CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

Metaphors of performance management that emerged offered insights into both the negative and positive perceptions individuals' have of performance management. Significant differences were not found based on gender and race; however differences based on employment level were evident. Some images that individuals used were to be expected such as those of a seed, or tree and those of likening performance management to an animal. Other unexpected yet very interesting metaphors also emerged, such as those of being terrorised and likening performance management to a chore. It is to be noted that the negative perceptions that have been attributed to call centres as unpleasant environments emerged in the metaphors used by agents.

In line with the beliefs of Lawley and Tompkins (2000) as well as Lakoff and Johnson's (1980), metaphor was able to capture the essence of participants' performance management experiences. This was evident in the vividness of metaphors employed, if Lakoff and Johnsons' (1980) proposition is to be employed, then people defining their reality based on the negative metaphors such as those of terrorism and being monitored and general dissatisfaction employed are likely to then act on the basis of the negative metaphors in all aspects within the call centre; which ultimately raises concern and in itself suggests that metaphors may be employed to highlight areas of concern and work on improvements from there.

The use of metaphors as the chosen method of eliciting perceptions proved valuable, original and very interesting. In the true nature of metaphors, great insight was extracted form various metaphors employed. The information and insight gained in this research forms a contribution to the study of metaphors, performance management, and the growing call centre literature. It is hoped that these contributions may add value to or become a stepping-stone for further research in this area.