during the 2003/2004 financial year.

5.4.1.3 Awareness of the report issued by the PSC resulting from the M&E research.

Discussion

The majority of the respondents (68.75%) report not being aware of nor having read the PSC report on M&E. this finding, just like with the research statement raised before this one - awareness that the PSC has conducted the monitoring and evaluation research in the Department – is not surprising as most of the senior managers joined the Department after the report had long been issued. For those senior managers who were already with the Department at the time the research was conducted, they are not aware of it because they were never engaged in discussions around the findings, neither was the report made available to them after it was presented to the Head of Department.

5.4.2 Findings on research objective two: To assess whether the Department implements the recommendations made in the report and the challenges experienced (if any)

5.4.2.1 Implementation of the recommendations in the PSC report

Discussion

About half of the senior managers in the Department are not aware that the PSC has conducted M&E research in the Department, neither have they seen or read the report that was issued following the research. Whilst it is concerning, it is however not surprising that the majority of the respondents at 75% (12) are not sure if the Department has implemented any of the recommendations contained in the report issued by the PSC.

Of concern also is the finding that the 2 (12.5%) respondents who agree that the Department has implemented the recommendations in the report issued by the PSC did not give examples of which recommendations, emanating from the report, have been implemented and furthermore, what kind of impact this has had for a particular programme. This was despite a request to do so in the questionnaire.

5.4.2.2 Existence of constraints in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the PSC's M&E report.

Discussion

It has been found that 31.25% of the respondents agree that there are constraints experienced in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the PSC's M&E report. They believe that the Department can overcome such constraints by:

- Constant focus, planning and reporting back on the success and failure of implementation;
- Establishing a unique directorate that deals with M&E;
- Improving its capacity; and
- Conducting workshops on the PSC M&E framework or making it available to managers.

5.4.3 Findings on research objective three: To measure the level and type of impact that M&E has on the Department's performance

5.4.3.1 The Department has systems in place to monitor its performance

Discussion

The fact that there are (87.5%) of respondents who strongly agree and agree respectively, that the Department has systems in place to monitor its performance is an indication that there is great awareness about such systems and that staff members do get involved in ensuring that performance is monitored by giving continuous feedback and updates at the different meetings as listed by the respondents.

5.4.3.2 Monitoring and evaluation of performance of the department will assist in improving service delivery.

Discussion

The majority of respondents at 93.75%, agree that the monitoring and evaluation of performance of the Department will assist in improving service delivery. As indicated in the interpretation of this research statement, this finding goes to demonstrate that fact that senior managers in the Department do appreciate and acknowledge the importance and positive impact that monitoring and evaluation can have on performance.

There was only 1 respondent who reported being uncertain whether monitoring and evaluation of performance will assist in improving service delivery will assist in improving service delivery or not and did not provide any reasons for the uncertainty.

5.4.4 Findings of research objective four: To establish whether there are other strategies that can be implemented to ensure compliance with the Constitutional values and principles.

5.4.4.1 Other strategies or systems that may be helpful in monitoring and evaluating compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles.

Discussion

The findings under this question demonstrates that whilst some of the respondents at (25%) are of the view that the current system utilised by the PSC is fine and in fact, very effective, it is clear that with vigorous communication and if the PSC had followed-up with the Department more frequency and soon after presenting the report to the Head of Department, the number of senior managers who believe the current system is helpful could be higher.

It was however, interesting to note that some of the respondents suggested other strategies, as shown under data analysis and interpretation above, which may also be helpful in monitoring and evaluating compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles.

5.4.4.2 Opinions on how best can the PSC improve on the current M&E system to ensure compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles, and to therefore improve service delivery.

Discussion

The majority of the respondents, 4 (25%), say they want more visibility from senior managers. On the other hand, respondents came up with other very important and different opinions which included for instance more advocacy work by the PSC. Also, just like the Batho Pele Principles, the respondents are of the opinion that the Constitutional values and principles should also be institutionalized, amongst others.

Whilst the opinions raised by respondents, as shown under data analysis and interpretation above are very important, it was however noted with concern that some senior managers do not know the difference between Batho Pele Principles and the nine Constitutional values and principles. Whilst managers should be aware of these values and principles, this does, however, re-emphasise the importance of advocacy work that must be done by the PSC.

5.4.5 Findings on research objective five: To assess the usefulness of the chosen indicators in addressing the specific information needs of particular decision makers

5.4.5.1 The indicators used at each of the nine principles in the PSC M&E system framework are helpful in addressing the needs of decision-makers.

Discussion

The majority of respondents 11 (68.75%) are uncertain that the indicators used at each of the nine principles in the PSC's M&E system framework are helpful in addressing the needs of decision–makers .This finding does not come as a surprise because exactly 68.75% of the respondents reported having little or no knowledge of the PSC's M&E system. Without knowledge of the PSC's M&E system, respondents may therefore not be aware of the indicators used at each of the nine Constitutional values and principles in the framework.

5.4.6 Findings on research objective six: To assess whether M&E should be used for accountability or for learning purposes

5.4.6.1 M&E should be used for accountability purposes

Discussion

The fact that the majority of respondents, at 93.75%, agree that M&E should be used for accountability purposes is interesting because M&E in its nature is to track performance which in turn ensures that managers are held accountable to commitments they have made in terms of output and outcomes.

5.4.6.2 M&E should be used for learning purposes.

Discussion

The majority of respondents, at 75% agree that M&E should be used for learning purposes. This high rate that M&E should be used for learning purposes is worth noting because by monitoring and discussing performance, one is also getting feedback and therefore in many ways, this is learning as it gives the responsible manager an idea of where the systems might be lacking and to therefore improve.

5.5 Conclusion

Monitoring and Evaluation is an important tool for improving the results achieved by government programmes. It pre-supposes openness to continuously evaluate the success of what we are doing, diagnose the causes of problems and devise appropriate and creative solutions. However, monitoring and evaluation can only be influential if it provides quality analytical information and if decision-makers are willing to consider and act on that information.

The main outcomes and findings of this study revealed that the majority of respondents have little knowledge of the monitoring and evaluation system utilized by the PSC. This finding is of serious concern considering the fact that about 56.25% of the respondents were already employed by the Department at the time the research on the compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles was conducted during the 2003/2004 financial year by the PSC.

It has also come out clearly that whilst the PSC, as a technical oversight body, has conducted this very important assessment on the level of compliance by the Department of Finance with the nine Constitutional values and principles, produced a report with findings and recommendations on what the Department should do in order to improve on its programme performance, such a report is not known to at least half (50%) of the respondents who are senior managers and are responsible for the implementation of the recommendations contained in it.

The important lesson learned from this study is that close and positive relationships help to ensure that findings are valued and recommendations are implemented. Without a good relationship, there is a serious risk that the research reports will simply be filed away without being put into practice.

5.6 Recommendations

The main objective of this study was to assess the implementation of and compliance with the nine Constitutional values and principles in the North West Provincial Department of Finance and the impact that M&E has in improving service delivery and therefore good governance. Following from the findings of this study, the recommendations which should be considered in ensuring that the nine Constitutional values and principles used in the PSC's M&E framework to monitor and evaluate Departmental performance do add value towards the improvement of service delivery are as follows:

- Since the values and principles are an important tool to improve on service delivery and to maintain high levels of service standards in the public service, the PSC needs to create a lot of awareness through advocacy work.

- Like the Batho Pele Principles, the nine Constitutional values and principles should also be institutionalized (for example, by including these in the performance agreements of all senior managers).

- Over and above the presentation of the report containing the findings and recommendations to senior managers in a Department, the PSC should follow-up on the actual implementation of such recommendations at least twice during the financial year when the report was presented.

- Future research should be embarked upon to determine the impact of these recommendations and to investigate other possible causes affecting the impact of M&E on service delivery.

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