

**SERVICE DELIVERY TRAINING INTERVENTIONS IN THE MPUMALANGA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, ROADS AND TRANSPORT.**

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**A research report submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management,
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this dissertation is to determine the impact made by service delivery training interventions in the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport in the Mpumalanga Provincial Administration.

There has been great concern that training is conducted annually in the Department, but improvement in the individual's - work performance, growth, development and service delivery is not realized. It has been a great concern also that, it is difficult to measure work performance in the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport since there are no tools in place which can measure and assess both pre - and post - impact of training interventions.

The study opens with an orientation to the problem and related issues, and findings from literature. Various legislative and policy frameworks guiding training and development are discussed in Chapter Two and the actual data collection is outlined in Chapter Three. Results are presented in Chapter Four, interpretation of results in Chapter Five. The study is concluded in Chapter Six.

The respondents, Middle and Senior Managers who were interviewed, revealed that most of the training conducted is irrelevant and these are not driven by the demands for skills, but by problems and challenges encountered by employees. An observation has been made that it is also imperative to ensure that training programmes are informed by the needs and objectives of the department. Interviewees also reflected on the issue of limited resources and budgetary decline.

Interviewees also indicated that most people attend training as a way of destressing themselves of the work environment. The implementation of the Workplace Skills Plan also leaves much to be desired. It was also indicated by managers who were interviewed that training should be viewed not as an expense, but rather as investment in human capital.

It is hoped that the recommendations emanating from the findings in Chapter five of the research will be utilized with the view to improve work performance and speedy delivery of services in the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport and further enhance the effective and efficient realization of organisational goals and objectives.

DECLARATION

I, Donald Lawrence Mabuye, declare that the research report submitted for the degree: Masters of Management in Public Policy, at the University of Witwatersrand, is my own original work and has not been submitted to any institution of higher learning. I further declare that all sources cited or quoted are indicated and acknowledged by means of a comprehensive list of “references”.

Mabuye Donald Lawrence

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Signed at

On the day of 2013

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to

My Wife, Sharlote Tholiwe

Sons: Amanda Tshegofatso and Hope Regaugetswe

And

Daughter, Scanty Refilwe

For their support and courage

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My wife, Sharlote Mabuye, for always being there in times of need.

My three beautiful children for their support and courage.

ACRONOMYS

WSP	Workplace Skills Plan
PGDS	Provincial Growth and Development Strategy
HRDS	Human Resource Development Strategy
SDA	Skills Development Act 97 of 1998
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
NQF	National Qualification Framework
HRD	Human Resource Development
PSR	Public Service Regulation Act, 2001
SDLA	Skills Development Levies Act, No.9 of 1999
NGO's	None – Governmental Organizations
HR	Human Resource
ROI	Return on Investment

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CHAPTER ONE.

ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY.

1.1. Introduction.

The transformation process in the public service, though not an end in itself is regarded as the key instrument for developing a fundamentally different public service in which socio- economic factors, improved, efficient and effective service delivery takes priority above all. The requirements to build partnerships and collaboration are changing the way that the public service is organized, as well as the skills that are required to establish, manage and sustain these critical collaborative arrangements.

Mpumalanga Provincial Government has an obligation to develop the Human Resource capacity and to create a favourable learning environment in which all employees shall develop their full potential through continuous access to education and training opportunities, consistent with their work related, Departmental and personal development needs and priorities.

1.2. Context of the Study and Problem definition.

The development of skills as enshrined in the supreme law of the Country i.e. the Constitution has been an issue since the inception of a new democratic South Africa in 1994. The current Human Resource Development Strategy in Mpumalanga Provincial Government does not give provision for assessing the impact made by training interventions, hence a need for further exploratory research study on the research topic.

The reality is, as from **2009 to 2012**, 240 training interventions have been conducted and 5186 employees have been trained (Source: Public Works, Roads and Transport database).

The breakdown is as follows

2009/2010 financial year

Total No. of training interventions	Total No. of employees trained	Financial year
27	207	2009/2010

2010/2011 financial year

Total No. of training interventions	Total No. of employees trained	Financial year
49	2553	2010/2011

2011/2012 financial year

Total No. of training interventions	Total No. of employees trained	Financial year
136	2298	2011/2012

2012/2013 financial year i.e. (from 1st April 2012 to 31st August 2012)

Total No. of training interventions	Total No. of employees trained	Financial year
28	128	2012/2013

Much has been done about human resource development and capacity building, but issues of performance and service delivery to the public is still a problem.

Section 195 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, stipulates the principles of democratic values, such as good human resource management and career development practice, as well as a public service that is developmentally oriented. Public Service Regulations Act, 2001, states that, the supervisors shall monitor the employee's performance on a continuous basis and give an employee feedback on her or his performance, orally if the employee's performance is satisfactory and in writing if the employee's performance is unsatisfactory.

The White Paper on Human Resource Management, 1997, indicates that human resource management within the public service will need to undergo fundamental change in order to actualise the following management principles, namely, increased delegation of managerial responsibility and authority to national departments and provincial administrations and within departments, the delegation of day to day management decision to line managers, the development of a service delivery-oriented, multi-skilled and multi-cultural workforce, the continuing drive for efficiency and effectiveness and the creation of a flexible environment that takes into account both the operational needs of the organization and the needs of the employees.

Training and education should be perceived as an "integrated skills development system which promotes economic, employment growth and social development through a focus on education, training and employment services" (Van Dyk et al, 1992), and there is a "lack of institutional coherence and co-ordination, poorly articulated programmes, separate education and training tracks, weak linkages with industrial environment" (Desi, Peliwe, Camel, Pauline, Getti, Sello, Sphamandla, 2001). According to Van Dyk (1992) and Desi et al (2001), skills development should be perceived as an amalgamated reciprocal institutional coherence and co-ordination through well structured and articulated programmes, integrated education and training tracks and strong linkages with the industrial environment.

“Another broad area in the framework for strategic organization development is capability – building. If you embark on new strategies and employees do not have the knowledge of these new strategies, it is essential to build their capacity in this regard. This entails the development of capacity within the organization to do what needs to be done to achieve strategic success. Capacity building is aimed at developing the right capacity and the appropriate competencies across the entire organization”. (Meyer, & Botha, 2004, p.52).

1.3. Problem Statement.

The situation thus presents Mpumalanga Province with a considerable knowledge gap in terms of measuring and assessing training interventions in relation to costs, performance and the delivery of services. With this in mind, the inability to assess and measure training interventions in relation to public service delivery and attempts to paint a picture of the new demands and the way that the practice of human resources needs to change to remain a key player in the building of human resource capital appears to be a problem which needs further exploratory research studies.

1.4. Purpose of the study.

The researcher wishes to engage and establish whether service delivery training intervention is critical and key in the betterment and improvement of performance and behaviour change of employees at large in Mpumalanga Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport. The focus of the study is on improved service delivery, performance, production as well as behaviour change of employees at large.

Further to the above, the purpose of the study is to present a thorough understanding of service delivery training interventions and the impact on improving performance and behavior change. This is covered through a literature review. Secondly, the purpose is to present the methodology used in understanding performance and behavior change. Thirdly, the study seeks to present an analysis of findings from which conclusions will be drawn and recommendations be made.

1.5. Research Objectives.

The purpose of the study is to explore, investigate and make proposals with regard to:

- Improved service delivery and performance through the development of impact assessment tools.
- Effective utilization of human resource and to make recommendations on how skills development can be coordinated, managed, assessed and evaluated.

1.6. Research Questions.

The primary research question for this research project is:

- To what extent does the development of skills through training interventions impact on service delivery?

The primary research question raises further subsequent questions such as

- Why is it imperative to regularly review the training and development needs of employees?
- Does an investor in human resources evaluate the investment in training and development to assess achievement and improve future effectiveness?
- Why is it important to train and develop individuals on recruitment and throughout their employment?

1.7. Delimitations of the study.

The focus of the research is on service delivery training interventions in relation to work performance in the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport within Mpumalanga Provincial Government as depicted in the Skills Development Act No.97 of 1998, Skills Development Levies Act No.9 of 1999, Departmental Workplace Skills Plan, Provincial Growth and Development Strategy and Human Resource Development Strategy.

Data was gathered from individuals involved in skills development and capacity building activities, human resource development practitioners, regional training committees and monitoring and evaluation experts in the three Departments within the Mpumalanga Provincial Government, namely, Public Works, Roads and Transport Department, Education Department and Premier's Office. The decision making process in this research project was a collective effort because capable individuals and cadres from various Departments were interviewed. Qualitative research techniques were employed to collect data. The outcomes of the research were also influenced by the knowledge of the respondents on this research topic.

Mpumalanga Provincial Government was selected for sampling; therefore, the findings may not be applicable to other Provinces within the Country.

1.8. Structure of the research report.

The research report consists of six chapters. The first chapter entails the purpose of the study, context of the study and problem definition, problem statement, delimitations of the study, research questions, research objectives and the structure of the research report.

Chapter two outlines the various data sources used to paint the broader picture of new demands and the way that the practice of human resources needs to change to remain a key player in the building of human resources. Over and above this, various primary data sourced from human resource capital were used to measure the impact on training interventions in relation to public service delivery.

These were supplemented with secondary data from document analysis and a literature review, section 195 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, and the White Paper on Human Resource Management, 1997. The purpose of the literature review is to explain and discuss key concepts and to intensively search for a potential

remedy to the research problem. It further gives a clear definition of the concept 'impact assessment on training intervention' and the different models that exist in literature.

Chapter three describes the methods and methodology used in the research for data collection and research instruments. It further discusses the chosen population and sample, sample and sampling method, limitations of the study, construction of the questionnaire for the research questions and the layout on how interviews were run and conducted.

Chapter four presents the findings from the chosen population and samples from human resource development units, regional training committees, supervisors and Monitoring and Evaluation experts. Chapter five describes the researcher's interpretation of the results with regards to the propositions posited and what was learnt from the research study.

Chapter six marks the culmination of this research report. It draws together major findings and inferences made in the entire study. It further discusses the management implications of the research results and suggests areas for future research in the field of human resources and capacity building and development programmes. The study seeks to provide answers to challenges facing the provision of services to the public in relation to the impact made by training interventions on human resource management and development in the Mpumalanga Provincial Government.

1.9. Conclusion.

The role of training and development needs to be clearly defined in order to determine whether line function managers understand their role and responsibilities. It is also imperative that the study provides the actual issues that have happened, and that are still happening, pertaining to training and development in the Mpumalanga Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport. The views of different authors are expressed in Chapter two to form an objective opinion on how training and development programmes in an ideal environment should take place.

CHAPTER TWO.

LITERATURE REVIEW.

2.1. Introduction.

This chapter provides a broader theoretical understanding on how training and development in terms of service delivery training interventions need to be administered. It helps to create a base within which line function managers can start to understand their roles and responsibilities within human resource development and a capacity building environment. The Chapter gives definitions to various concepts related to training and development.

According to Erasmus & Schenk (2008), business exists for only one reason, which is maximizing profits. In order to get to that end there are resources that are seen as means, hence human resources and budget. It is the responsibility of all the affected parties to see to it that these resources are properly managed. The National Training Board found that education and training systems have been developed in countries where a common sense of identity exists in the population, and have often followed unrest which led to, or threatened, large-scale impoverishment or economic depression.

These systems have nurtured those competencies which are prerequisites for success in industry, small business and the formal sectors, which encourage the development of a partnership between business, trade unions and the state in education and training (Erasmus & Schenk, 2008).

Strong links and a culture of cooperation have also been developed between the education and training systems and organizations to act as champions for the development of these systems (Erasmus & Schenk, 2008). Even though those education and training systems achieved success, the South African education system

faced serious challenges in 1994 e.g. large scale inconsistency in standards, the provision of facilities, resources, and the legacy of illiteracy.

Line function managers exist to achieve results and they should accept personal responsibility for the training and development of their staff. To do so they have to properly manage issues related to training interventions, capacity building and development in relation to public service delivery. There is thus no doubt that an integrated system for training and development needs to be created.

The focus of this research and its concern is on the perceived impact of training interventions on employees, change in organization's culture, organizational growth and production and the delivery of services. It is therefore imperative to make a clear distinction between training, learning, employee development, development, training intervention, employee training and development, impact assessment and employee training.

This literature review covers different definitions and concepts that are closely related to training, education, learning and development. It also covers concepts such as HRD, training trends, the impact of training and development on service delivery, principles of learning, theories and approaches and research propositions.

2.2. Definitions.

Erasmus & Van Dyk (1999), define **training** as a systematic and planned process to change the knowledge, skills and behavior of employees in such a manner that organizational objectives are achieved. Nellmapius (1996), defines **training** as a convergent process that focuses on the development of specific knowledge and skills which are usually vocational and task orientated and related to pre - defined training needs.

Nellmapius (1996) says that **development** is general and future orientated. It attempts to enhance personal and organizational potential so that coping with future changes and

challenges will be easier. It occurs on and off the job and ranges from activities such as short assignments and projects.

Erasmus & Van Dyk (1992), defines the concept of employee development as being directed at creating learning opportunities and making learning possible within an enterprise.

The term **‘training interventions’** includes any event that is deliberately planned by those responsible for training to assist learning to take place. It includes a wide range of activities from formal courses to structured work experiences and these activities are referred to as strategies. According to Reid & Barrington (1997), the first difficulty is that it is necessary to know the exact knowledge and skill of each trainee before the start of the training. Without this information, it would be impossible to assess what they have learned in the end. The advocacy of pre - and post - impact assessment on training intervention is key and vital, according to Reid et al (1997), which is also key to this research project.

Employee training and development refers to all activities designed to assist employees to gain knowledge, skills, attitude or behavior patterns that would enhance performance and career- pathing so that developmental objectives can be achieved to ensure improved service delivery.

Oxfam, Roche and Novib (2005), as quoted by Thibela (2006), define **impact** as “sustained changes in people’s lives brought about by a particular intervention”. Impact thus referred not to any immediate outputs or effects of a project or programme but to any lasting and sustained changes which have been brought about. A working definition for **impact assessment** is an evaluation of how, and to what extent, change had occurred, Oxfam et al (2005). A common definition, according to studies: Impact assessment is the systematic analysis of the lasting or significant changes i.e. positive or negative, intended or not, - in people’s lives brought about by a given action or series of actions.

Human resource development can be defined as a learning experience organized mainly by an employer, usually within a specified period of time, to bring about the possibility of performance improvement and/or personal growth, (Analoui, 2007), as quoted by Mokoena, (2002). The main focus of HRD is learning, and its principal aim is to attain the objectives of both the organization and the individual.

Employee training is job related learning that is provided by employers for their employees. The main aim is the improvement of employees' skills, knowledge and attributes so that they can perform their duties according to set standards (Nadler & Nadler, 1989; Analoui, 2007).

Casio (1998), defines **training and development** as “changes in skills, knowledge, attributes or social behavior”. Although there are numerous strategies for affecting change, training and development is a common and important one. Training is mainly designed to develop new skills and knowledge that are expected to be applied immediately upon return to the job (Meyer 1998).

Training consists of planned programs designed to improve performance at the individual, group and/or organizational levels. Improved performance, in turn, implies that there have been measurable changes in knowledge, skills, attributes, and /or social behavior (Cascio, 2003, p.290). He further went on to say, when we examine the training enterprise as a whole, it is clear that training issues can be addressed from at least two perspectives.

At the structural level, one can examine issues such as the following: the aggregate level of expenditures by the various providers of training e.g. federal, state and local governments, educational institutions, and private sector business. At the micro level, one may choose to examine issues such as: what types of training seem to yield positive outcomes for organizations and trainees; how to determine whether training is needed and, if so, what type of training best fits the needs that have been identified; how to structure the delivery of training programs, and how to evaluate the outcomes of training efforts (Cascio 2003, p.291).

Cascio (2003, p.291), emphasises that, organisations sometimes place too much emphasis on the techniques and methods of training and not enough on first defining what the employee should learn in relation to desired job behaviours.

Casio (1998, p.260), defines **learning** as “a permanent change in behavior that occurs as a results of practice or experience. It is the ability to perform and it is acquirable over a long period of time”.

2.3. Importance of HRD.

Erasmus and Schenk (2008), state that the importance of human resource development as a means of ensuring that organizations maintain their competitiveness in an ever changing environment cannot be overemphasised. According to Erasmus et al (2008), the following are a few of the many reasons why organisations train and educate employees i.e. to improve the performance of employees who do not meet the required standards of performance once their training needs have been identified, to prepare employees for future positions, to prepare employees for forthcoming organisational restructuring or for changes in technology, to ensure competitiveness in the market place by retraining employees, to increase the literacy levels of employees, to benefit the individual employee; for example, HRD helps the individual to make better decisions and increases job satisfaction, which in turn should benefit the organisation and to improve interpersonal skills and to make the organisation a better place at which to work.

The Province's history, technological innovation, performance, competitive pressures, restructuring and downsizing, illiteracy and the increasing diversity of the workforce are some of the important issues which force organisations to retrain employees and to provide basic literacy training, thus ensuring that employees are ready to face present challenges and prepare themselves for the future. Training intervention should have direct or indirect impact on service delivery in the department of Public Works, Roads and Transport within the Mpumalanga Provincial government.

According to Roche (2005, pp.2), there is an “increasing pressure on NGOs to demonstrate results and the impact of their work. Thus an efficient assessment helps to decide whether the same results could have been achieved at lower cost, or whether better results could have been achieved with only a small amount of additional resources. An effective assessment looks at the degree to which a project has achieved what it set out to do. Impact is then assessed by analysing the degree to which an intervention’s outcomes led to change in the lives of those it is intended to benefit”.

The assessment of impact has been seen as part of the appraisal stage or as a specific type of evaluation which occurs near, or after, the end of a project. Impact assessment is understood to examine only the outcome or impact level of an intervention and it should further be seen as an ongoing process throughout the training. Roche (2005, p.193), states that, “organizations and institutions must show that lasting change in policy and practice actually results in improving the lives of people”.

According to Evans (2006, pp.163), it is important to take a more holistic, integrated approach if we are to improve workplace learning through training. Employee development activity via interventions at national, industry and local community level is beginning to show results, even though it is difficult to assess the impact in relation to the individual’s key performance areas in term of service delivery. Evan et al (2006, p.168), further alludes that organisational interventions are likely to be more effective under specific conditions, namely, interventions need to address both the employee and the employer.

Rainbird (2003), indicated that the involvement of employee representatives contributes to the expression of employees’ interests and can reassure them that gains in productivity will not have a negative impact on jobs and conditions of employment. Rainbird (2003), stated that learning needs to be seen as an integral part of practice rather than a bolt - on activity and lastly, learning should be dominated by measurable changes in performance.

Training and education should be perceived as an “integrated skills development system which promotes economic, employment growth and social development through

a focus on education, training and employment services” Van Dyk, Nel & Loeoff, (1992), the alternative is a “lack of institutional coherence and co-ordination, poorly articulated programmes, separate education and training tracks, weak linkages with industrial environment” (Desi, 2001).

According to Van Dyk et al (1992), skills development should be perceived as an amalgamated reciprocal institutional coherence and co-ordination through well-structured and articulated programmes, integrated education and training tracks and strong linkages with industrial environment. The research proposal will be conducted during the 2012/2013 academic year.

According to Meyer and Botha (2004, p.52) “another broad area in the framework for strategic organization development is capability – building. If you embark on new strategies and employees do not have the knowledge of these new strategies, it is essential to build their capacity in this regard. This entails the development of capacity within the organization to do what needs to be done to achieve strategic success”.

Rothwell and Kazanas (1992:69-76), further alludes that “the following three categories of learner characteristics should be assessed in order to define the target population, namely, situation related characteristics, decision related characteristics and learner related characteristics”. Pre- and post- impact assessment tools need to be designed, crafted and developed, which will in turn, assist in measuring and evaluating the impact made by those interventions.

This proposal argues that further research needs to be undertaken on how best skills development could be monitored, coordinated and assessed if we are to build a strong foundation for the effective use of human resources. Assessing the impact made by a training intervention is not an easy exercise, hence calls for individual commitment, self determination and nationalism as a mechanism to ensure that the right things are done the right way for the right people.

Skills development should influence alterations in individual’s cognitive domain and people’s mental model, behaviour and results, hence a need for an assessment to

measure the impact for reinforcement. According to Meyer and Botha (2004,p.05), “South Africa has been identified as the worst performer in terms of competitiveness in this category, usually achieving 47th place out of 47 countries compared”.

The World Competitiveness Report clearly indicates that development and transformational practices are not effective in South African organisations.

Mpumalanga Province does not have a coherent way of developing the skills needed to make the economy competitive and thriving. Meyer and Botha (2004, p.172), states that “organisations had been using in vain skills development legislation to develop the workforce to enable them to meet organisational objectives”.

The legislation had its own weaknesses, hence a need for government intervention to try and transforms the weaknesses into strengths by introducing a skills development strategy. “This Strategy is embodied in the Skills Development Act of 1998,The Skills Development Levies Act of 1999 and numerous policy documents and regulations emanating from this regulation”, (Meyer et al, 2004,p. 173).

Assessment is one of the ways of driving change in governments, organisations and sectors. It assists also in measuring whether that which is intended to be achieved has been acquired through continuous formative and summative forms of assessment. Charles et al (2002), mentions that “Human resources of any organisation are its most important valuable assets. In the view of many top level executives, employees are the key source of an organisation’s competitive advantage”, (Brown & Kraft, 1998); (Chilton, 1994).

A well - structured assessment tool needs to be developed and endorsed which will assist in managing progress and effectiveness in order to assess to what extent training interventions reflect on the general socio-economic growth, industrialisation and socio-economic stability.

Assessing the impact made by training interventions plays a very critical and imperative role towards the organisations’ effectiveness, productivity, growth and development.

“Critically important to effective human resource management is to develop and instill core values throughout the organisations” (Down, Mardis, Conolly & Johnson, 1992).

“These values include integrity and honesty, commitment to the organizational mission, accountability for and pride in one’s work, commitment to excellence, and building trust. They form the basis for developing cohesiveness and teamwork, as well as for developing policies, procedures and programs that focus on meeting the needs of customers or clients”, (Charles et al, 2002). There should be a strong integrated link between training evaluation, assessment processes and total quality in terms of impact made by training interventions on work performance.

Schouborg (1993), in his writing, though it is a little older in terms of years is so relevant and contributory to this research topic because he brought clarity on issues related to the impact made by training interventions, “to continuously improve anything you must employ a systematic or methodical process, one that is flexible and measurable. Flexible, so that you adjust the process to the inevitable changes that will occur around it. Measurable, to have a benchmark against which you can document progress and keep the process on course. Without measurement you cannot demonstrate any improvement you may achieve, more importantly you have no reliable way of remaining on course and clear about what further progress is possible”.

As a counter- argument to nothing to evaluate, Blanchard (2004), indicated that “training is designed with some goal or objectives in mind”. The sole aim and purpose of training employees is to bring total change, improvement, progress and development in the lives of individuals and to the entire organisation.

Therefore, it is imperative and proper that impact made by training interventions be assessed, evaluated and monitored on an ongoing process. “In order for training and development to survive and grow, it must demonstrate that expenditure for training is not a cost but a sound business investment”, (Schneier, 1994). Training evaluation and intensification cannot bring total effectiveness to the organisational development.

It is good to quantify the effects of training through training value analysis but the imperatives of impact assessment cannot be underestimated at all costs. Werner (2009), believes that “top management at this optical retailer understood that employee training was important, but they wanted to know what evidence was available to show that there was in fact a payoff to the organisation from the money being spent on training”. Though not an easy exercise, but organisational competitiveness in terms of service delivery, sustainability and vibrancy, could be perceived as new hope and strength towards the broader development of the entire organisation.

According to Caudron (2000, p.12), as quoted by Mokena L. (2002), “there is for flexible yet precise ways to measure the value of training”. He notes that although this is largely true, the need to measure the contribution of training remained unfulfilled.

Management of organisations throughout the world have begun to express concern about accountability with regard to training, and have started to explore methods and techniques to measure the results of training, (Phillips, 1997).

Davidson (1998), points out that measurements of the results of human resource (HR) and human resource development (HRD) were being lauded as a modern tool of high credibility – a ‘must- use’ formula for every sophisticated HR professional who was striving to gain respect as a genuine strategic business partner. He further notes that those in HR and HRD drew attention to the success of their contributions when they could show the cost effectiveness of their efforts for their organisation.

According to Cummings and Worley (2005), as quoted by Thibela (2006), “training focuses on changing the skills and knowledge of a group of organisational members to improve their effectiveness or to build the capacities of the organisation as a system”. With regard to the effectiveness of training, Cumming and Worley (2005), “point to research indicating that companies with a higher average training expenditure per employee also have higher profits per employee”.

Improving the effectiveness of the organization as a system requires collaborative endeavours, integrated intervention efforts and the development of pre - and post -

assessment tools which will, in turn, assist in managing the impact made by the development of skills through training interventions.

According to Netshitomboni (2000), an ongoing programme covering eight areas is in place which includes supervisor, industrial relations courses as well as adult education and training. The ongoing training programmes are part of the industry training board to which they regularly send their employees. Some of the skills required tend to be acquired through experience and in-house training. Wet blues needs inspection to adapt to various processes to suit its needs.

The company does employ temporary workers only in cases when it is supposed to meet deadlines and during weekends. Skills of employees, however, transcend formal training, particular in areas of inspection, where the experience of employees is indispensable. All organisations, firms and companies indicated the salience of investing in the skills of employees through training and capacity building programmes.

Abrahams (2011), proposes that the strategy of firms, departments and organisations should allow for the development of certain skills that influence the ability to commercialise technological innovations. Organisations that have the ability to satisfy the needs of innovator and early adopter segments, tend to be market oriented which allow them to develop the resources and capabilities to develop disruptive innovations.

Organisations that satisfy the needs of mainstreams markets develop innovations based on customer feedback, and develop sustaining technologies. For an organisation to successfully develop and commercialise disruptive innovations, it must develop the expertise to successfully target the early adopters, (Slater & Mohr, 2006).

According to Sirota et al. (1998), as quoted by Mokoena (2002), there are four characteristics that seem to distinguish companies that have the most effective training practices i.e top management is committed to training and development and training is part of the corporate culture, training is tied to business strategy and objectives and also linked to bottom line results, a comprehensive and systematic approach to training exists, training and re-training are done at all levels on a continuous basis and there is a

commitment to invest the necessary resources to provide sufficient time and money for training.

Meyer (1999, p.89), as quoted by Mokoena (2002), mentions the different reasons why training does not produce the desired results: training does not meet the business needs, in training, one size does not fit all, managers do not support training and employees have a heavy workload.

Meyer (1999, p.89), as quoted by Mokoena (2002), mentions further that the shift from traditional training to performance driven impact for training is vital in meeting today's business needs. He further states that "the focus has to shift from what people need to train for to what they must do" (performance). "If training and development are to have any long term benefits; efficient learning, long term retention and positive transfer to the job are essential" (Casio, 1998,p.270).

Goldstein (1993), as quoted by Cascio (1998), discusses the six steps required in defining what is to be learned and what the substantive content of learning and development should be. These six steps are: to analyze the training and development subsystems and its interaction with other systems, to determine the training needs, specification of the training objectives, decomposing the learning task into structural components, determining an optimal sequencing of components and considering alternative ways of learning. Cascio (1998, p.262), emphasises the point that "our overall goal is to link training content to the desired job behaviours".

2.4. Training trends.

Both economic and demographic trends suggest radical changes in the composition of the workforce of the 21th century hence the following according to Cascio, (2003, p.291):

"The number of unskilled and undereducated youth who will be needed for entry- level jobs, and the need to train currently underutilized groups of racial and ethnic minorities, women, and older workers. This is the social challenge.

Increasingly sophisticated technological systems that will impose training and retraining requirements on the existing workforce. This is the high- performance work systems challenge.

Ongoing needs to meet the product and service needs of customers. This is the quality challenge.

The need as more firms move to employee involvement and teams in the workplace, for team members to learn behaviors such as asking for ideas, offering help without being asked, listening and feedback skills, and recognizing and considering the ideas of others. This is the interpersonal challenge.

Training needs stimulated by the expansion of many firms into global markets. Such needs involve the training of local nationals, as well as preparing employees, from the home country to work in foreign markets. This is the global challenge”.

2.5. Human resource development players/stakeholders.

According to Erasmus & Van Dyk (1999, p.23), the roles of training practitioners are outlined as follows:

Manager.

The training practitioner must provide the enterprise/ institution with guidance and leadership regarding training activities, during the planning process, organising, directing and controlling, to ensure that the organisation’s objectives are achieved.

Consultant.

The training practitioner acts as a consultant when assisting in solving the performance problem of employees. The training practitioner must act in response to the actual problem affecting performance.

Instructor.

The instructor requires that the learning content be activated to convey it to the target group and to facilitate its transfer. Facilitation is directed at the questioning and listening skills, as well as providing students with feedback and positive reinforcement during the learning process.

Evaluator.

The impact of training on the success of the enterprise is to be measured. Instruments that indicate all facets of performance improvement must be designed and applied.

Group facilitator.

This is the essential role of managing group discussions and group process so that individuals can learn from them and regard them as a positive experience. Important problems are addressed in group processes and group cohesion is therefore made possible.

Marketer.

The role of promoting training programmes among top management and target groups in the enterprise is key. The value of training for personal development and organisational growth must be impressed upon clients.

Application agent.

Individuals who have attended training must be assisted in applying such training in practice.

2.6. The involvement of other employees in HRD issues in an organisation.

Maggison et al (1995, p.23), outline the roles that employees play in the delivery of HRD programmes, namely:

Senior Manager.

Senior Managers are responsible for the establishment of a broad policy framework, linking HRD with other aspects of human resource management in ways which clearly support current and future organisation requirements.

Training specialists.

Training specialists work with senior managers in establishing the policy framework, design and implement detailed proposals for learning against specified objectives.

Line Managers.

Line Managers ensure that the policy framework and detailed proposal reflect operational requirements, and actively support subordinate learning with particular emphasis given to its application and utilisation.

Employees.

The role of employees is to commit themselves to their own development and to support management's attempt to relate this to enhanced organisational effectiveness.

2.7. Structural Issues in the Delivery of Training.

Cascio further alludes that despite compelling arguments for training, at least eight structural issues must be addressed if training systems are to reach their full potential. Cascio (2003), has identified problems at macro level and the following explanations are what Cascio proposed:

Corporate commitment is lacking and uneven. Most companies spend nothing at all on training. Those that do, tend to concentrate on managers, technicians and professionals, not rank and file workers. Fortunately, this is changing, for, as a result of the rapid pace of introduction of new technology, combined with new approaches to organisation design and production management, many companies simply cannot afford to overlook training. In an increasingly competitive market place, the ability to implement rapid

changes in products and technologies is often a key requirement to preserving the competitive edge.

Aggregate expenditures by business on training are inadequate. Thus the American Society for Training and Development urges business to increase training expenditures to at least 2 percent of their annual payrolls on training- up from the current U.S. industry average of 1.2 percent. Leading companies invest much more, e.g General Electric 4.6% of payroll, U.S. Robotics 4.2%, Motorola 4% and Texas Instruments 3%.

Businesses complain that universities award degrees, but there is no guarantee that graduates have mastered skills. As a result, business must spend large amount of money to retrain workers in basic skills. In a recent survey, companies reported that, on average, 34.1% of applicants lack functional workplace literacy- the ability to read instructions, write reports, or do arithmetic at a level adequate to perform common workplace tasks. However, only about 6.5% of the companies provide remedial training in these basic skills.

Poaching trained workers is a major problem for U.S. businesses, and provides a strong disincentive for training. Gary Tooker, CEO of Motorola, says, "If knowledge is becoming antiquated at a faster rate, we have no choice but to spend on education". This has profound consequences for "selling" senior managers on the value of training in the United States.

Despite the rhetoric about training being viewed as an investment, current accounting rules require that it be treated as an expense. Businesses might spend more on training if accounting rules were revised. Unlike investments in plant and equipment, which show up on the books as an asset, training expenditures are seen merely as expenses to be deducted in the year in which they are incurred.

Government is not providing enough funds for retraining to help workers displaced as a result of downsizing or the defence contraction. Throughout the industrialised world, government leaders are focusing on one of the most corrosive, dangerous trends of the new millenium: the inability for modern economies to ease the transitions that the

young, the poor and older workers must make to keep up with rapid technological changes in the workplace.

Employers and schools must develop closer ties. Schools are often seen as not responsive to labor market demands. Businesses is seen as not communicating its demands to schools. The development of a national curriculum for training entry level manufacturing technicians seeks to bring closer ties between employers and schools.

Organised labor through formations have developed first - rate apprenticeship programmes in a number of crafts. Now they are getting involved in “ soft skills” training as well.

2.8. Impact of training and development on service delivery.

According to Cascio (2003), one investigation reported the following returns on investment (ROI) for various types of training: behavior modification, customer service, team training and sales training. He further indicated that, at a more general level, the literature on training evaluation shows that while the potential returns from well conducted training programs can be substantial, there is often considerable variability in the effectiveness with which any given training method or content area is implemented.

Considerable planning and follow up programme evaluation efforts are necessary in order to realize these returns. Given the pace of change in modern society and technology, retraining is imperative to enable individuals to compete for, or retain, their jobs and to enable organisations to compete in the market place.

2.9. Principles of learning.

For effective and efficient learning, long term retention and positive transfer to the job to take place, there are certain principles of learning that have to be adhered to. These principles are; knowledge of results, transfer of training, self management to maintain changes in behaviour, reinforcement, practice and motivation (Cascio, 1998, p.270).

Knowledge of results.

Knowledge of results provides information that enables the learner to correct mistakes and provides reinforcement, thereby motivating the learner (Cascio, 1998).

Greller (1980), as quoted by Cascio (1998), states that supervisors often underestimate the importance subordinates attach to feedback from the task itself, comparisons to the work of others and co - workers comments. He further states that supervisors often underestimate the importance of formal rewards, informal assignments and comments from the boss.

Transfer of training.

Transfer of training is the effective and continuing application by trainees to their jobs, of the knowledge and skills gained in training, both on and off the job (Kline & Saunders,1993).

According to Baldwin & Ford (1998), as quoted by Cascio (1998), the following factors should be considered in order to maximise positive transfer of training, namely:

The similarity between the training situation and job situation should be maximised.

Trainees should be provided with as much experience as possible with the task, concepts or skills being taught so that they can learn to deal with situations that do not fit textbook examples exactly.

Trainers should ensure that trainees thoroughly understand the principles that are being taught.

Trainers should provide a strong link between training content and job content.

In team based training, trainers should ensure that teams have open, unrestricted access to information.

Trainers and supervisors should ensure that what is learned in training is used and rewarded on the job. If immediate supervisors' peers do not support what was learned in training, either by their words or by example, they must not expect the training to have much of an impact on performance.

Cascio (1998), mentions that the attitude of trainees may also affect transfer of training. He further states that transfer is likely to be higher when trainees are confident in using their newly – learned skills, when they are aware of work situations where they can demonstrate their new skills. Transfer is also likely to be higher when trainees perceive that both job and organisational performance will improve, if they use the new skills and if they believe that the knowledge and skills emphasised in training are helpful in solving work - related problems.

Parry (1997), contend that four major factors frequently inhibited the success of training, namely, lack of involvement by top management in the behaviour change process, recognition that efforts towards improvement were over - centralised in the top echelons of the organisation, which resulted in lack of acceptance by lower level participants. Executives believed that efforts to improve employee behaviour were too 'staff – centered', with insufficient participation by the direct users. Executives further believed that expectations from the training programmes were unrealistic since too much was expected soon.

To avoid the problem of lack of transfer of skills after a training programme, instructors could design the learning experience so that identical elements exist in both the training and the actual job circumstances, as illustrated in table 1,2 and 3 (Kline & Saunders, 1993).

Table 1 : Strategies for Managers, Trainers and Trainees for Managing Transfer of Training Before Exposure to Training.

Responsibility	Before exposure
Managers	To involve supervisors and trainees in needs analysis procedure. To involve trainees in programme planning. Brief trainees on the importance of the course and course objectives. Provide time to complete pre-course assignments. Offer rewards and promotional preference to trainees who demonstrate new behaviours. Prioritisation of organizational training needs. Provide a positive training environment. Plan to participate in training sessions. Develop a supervisor /trainee contract. Plan pre- assessment on training interventions

Trainer	Align training programme with the organisation's strategic plan. Involve managers and trainees. Systematically design instruction. Provide practice opportunities. Develop trainee readiness. Design a peer coaching component for the programme and its follow - up activities.
Trainee	Provide input into programme planning Actively explore training options Participate in advance activities

Adapted from Neurolink Transfer of Training Module (2000): Source: Kline & Saunders

Table 2 : Strategies for Managers, Trainers and Trainees for Managing Transfer of Training During Exposure to Training.

Responsibility	During exposure
Managers	Prevent interruptions. Transfer work assignments to others. Communicate managerial support for the programme. Monitor attendance and attention to training. Recognise trainee participation. Participate in transfer action planning. Review training information on employees. Plan assessment of transfer of new skills.

Trainer	Develop application – orientation objectives. Manage the learning process. Provide realistic work- related tasks. Provide visualisation feedback. Give individual attention to trainees. Provide job performance aids. Create opportunities for support groups. Help trainees create individual action plan. Design and conduct relapse prevention sessions.
Trainee	Participate actively. Form support groups. Plan for applications. Anticipate relapse.

Adapted from Neurolink Transfer of Training Module (2000) Source: Kline and Saunders.

Table 3 : Strategies for Managers, Trainers and Trainees for Managing Transfer of Training After Exposure to Training.

Responsibility	After training
Managers	Plan post- assessment on training interventions. Psychologically support transfer. Provide a “reality check”. Provide opportunities to practice new skills. Have trainees participate in transfer – related decisions.. Reduce job pressures. Debrief the trainer. Give positive reinforcement . Set mutual expectations for improvement . Arrange refresher sessions. Support trainee reunions. Publicise successes. Give promotional preference.

Trainer	Provide follow up support. Conduct evaluation surveys and provide feedback. Develop and administer recognition systems. Provide refresher/problem solving sessions.
Trainee	Practice self management. Review training content and learned skills. Develop a mentoring relationship. Maintain contact with buddies.

Adapted from Neurolink Transfer of Training Module (2000): Source: Kline & Saunders

Self - management to maintain changes in behavior.

According to Max (1992), as quoted by Cascio (1998), self-management is described as a novel approach to the maintenance of newly trained behaviours. He further explains that the first step to self management is to make trainees aware of the relapse process itself.

Reinforcement.

In order for good behaviour to be acquired, modified and sustained, it must be rewarded or reinforced. Haire (1964), as quoted by Cascio (1998), suggests that if the supervisor does not reinforce what is learned in training, then the training itself will be encapsulated and the transfer will be minimal or negative.

Practice.

“Practice refers to the active use of training content”, (Cascio, 1998). He further notes that training has three aspects, namely, active practice, over – learning and the length of the practice session. All the above, mentioned three aspects that have an impact on the trainees’ ability to learn and apply what has been learned in the work environment.

Motivation.

In order to learn, one must first be intrinsically and extrinsically motivated. Noe and Wilk (1993), state that in practice, however, more attention is usually paid to the trainees’ ability to learn than to their motivation to learn, or to their interaction of ability and motivation.

2.10. Learning.

According to Rothwell and Sredi (1992), learning is a change in knowledge, skills and attitude. They classify four theories of learning. Firstly, Learning could be viewed as a process of giving or receiving information (pedagogy). Secondly, learning could be understood according to the theory of behaviourism, where it is viewed as an association of a series of stimuli and accompanying responses. Thirdly, learning could be considered as a result of insight and perception, according to the theory of cognitivism. Lastly, in terms of developmentalism, learning could be viewed as a means of meeting human needs.

2.11. Theories and Approaches

The integration of institutional, rational and system approaches and consideration of corporatism, reinforcement, cognitive, behaviourism, cybernetic and information theories are key to business and society and the problems posed for coherent theory development.

However, this study is principally concerned with impact assessment dimensions on training interventions and ethics. Demsetz (1973), though older research, provides a noteworthy attempt on “considering the impact of market competition on public policy formation, industrial policy formation, political relationships, intergovernmental relationships and the consequences of the clash of corporate nationalism”.

Institutional Approach.

Kraft and Furlong (2004), emphasis the way in which governments are structured, and the way they arranged their legal powers, rules and procedures. Integrated institutional arrangements, reciprocal relationships amongst human resource development units within government departments, training academies, further education and training (FET) and Higher education and Training (HET) could allow an opportunity to encourage corporate engagement in a very systematic way. Policy on training interventions should impact on issues such as change, better performance, networking, deliberations and collaborations. Institutions are key organs in the determination and implementation of public policies.

As Anderson points out (1997:31), “little was done to explain how these institutions actually operate, rather than how they are supposed to operate”. Institutional theory is key in this research proposal as it impacts on aspects of government structures and procedures. It is in the interest of all organisations and departments within provinces to make progress, success and growth. The ways in which institutions are structured and arranged have important consequences for the adoption and content of public policies.

Rhodes (2000:55), argues that the emergence of networks is not the end of state authority per se but the redefinition of it, characterized by a much more open minded allowance for more diversity and experimentation. Flexibility and diversity are key elements in bringing changes and growth in terms of performance and viability within institutions.

Rational Approach.

According to Morse and Struyk (2006), the decision - maker - is confronted with a problem that can be both clearly defined and separated from other problems. Impact assessment on training interventions is a grey area in this research proposal hence a need for an institutional rational decision - making through corporate engagements, strategies and means. Goals and values that guide the decision – maker are clear and ranked in order of performance.

The current strategy which is used for training and development of human capital in Mpumalanga does not have a provision for the assessment of training interventions on human capital and its impact. “The examination of all alternatives, calculation of all the costs and benefits of each alternative, weighing up the consequences of each alternative against the impact of other alternatives, and choosing the option which best contributes to the realization of the stated policy goal”. (Morse & Struyk, 2006).

Corporatism Theory.

Corporatism theory determines the best policy reforms, strategies and tools that should ensure that “decisions - making become cooperative enterprises in which the actors are mutually dependent”, (Ham & Hill, 1993). An institutional arrangement in Mpumalanga Provincial Government is key in making rational and corporate - decisions in this research proposal. “This cooperative relationship can serve purposes of both control and creation of harmony”, (Schmitter, 1974).

Reciprocal relationships between, and among supervisors and employees need to be fuelled up and encouraged through performance initiatives and development programmes and interventions, with performance assessment measures, tools and strategies in place.

Reinforcement Theory.

According to Skinner (1965), the assumption is that “receiving a ‘reward’ (which for human is not corn, but might be feedback in the form of being told that they have done well) gives positive reinforcement to that response and motivates them to continue and extent their learning”. Praise or reinforcing feedback, whether positive or negative, serve as a motivating factor and can be done through assessing pre - and post - impact on the training conducted.

According to this theory, the development of impact assessment tools will assist in shaping the development of human resources through training interventions and better performance in terms of service delivery within institutions, government departments and training academies.

Cybernetic and information theory

Stammers and Patrick (1975), and Duncan and Kelly (1983), concentrated on how information is received and monitored within training institutions, government departments and the private sector. “They liken the way in which feedback can control human performance to the manner in which a thermostat controls a heating system.

The temperature is monitored and regulated because information fed back from the thermostat determines the level of power input to the system”. In a training situation the most usual form of feedback is provided by an instructor, but sometimes it can be given by simulators which act as artificial ‘thermostats’ and help the trainee monitor his or her performance.

The system approach.

According to Goldstein (1980), there is no one single ‘system’ approach to training. System thinking is all about relationships between parts of a system, about their appropriateness, effectiveness, accuracy and feedback, which acts as a judging mechanism and feeds new operational decisions.

“A systems approach may equally address the training system per se: assessing the impact of training policy; challenging the quality of data which comes from appraisal; suggesting new ways of evaluating actual training activities; comparing the effectiveness of different training methods; identifying whether learning transfers easily between off-the-job training events and the workplace; redefining trainer roles; and so on ad infinitum.

It can immediately be seen, however, that this approach cannot normally replace others: it will seek to refine and improve those others by continually reviewing them”. Impact assessment on training intervention should be regarded as a collective effort, a system and corporate endeavour within training institutions in both public and private sectors.

2.12. Regulatory Framework in training issues.

National Skills Development Strategy 2005- 2010 spell out information on critical skills development matters which are relevant and key to this research proposal. The impact of information dissemination is researched, measured and communicated in terms of capacity building. The Skills Development Act, No.97 of 1998, talks about improving skills levels and the creation of new skills in building internationally competitive industries, sustainability and socio-economic growth.

The Skills Development Levies Act, No.9 of 1999, outlines a levy payable by employers within institutions to various SETA's or their approved body for skills development. Departmental Workplace Skills Plans within government departments and private sector serve as guidelines and vehicles in the implementation of training interventions. The Provincial Growth and Development Strategy and Human Resource Development Strategy 2005-2014 for the Mpumalanga Province impacts directly on this research proposal. The White Paper on Human Resource Management, 1997, spells out that public service need to undergo fundamental change which also impacts positively on this research topic.

2.13. Research Propositions.

Based on the literature review and the problems defined earlier in this report, six research propositions have been identified, namely:

- ❖ If the supervisor or employee does not reinforce what is learned in training, the training itself will be encapsulated.
- ❖ Attitudes of trainees may also affect transfer of training.
- ❖ The shift from traditional training to performance driven impact for training is vital.
- ❖ Employee training is all about bringing change, improvement progress and development
- ❖ Evaluation and training should be perceived as an integrated skills development system.
- ❖ Government departments and organisations should maintain their competitiveness in an ever changing environment.

2.14. Conclusion of literature review.

This chapter has provided the theoretical basis for managers to understand different conceptual definitions, processes and systems that are relevant for the successful administration and management of training and development functions in any organisation. More light has been shed on the roles and responsibilities of managers, employees and trainers to ensure that the training function is a cross cutting one which requires commitment from everyone. This will take us to the practical environment which is outlined in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE.

RESEARCH METHODS AND METHODOLOGY.

3.1. Introduction.

The research section outlines the manner in which the researcher approached the investigation on service delivery training interventions, in terms of the primary research question, which is outlined in chapter two, which read thus: To what extent does the development of skills through training interventions impact on service delivery in the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport within Mpumalanga Provincial Government?

The research methodology utilized was based on qualitative research methodology. The research techniques were appropriate as data was gathered and collected from experts in a particular context (human resource utilization and capacity building) and their perceptions and knowledge of the industry formed the basis of the framework designed in this research. The problem was defined and a literature research conducted to generate potential solutions to the research problem.

Re-invention of the wheel was not the intention of this research. For Neumann, in a case study, a researcher may intensively investigate one or two cases or compare a limited set of cases, focusing on several factors (Neumann, 2003). “Researchers who conduct exploratory research must be creative, open minded, flexible, adopt an investigative stance and explore all sources of information”, Neumann, (2011, p.38). Data gathered during interviews with respondents was subject to interpretation to extract common themes viewed as imperative. Data was then analyzed, recommendations made and eventually a conclusion was drawn from the study.

3.2. Research methods and methodology.

Interviews have been chosen as the best research method because expertise and training practitioners on training matters have first-hand information, experience and vivid knowledge on the subject matter. Qualitative research methodology allows an opportunity to elaborate on factors that are considered necessary by respondents, and as such, some factors that are unique to new technologies and emerging markets that are missing from the literature review may be unearthed, which may eventually result in extracting factors that are imperative as well as a clear training intervention framework for skills development institutions.

The research methodology was focused on determining an individual's perception of the research problem. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2009), phenomenology attempts to ascertain an individual understanding of a problem and a content analysis to identify biases, themes and patterns. Hyde (2000), in his article on analyzing deductive processes in qualitative research mentions that a researcher expands and generalizes theories in qualitative research instead of establishing the frequency of the event.

Hill and McGowan (1999), reason that the reality of each participant is individualistic in nature and differs from other individuals, which suit a qualitative research paradigm. A qualitative study attempts to unveil multiple viewpoints on the topic rather than a particular truth (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005).

3.3. Research design.

Patton (2002), alludes that, in qualitative research, an understanding of the research problem in a real-world context is sought, with no attempt by the researcher to manipulate the research of interest. Qualitative research is defined as “any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p.17). This research methodology attempts to find a causal link between phenomena, thus allowing for interpretation, prediction and generalization of findings.

Qualitative research methodology further seeks to explore, enlighten, and understand phenomena. Drawing a complete and accurate selection is not an easy task for this study; therefore, purposive selection based on the expertise is recognized as the best option (Groenewald, 1986).

On selection of interviewees using purposive selection as a technique, this study made use of focused interview (Denzin, 1972). In this format, the interviewer works with a fixed list of questions to be covered but alters that list for each respondent (Denzin, 1972). Through this research method, the researcher aims to gather common information and diversity in terms of options that are prevalent and relevant to service delivery training interventions.

The study also aims to make effective use of probes and follow - up questions in an attempt to obtain more details and accurate information from respondents, especially where the interviewee was intentionally making use of vague and indirect language (Bailey, 1994). This ensures that all topics of interest are covered, and the amount of irrelevant information reduced (Bailey, 1994).

This research was exploratory in nature and the intention was for the research outcome to provide guidance on the improvement of service delivery through training interventions in the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport in Mpumalanga Province. Structured questions were developed and interviewees were engaged in an open discussion following the sequence of the questions as a guideline.

3.4. Population and Sample.

Population.

The population included employees, individuals and persons who were clued up and knowledgeable about the research topic with the sole aim of exploring phenomena where relatively little was known. Human resource development cadres and practitioners, skills development expertise and skills development facilitators were drawn from three departments within Mpumalanga Province.

The research population was drawn from networks that the researcher had to other departments. The criteria used were that, the individual is an expert in skills development related issues, an employee was employed in the Human Resource Development Unit, employees' rank ranged from Assistant Managers (salary level 9-10) Manager (salary level 11-12), and Senior Managers (salary level 13-14).

Sample and Sampling method.

The sample included representative from the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport, Premier's Office and Education Department. Respondents were selected purely on networks that the researcher had within the skills development industry and institutions, human resource utilization and capacity building and development sections, cadres and experts on skills development related matters and the candidate's willingness to participate.

The selected sample represented a judgmental sample as they were knowledgeable and well informed about training and skills development matters in relation to performance and the delivery of services. Leedy and Ormrod (2009), suggest that qualitative researchers should select a few people who can provide the most comprehensive insight into the problem being investigated, as opposed to selecting a large sample in order to make a generalization.

The sample was non-random and non- probable due to the nature of this type of research. According to Leedy and Ormrod (1997), simple stratified sampling is used when a population consists of definite strata, each of which is distinctly different but the units within the stratum are as homogeneous as possible. The target sample size was 15 respondents; however only 11 interviews were completed. A questionnaire and a consent form was developed and distributed to respondents prior to the interview so as to allow thorough and adequate preparedness of the interview session.

This was done to maximize the in-depth flow of knowledge and information during the interview process and it was done through the internal post and e-mail as a form of

communication with participants and role players in the research project. A sample of questionnaire and a consent form can be found in Appendix A and B.

3.5. Research Instruments.

The data was gathered and collected through one - on - one interviews with the respondents. Respondents were made aware in time by setting up appointments with the consent form signed. Semi- structured, open ended questions were asked. The advantage of semi- structured interview questions was that new data was unlocked and uncovered, allowing the researcher an opportunity to shift focus.

The interviews allowed the respondents to share information, brainstorm and explore on how best training interventions could be co- ordinated, managed and administered. Further to this, prompts and guiding questions were used to address the propositions adequately.

Due to the need to probe and ask follow up questions, in- depth face - to - face interviews were selected as a means to complete the research project. The interviews were exploratory and semi- structured in nature, and revolved around a few guiding questions.

The disadvantage of semi- structured interviews could be that the researcher may alter people's beliefs, and how events may unfold, through the interview process while the advantage could be that, new data can be uncovered, allowing the researcher to shift focus, (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001).

Interviews, further, foster an environment conducive to an open discussion of current issues. The conversation was electronically recorded on voice recorders with the permission of the interviewees. The research propositions outlined in Chapter two were adapted as part of the research instruments.

Research proposition One.

If the supervisor or employee does not reinforce what is learned in training, the training itself will be encapsulated.

In order for good behavior to be acquired, modified and sustained, it must be rewarded or reinforced. One needs to be intrinsically and extrinsically motivated in order to learn. Noe and Wilk (1993), state that in practice, however, more attention usually is paid to the trainees' ability to learn than to their motivation to learn, or to their interaction of ability and motivation.

Interview question no.1 in the sample questionnaire was used to determine whether the employees perceived this proposition to be true or false. Employers, supervisors and managers should consider new and improved ways which will contribute towards the province's socio-economic factors and employee performance in terms of service delivery in the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport within Mpumalanga Provincial Government.

Research Proposition Two.

Attitudes of trainees may also affect transfer of training.

Transfer of training is likely to be higher when trainees are confident in using their newly-learned skills, when they are aware of work situations where they can demonstrate their new skills. Transfer is also likely to be higher when trainees perceive that both job and organizational performance will improve if they use the new skills and if they believe that the knowledge and skills emphasized in training are helpful in solving work-related problems (Cascio, 1998). Executives believed that efforts to improve employee behaviour were too 'staff – centered', with insufficient participation by the direct users.

According to, O' Neill (1990), any change in an organisation's culture requires that each organisational group learn the behaviours, norms, values and basic assumptions of the new culture. O' Neill (1990) also states that it is particularly critical for members of management to learn all facets of the new culture effectively and efficiently. Executives further believed that expectations from the training programmes were unrealistic since too much was expected too soon. Interview question no.2 was used to test the validity of this research proposition.

Research Proposition Three.

The shift from traditional training to performance driven impact for training is vital.

According to the above literature findings, the focus has to shift from what people need to train for to what they must do (performance). If training and development are to have any long term benefits; "efficient learning ,long term retention and positive transfer to the job are essential", (Casio,1998,p.270).

Statement no.3 was used to test the authenticity of this proposition. In order to achieve this research proposition, respondents should acknowledge the perception that they receive the necessary feedback and training and that they have access to all the resources they need to render good service to the public in Mpumalanga, and if the respondents further perceive that training can bring about change in behaviour and development.

Research Proposition four.

Employee training is all about bringing change, improvement progress and development.

The above literature findings highlighted that it is imperative and proper that impact made by training interventions be assessed, evaluated and monitored on an ongoing basis and continuously. "In order for training and development to survive and grow, it must demonstrate that expenditure for training is not a cost but a sound business

investment” (Schneier et al, 1994). Training evaluation and intensification cannot bring total effectiveness to the organizational development and change.

Employees are empowered to use the knowledge gained to better perform their duties in terms of the delivery of services in the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport within Mpumalanga Province. Interview question no. 4 was used to test this proposition.

Research Proposition five.

Evaluation and training should be perceived as an integrated skills development system.

“Lack of institutional coherence and co-ordination, poorly articulated programmes, separate education and training tracks, weak linkages with industrial environment” (Desi, 2001). According to Van Dyk (1992), and Desi (2001), skills development should be perceived as an amalgamated reciprocal institutional coherence and co-ordinated through well structured and articulated programmes, integrated education and training tracks and strong linkages with industrial environment. It is important to take a more holistic, integrated approach if we are to improve workplace learning through training. Interview question no. 5 was used to check the correctness of this research proposition.

Research Proposition six.

Government departments and organizations should maintain their competitiveness in an ever changing environment.

The Province’s history, technological innovation, performance, competitive pressures, restructuring and downsizing, illiteracy and the increasing diversity of the workforce are some of the important issues which force organizations to retrain employees and to provide basic literacy training, thus ensuring that employees are ready to face present challenges and prepare themselves for the future. Training should have direct or indirect impact on service delivery in the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport within Mpumalanga Provincial Government.

Interview question no.3 and 4 were used to determine whether this proposition is true or false. Impact assessment on training has been seen as part of the appraisal stage or as a specific type of evaluation occurs near or after the end of a project. It is understood to examine the outcome or impact level of an intervention and it should further be seen as an ongoing process throughout the training.

3.6. Procedure for data collection

Respondents were informed in time about the interview dates. A consent form with the questions to be asked was sent to each respondent prior to the interview. Semi-structured, thought provoking questions were used to furnish a framework for the interviewees responses.

All interviews were held and conducted at the respondents' preferred geographical location. This was mainly due to the detailed information sought as well as the busy nature of the respondents, making the interview process convenient for them. The questions were asked in an interview setting.

The interviews were scheduled to be an hour long; however, the actual time varied from 45 to 60 minutes. Interviews were recorded. Areas of interests were explored and raised by the interviewer during the interview proceedings in some instances that may not have been uncovered in the literature review.

The primary objective of the research was to explore, investigate and make proposals with regard to improved service delivery and performance through the development of impact assessment tools, effective utilization of human resources and to make recommendations on how best skills development could be co-ordinated, managed, assessed and evaluated. According to Leedy and Ormrod (1997), data gathered can be in the form of words, images or physical objects.

The primary research guiding question read thus, to what extent does the development of skills through training interventions impact on service delivery? The primary research question gave rise to three subsequent build - up questions, namely, why is it imperative to regularly review the training and development needs of employees? Does an

investor in human resource evaluate the investment in training and development to assess achievement and improve future effectiveness? Why is it important to train and develop individuals on recruitment and throughout their employment?

3.7. Data analysis and interpretation

Leedy and Ormrod (2009), point out that there is no correct way to analyse data in qualitative research. They suggest that analysis starts with categorizing and sorting through large bodies of information to identify the smaller underlying themes. These themes are often only identified after evaluating the body of the material collected. In qualitative research, data analysis, interpretation and collection is often enmeshed with the data collection process (Leedy & Ormrod, 2009). The content of data collected was analysed and different themes for different propositions were formulated, determining which themes were considered to be the most relevant.

Uncovered new themes were added, and a comparison between the percentages of respondents that identified a particular theme as relevant was made. The approach used to analyse and interpret the data was based on Cresswell's (2003), four steps of data analysis:

- Organise the data: this was done by sorting, storing and transcribing interview results in a central location.
- Study the entire data set.
- Identify categories or themes: this confirms the categories and allocates information to the relevant theme.
- Integrate and summarise the data in write – ups.

Data analysis and interpretation was done this way:

The interview transcripts were recorded and transcribed by the researcher. All transcribed interviews were broken into coded segments representing complete thought statements. After coding, all the interview segments were transferred from word processing format into a spreadsheet format for further analysis. The transcribed

interviews were coded according to themes that coincided with the major areas of the research questions.

A theme may occur several times within an interview, but for the purpose of analysis, this theme may only be counted once per interview transcript. Besides the themes directly linked to the research questions, the researcher anticipated further findings (that were not covered by the literature review) arising from the interviews. These themes were then grouped together into the appropriate categories and presented in the discussion in the concluding sections of the research findings.

3.8. Reliability and validity.

It is important in any research project that the measuring instrument is both valid and reliable. According to Kalaf (2008), reliability relates to consistency in research findings.

It is further defined as “the extent to which similar research conducted in future will results in similar outcomes (Leedy and Ormrod, 2009). Where the reliability is good, error is reduced in the research findings (Kalaf, 2008). In order to ensure uniformity, the researcher conducted all interviews personally and followed the semi- structured approach. Reliability, on the other hand is supposed to measure across samples and over time. Although the sample size is relatively small, they holistically represented human resource development, capacity building and development in terms of skills.

Reliability was ensured at all times during the research process hence data recording and transcribing to ensure that it had been correctly captured. Follow - up questions during the interview session were raised to acquire further information relevant to the research topic.

Validity correlates the ‘goodness of fit’ between all elements of the research methodology results and data analysis (Kalaf, 2008). According to Joppe (2000), as quoted by Abrahams (2011), validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are. Researchers generally determine validity by asking a series of questions, and will often look for the answers in the research of others. In this research project, internal validity is

assumed to outweigh external validity because the sample size is relatively small. Leedy and Ormrod (1997), further defines validity as “concerned with soundness, the effectiveness of the measuring instrument”.

Internal validity.

Internal validity is “the study of drawing appropriate conclusions from the data at hand” (Kalaf, 2008 p.156). This is highlighted by the fact that, in qualitative research, the researchers’ biases and values will always influence the interpretation of the data. Subjectivity was minimized by linking the questions asked directly to the propositions of the research.

The research satisfies the elements of internal validity as the respondents chosen represent all major role players in human resource development, capacity building and development. This study made use of a representative sample to ensure the internal validity of the data. The sample was drawn from individuals who are currently employed in various departments within the Mpumalanga Provincial Government, namely, Public Works, Roads and Transport Department, Education Department and Office of the Premier.

External validity.

External validity is closely related to generalization, i.e. the degree to which the conclusions in the research would hold for other persons and organizations in other places and at other times (Leedy and Ormrod, (2009). In the research conducted, one can generalize to service delivery training intervention in the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport in Mpumalanga Province. It would be difficult to generalize the interviewee’s responses to all persons in the population, as one would have to consider specific themes emerging from the research project. The research sample was small and convenient. Despite this, limited generalizations could still be made by the researcher. The interview was therefore reliable and has relatively good external validity.

3.9. Conclusion

According to the literature reviewed, one can draw some inference to say, much still need to be done. It has emerged that there is uncertainty amongst managers within Public Works, Roads and Transport Department as to how and what to extent should line managers be involved in the identification and implementation of training and development interventions. Research methodology adopted was a qualitative approach and the research findings of this study are outlined in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS.

4.1. Introduction.

In chapter three (3), the researcher indicated that the data collection method used was interviews, which involved interviewing a total of 11 employees within the middle and senior management level of the organization and other organizations within Mpumalanga Provincial Government. Responses gathered during the interviews were grouped into themes and related back to the propositions. This was tabulated, and related back to the themes.

4.2. Composition of Respondents.

Before the research analysis is undertaken, a clear understanding of the respondents is required. All 11 respondents were individuals who are employed in various departments within Mpumalanga Provincial Government and whose rank ranges from salary level 9-13, namely, Public Works, Roads and Transport Department, Education Department and Office of the Premier, and who are hands - on and knowledgeable about human resource development issues, capacity building and development.

A total number of 11 interviews were conducted in person over a period of 6 months. The sample was representative of Assistant Managers, Managers and Senior Managers who are currently employed in Human Resource Utilization and Capacity Development in the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport, Education and Premier' Office within Mpumalanga Provincial Government. Interviewed individuals needed confidentiality hence their names were not disclosed.

4.3. Interview process

Respondents were informed in advance telephonically and through e-mails about the interview dates. Five semi - structured questions and a consent form were developed. Participants were made aware that the interviews were conducted as part of the fulfillment of the requirements for the degree.

The research topic was introduced and clarified before engagement. A time was set and respondents were made to sign the consent form after reading it. Once this was done, the interviewer enquired from the respondents whether there were other barriers that prevented them from providing the required unbiased feedback on research being undertaken.

The findings of the respondents, in terms of service delivery training interventions in the Mpumalanga Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport were captured and sorted according to the five propositions. Semi - structured interview questions were linked to research propositions respectively. The findings were presented as below:

Results pertaining to Proposition One.

If supervisor or employee does not reinforce what is learnt in training, the training itself will be encapsulated.

All five questions of the semi - structured interviews were designed to initiate open deliberations, discussions and elaborative engagements. Responses to views about service delivery training interventions in Mpumalanga Province were presented as follows:

Three (3) respondents out of nine (9) expressed their sentiments on the important role of supervisors and the symbiotic relationship between the public and private sector on service delivery training interventions.

Training interventions were to be implemented fully through the Departmental Workplace Skills Plan. Respondent A indicated the importance of reciprocal relationship between supervisors and employees. Lack of close monitoring and supervision resulted in employees attending training as a way of destressing themselves from the work environment. Employees' PDP's are not relevant to employee's key performance areas. Inability of supervisors to quantify the money spent on training interventions in relation to individuals' work and key performance areas is another critical area.

Respondent C clearly stated the need to revitalize, reinforce and strengthened the reciprocal relationship between the public and private sector. Respondent E commented about the establishment of a conducive and workable environment between supervisors and employees in order for training results to be realized. Two respondents questioned the illegitimacy of training institutions and their competencies. Three respondents questioned the inability of Departments to comply with Skills Development Levies Act, No.9 of 1999, in terms of the 1% total wage bill.

All respondents agreed that budgetary constraints and limited resources impact negatively on service delivery training interventions. Re - definition of the skills programme in terms of service delivery was raised by respondents. One respondent questioned the effectiveness and competencies of Human Resource Development Units in Departments within the Province.

Empowerment and capacitation of Departmental Skill Development Facilitators was raised by respondents. Two respondents emphasised the development of pre - and post - impact assessment tools on training interventions. Alignment of training interventions with the WSP is critical and key, according to respondents. Performance Management and Development Systems were not linked to work performance.

Results pertaining to Proposition Two.

Attitudes of trainees may also affect transfer of training.

Responses to views about the realization of improvement on work performance after training interventions were presented as follows:

Respondents varied greatly on improved work performance after training interventions took place. Two respondents agreed that improvement has been realized sporadically though the impact on work performance is immeasurable. Growth and promotions based on competency have been realized as well as results of training interventions. Three respondents indicated that speed at service delivery has improved significantly. Two respondents argued that little improvement has been realised, since there are no tools in place to measure performance.

Two respondents settled on the sentiments that improvement on work performance is hardly realized as results of training interventions that are irrelevant and do not assist individuals in building towards full qualifications. All respondents agreed that improvement on work performance is immeasurable since there are no tools in place to measure the impact. One respondent argued that the Workplace Skills Plan needed to be costed before implementation for prioritization.

There is need for the enforcement of managers at all levels to manage and monitor performance. One respondent echoed that, “a happy worker is a productive worker”. The development of strategies for sustainability, retention and growth in terms of critical and scarce skills is required.

Results pertaining to Proposition Three.

The shift from traditional training to performance driven impact for training is vital.

Responses to views about the importance of training and developing employees throughout their employment were presented below:

All respondents stated that skills development has been one of the key areas prioritized by the National Department of Labour. The Department does not comply with the Skills Development Levies Act in terms of the minimum 1% wage bill. Any developmental state needs to have the necessary skills for socio-economic development.

Training should not be viewed as an expense, but rather be viewed as an investment. One respondent commented on the use of consultants and encouraged the empowerment and capacitation of human resource practitioners. All respondents alluded to the new changing technologies and adjustments to new environments and circumstances. Knowledge should not be limited. Human capital investment is key for good results.

Results pertaining to Proposition Four.

Employee training is all about bringing change, improvement, progress and development.

Responses to views about impact assessment on training interventions were presented as follows:

80% of the respondents highlighted the need to develop pre - and post - training assessment tools on training interventions in order to determine the impact. Realization of value for money is imperative.

One respondent argued that training alone cannot bring a total change, development and progress in the lives of people is necessary, but integrated collaborative efforts, willingness, positive thinking will lead to a total change in attitude and behaviour. The creation of an atmosphere and environment that will enable the application of acquired skills should be developed. Benchmarking is critical and key. Check and measure return on investment. Adding value to the institution through capacity building is critical and key.

The department needs to check and measure work performance, change, improvement, progress, development and growth. Three % of the respondents mentioned the identification of gaps and challenges. One respondent emphasised the rating of service providers on the scale of three i.e. good, better and best.

Two respondents indicated that assessment on training interventions should be done holistically. Hundred (100) % of the respondents highlighted the need to develop pre - and post - training assessment tools on training interventions in order to determine the impact of the training. Realization of value for money is imperative.

Results pertaining to Proposition Five.

Evaluation and training should be perceived as an integrated skills development system.

Responses to views about the importance of regularly reviewing the training and development of employees are noted below:

Three respondents highlighted the alignment of training interventions to new training trends and demands, nationally and globally. One respondent touched base on gap identification through skills audits. Reviewal of training and development of employees serves as a measuring stick and adaption to new developments. Five respondents shared the same sentiments on alignment to new environments, new emerging

technologies, new initiatives, directives, revised, updated policies and new training environments.

Introduction of new methodologies, strategies and way of doing things: Developmental states need better skills and in-depth knowledge for socio – economic factors and development. One respondent indicated that public administration is dynamic. It is imperative to check the relevancy of training interventions, ensuring that we are moving in the right direction and coping from world class countries. Multi- skilling, up - skilling and re – skilling of employees is a collective effort.

Results pertaining to Proposition Six.

Government departments and organizations should retain their competitiveness in an ever changing environment.

Responses to views about the importance of training and developing employees throughout their employment and the impact made by training interventions are presented below:

Most of the respondents indicated that investing on human capital is critical and key. Training is an ongoing process and it should be constant. Respondents alluded to the new changing environments and circumstances. Determination of impact made by training interventions and diversity of the workforce is necessary.

4.4. Conclusion

From the responses above, it has emerged that, there is uncertainty among managers within the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport as to how, and to what extent, line managers should be involved in the identification and implementation of training and development. The development of pre - and post - impact assessment on training interventions will add significantly more value to the institution, hence having a

great impact on work performance and service delivery. It is imperative to ensure that training interventions and programmes are informed by the needs and objectives of the Department.

It is also important that training needs should be driven by the demand for skills and challenges, and not problems encountered by employees. Skills programmes need to be re-defined to ensure that proper and relevant training interventions are implemented.

The Department should always be conscious that the biggest investment that will last the longest is on human capital. The analysis and interpretation of the research findings will be outlined in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS.

5.1. Introduction.

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss and test the research results against the research proposition of the study. The five propositions were tested against the findings presented from chapter four and the literature review in chapter two. This report further aimed at exploring the landscape in an attempt to paint a picture of the new training trends and demands and the that the practice of Human resources needs to be changed to remain a key player in the building of human capital.

5.2. Demographic profile of respondents.

Of the targeted 11 respondents, all were available for interviews. All employees interviewed had a direct link to skills development related issues as indicated in chapter three. Human resource development cadres and practitioners, skills development experts and skills development facilitators were drawn from three departments within Mpumalanga Province. Respondents comprised of middle and senior managers and they were selected purely on networks that the researcher has within skills development institutions and departments.

Out of all 11 respondents interviewed, 4 were from Premier' Office, 2 from Education Department and 5 from Public Works, Roads and Transport Department within Mpumalanga Provincial Government. Having gone through chapter four and the reviewed literature in chapter two, some inferences may be drawn to say employee training is a requirement for progression. From the responses in chapter four, it is quite clear that the following themes are central to this research study.

Theme One: Reinforcement of training.

The literature on reinforcement of what is learned in training by supervisors and employees, in chapter 2, highlighted that the transfer of training is likely to be higher when trainees are confident in using their newly learned skills, when they are aware of work situations where they can demonstrate their new skills. Transfer of training is also likely to be higher when trainees perceive that both job and organizational performance will improve if they use their new skills and if they believe that the knowledge and skills emphasised in training are helpful in solving work related problems (Cascio, 1998).

According to the research results, the creation of a favourable and conducive work environment and the availability of resources will facilitate the application of the skills learned or acquired through training interventions. Healthy and reciprocal relationships among employees and their supervisors are also critical and key in terms of work performance, organisational growth and development.

Cascio (1998), stated that “practice refers to the active use of training content”. Rothwell and Sredi (1998), indicated that “learning is a change in knowledge, skills and attitude”. According to the research results, training should not be viewed by employees and supervisors as a way of spending the training budget or a way of destressing themselves from the work environment, but rather as an investment in human capital. From responses received, it is evident that respondents perceived the culture of the organisation as one of the impediments towards a successful implementation of the Departmental Workplace Skills Plan due to its inability to comply with Skills Development Levies Act. It is also evident from the responses given by the respondents that training does not meet the business needs, managers do not support training and there is currently no tool in place that can measure work performance (Meyer, 1999).

It is important to take a more holistic, integrated approach if we are to improve workplace learning through training (Evans et al, 2006). 80% of the respondents shared the same sentiments that the reinforcement of managers and supervisors at all levels in all programmes within the Department is critical and key in terms of managing work performance and monitoring training interventions, individual growth and organisational development.

According to the research results, line managers are not conversant with legislative requirements governing training and development, or the system is preventing them from taking full responsibility for their positions in terms of measuring work performance since there are no tools in place that can measure performance. Even though the value of training and development is well understood by managers and supervisors, there could be some impediments and obstructions which hinder their performance such as declining training budgets and limited resources.

According to Greller (1980), supervisors often underestimate the importance subordinates attach to feedback from the task itself. He further stated that supervisors often estimated the importance of formal rewards, informal assignments and comments from management. It is critical and key that work performance, capacity building and development through training interventions be aligned and linked to the performance management and development system.

Top Management of the Department should remain committed to training and development of the employees since training is part of the corporate culture. The development and creation of a comprehensive, integrated and systematic approach to training is critical and key.

Both literature and interviewees agreed that this theme is valid. The willingness of top management and managers in the Department to create a conducive and favourable workplace environment with the allocation of sufficient resources and training budget

will boost the morale and confidence of trainees to put into practice the newly learned skills acquired through training interventions.

The creation of a healthy and reciprocal relationship between and amongst supervisors and employees and the development of an integrated, comprehensive and systematic approach to training is critical and significant towards the realization of organizational goals and objectives.

Theme Two: Trainees attitude and transfer of learning.

From the literature reviewed in chapter 2, “impact” is defined as, “sustained changes in peoples’ lives brought about by a particular intervention (Oxfam and Novib, 2005). The researcher’ findings were that the impact on work performance is hard or difficult to measure since there are no tools in place to measure impact in the Department.

All participants and role players in the training environment should be committed to their responsibilities and roles. Trainees should take responsibility of their own learning. They are responsible for active involvement in training and must be ready and willing to learn. Growth and promotions based on competencies acquired through training interventions have also been realised and the speed of service delivery has improved significantly, even though capacity at some points is hampered by budgetary constraints and limited resources. In order for training to have an impact on the organisation, employees and managers should take full responsibility of their roles in the working environment.

Cumming and Worley (2005), further stated that training focuses on changing the skills and knowledge of a group of organisational members to improve their effectiveness or to build the capacities of the organisation as a system. All respondents shared the same sentiments that, even though significant improvement has been realized in the Department in terms of service delivery, it is difficult to quantify the impact made by training interventions.

From the responses received, employees need to be motivated intrinsically and extrinsically to implement in the work place what has been acquired through training interventions. Based on the responses received, the application of knowledge, behaviour patterns and skills learned and acquired through training interventions would enhance performance and career pathing so that the developmental objectives can be achieved to ensure improved service delivery.

The purpose of employee training is job related learning and is aimed at improving employees' skills, knowledge and attitude so that they can perform their duties according to set standards (Nadler and Nadler, 1989).

From the analysis of this survey report based on literature review and the responses received from respondents, the authenticity of this theme is inevitable. There has been significant improvement on the number of employees trained during 2010/2011 wherein 2253 officials were trained, compared to 207 officials who were trained in the year 2009/2010. It is also evident from the responses received from respondents that work performance and service delivery cannot be justified by statistics. The first difficulty is that it is necessary to know the exact amount of knowledge and skills of each employee before training.

Without this information it would be impossible to assess and evaluate the extent at which training had occurred (Reid, 1997). Human resources of any organisation are its most important and valuable assets. In the view of many top level executives, employees are the key source of an organisation's competitive advantage (Brown and Kraft, 1997).

Theme Three: Training for impact.

From the literature reviewed in chapter 2, and the analysis of interviews conducted with middle and senior managers from various Departments within the Mpumalanga Provincial Administration, the researcher' findings reflected that training budgetary

constraints and limited resources impacted negatively on work performance and the delivery of services.

In order for training and development to survive and grow, it must be demonstrated that expenditure for training is not a cost but a sound business investment (Schneier, 1994). According to the research results, employees need to be supported and empowered throughout their employment. Erasmus and Schenk (2008), discussed the importance of human resource development as a means of ensuring organisations maintain their competitiveness in an ever changing environment and this cannot be overemphasised. The following are a few of the many reasons why organisations train, develop and educate employees according to Erasmus & Schenk (2008):

To improve the performance of employees and assist employees to meet the required standards. Prepare employees for the future positions; prepare employees for forthcoming organisational restructuring. Changes in technology to ensure competitiveness in the market place. Increase the literacy levels of employees. To benefit the individual employee and increase job satisfaction. Improve interpersonal skills and make the organisation a better place to work. Competitive pressures, restructuring and downsizing. Increasing diversity of the workforce.

The research results reflected further that any developmental state need to have the necessary skills for socio – economic development. Prioritisation of skills programmes by Skills Development Facilitators in terms of scarce and critical skills is critical and key since training budgets and resources seem to be a challenge. Training should not be viewed by managers as an expense but rather be viewed as an investment. According to literature, (Van Dyk et al, 1992), training and education should be perceived as an integrated skills development system which promotes economic, growth and social development through a focus on education, training and employment services.

Some of the respondents discouraged the use of Consultants for training purposes in favour of the use of Human resource practitioners as trainers and facilitators through

empowerment and capacitation, but literature noted that the use of consultants for training purposes cannot be overemphasised. Improving the effectiveness of the organisation as a system requires collaborative endeavours, integrated intervention efforts, and the development of an assessment tool which will be used to measure and determine the impact made by training interventions.

Theme Four: Employee training for progress and development.

The authenticity of this research proposition was supported by almost 80% of the respondents when they highlighted the need to develop an assessment tool on training interventions to determine the impact of training. According to literature impact refers to “any lasting and sustained changes brought about” (Oxfam and Novib, 2005).

Literature further defined “impact assessment”, as an evaluation of how, and to what extent, change had occurred (Oxfam and Novib, 2005). Impact assessment is further defined by literature as systematic analysis of the lasting or significant changes i.e. positive or negative, intended or not,- in people’s lives brought about by a given action or series of actions.

Rosche (2005), further indicated that organisations and institutions must show that change in policy and practice actually results in improving the lives of people. To continuously improve anything you must employ a systematic or methodical process, one that is flexible and measurable. The need to measure the contribution of training remained unfulfilled.

Realisation of value for money is imperative and training alone cannot bring a total change, sustainable development and progress in the lives of people. For training and development to survive and grow, it must demonstrate that expenditure for training is not a cost but rather a sound business investment (Schneier, 1994). Organisations throughout the world began to express concern about accountability with regard to

training, and started to explore methods and techniques to measure the results of training.

Literature further supported the responses, by putting emphasis on the improvement of employee's skills, knowledge and attitude as the main aim of training (Nadler and Nadler, 1989). Improved performance in turn implies that there have been measurable changes in knowledge, skills or social behaviour (Cascio, 2003).

Literature correctly indicated that human resources of any organisation are its most important value assets. Employees are the key source of an organisation's competitiveness advantage (Brown and Kraft, 1998). Literature and the research results, shared the same sentiments on the development of impact assessment tools on training interventions to check and measure work performance, change, improvement, progress, development and growth. The creation of an atmosphere and environment that will enable the application of acquired skills and knowledge is critical and key according to the research results and literature.

Theme Five: Evaluation and training as an integrated development system.

Literature on the view of training and development needs and integrated skills development systems indicated that strong links and a culture of cooperation have also been developed between education and training systems and organisations to act as champions for the development of these systems (Erasmus and Schenk, 2008). It is imperative at a micro level to examine issues such as: what types of training seem to yield positive outcomes for organisations and trainees, how to determine whether training is needed and, if so, what type of training best fits the needs that have been identified, how to structure the delivery of training programmes and how to evaluate the outcomes of training efforts (Cascio, 2003).

According to Van Dyk (1992) and Desi (2001), skills development should be perceived as an amalgamated reciprocal institutional coherence and co-ordination through well

structured and articulated programmes, integrated educational and training tracks and strong linkages with the industrial environment. Respondents highlighted the need for the alignment of training interventions to new training needs and demands nationally and globally. Employees' development activity via interventions at national, industry and local community levels is beginning to show results even though it is difficult to assess the impact in relation to individual's key performance areas in terms service delivery (Evans, 2006).

Literature further reflected that training is tied to business strategy and objectives and also linked to bottom line results. Adaptation to new developments, socio economic factors and the alignment to new environments, emerging technologies, new initiatives, updated policies and sector training are critical and key. Responses from the respondents and literature put the emphasis on the need for multi - skilling, re - skilling and up - skilling, dynamic public administration and the relevance of training interventions.

Literature further stated that if you embark on new strategies and employees do not have the new knowledge of these new strategies, it is essential to build their capacity in this regard. This entails the development of capacity within the organisation to do what needs to be done to achieve strategic success. The shift from traditional training to performance driven impact for training is vital in meeting today's business needs (Meyer, 1999).

Both economic and demographic trends suggest radical changes in the composition of the workforce of the 21st century as stated by Cascio (2003) below:

Increasingly sophisticated technological systems will impose training and re - training requirements on the existing workforce. This is the high performance work systems challenge.

The need as more firms move to employee involvement and teams in the workplace, for team members to learn behaviour such as asking for ideas, offering help without being

asked, listening and feedback skills and recognising and considering the ideas of others. This is the interpersonal change.

Training needs are stimulated by the expansion of many firms into global markets. Such needs involve the training of local nationals, as well as preparing employees from the home country to work in foreign markets. This is the global challenge.

Ongoing needs to meet the product and service needs of customers. This is the quality challenge.

From the literature reviewed and the research results, it can thus be deduced that the identification of training needs in the Department is very fragmented. Skills audits need to be initiated which will result in the prioritisation of training that needs to be implemented in a particular given financial year.

Decision taking on training related issues should be a collective effort, not the responsibility of training divisions only. This research proposition was therefore tested and found to be correct by both literature reviewed and research results.

Theme Six: Competitiveness of Government departments and organizations.

Interview question number 3 and 4 were used to test the authenticity of this theme. The literature reviewed and research results agreed on diversity of the workforce in an ever changing environment and investment on human capital as critical factors. The literature on training evaluation shows that while the potential returns from well conducted training programs can be substantial, there is often considerable variability in the effectiveness with which any given training method or content area is implemented. Considerable planning and follow up program evaluation efforts are necessary in order to realise these returns (Cascio, 2003).

Given the pace of change in modern society and technology, retraining is imperative to enable individuals to compete for or retain their jobs and to enable organisations to

compete in the market place. Cumming and Worley (2005) point to research indicating that companies with a higher average training expenditure per employee also have higher profits per employee. Reviewed literature and respondents further agreed that, the emergence of networks is not the end of state authority per se, but the redefinition of it, characterised by much more diversity and experimentation. Flexibility and diversity are key elements in bringing changes and growth in terms of performance and viability within institutions (Roche, 2000).

Training of employees is regarded by both sources as an ongoing process and that it should be constant.

The ongoing training programmes are part of the industry training board to which they regularly send their employees for training and skills acquisition. All organization, firms, companies indicated the salience of investing the skills of employees through training and capacity programmes (Netshitomboni, 2002).

From the research results and literature reviewed service delivery training intervention is market oriented and influenced by national and global market competitive pressures. Knowledge cannot be limited and training is an ongoing process. In an increasingly competitive market place, the ability to implement rapid changes in products, delivery of services and technologies is often a key requirement to preserve the competitive edge.

5.3. Conclusion.

According to the research findings, reinforcement of training interventions, trainee's attitude and transfer of training will impact positively on work performance, employee's welfare and development and service delivery in the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport. Service delivery training interventions should be a collective and integrated endeavour. It is imperative to ensure that training programmes are informed by the needs and objectives of the Department.

It is critical to align the Workplace Skills plan with employees' key performance areas. Competitiveness of Government departments and organizations is critical and key in service delivery training interventions. It has to be taken into cognizance that the need for training and development is driven by the demand for skills and market competitive pressures. Conclusion of this research study and appropriate recommendations are outlined in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

6.1. Introduction.

Main findings of the research conducted are summarized in this chapter and recommendations are made to the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport in Mpumalanga Provincial Government on service delivery training intervention and work performance. Findings were based on the responses from literature reviewed and interviews conducted. Possible future research topics are also presented. Over and above, the research results are presented through a discussion of the research findings in terms of the six propositions that were qualitatively tested.

6.2. Conclusion of the study

From literature review conducted the following conclusions were made: The provision of theoretical basis for managers to understand different conceptual definitions, processes and systems that are relevant for the successful administration and management of training and development functions in any organization. More light has been shed on the roles and responsibilities of managers, employees and trainers to ensure that the training function is a cross cutting one which requires commitment from everyone.

The chapter on research methodology points to the following conclusions: there is uncertainty amongst managers within the department as to how and to what extent should line managers be involved in the identification and implementation of training interventions. Good behavior needs to be reinforced for sustainability. Skills transfer is likely to be higher when trainees are confident in using their newly- learned skills when they are aware of work situations where they can demonstrate their new skills.

The chapter on presentation of results points to the following inferences: It is imperative to ensure that training interventions and programmes are informed by the needs and objectives of the department. Training needs should be driven by the demand for skills and challenges, and not problems encountered by employees. Skills programmes need to be re-defined to ensure that proper and relevant training interventions are implemented.

The chapter on analysis and interpretation of results points to the following conclusions: Reinforcement of training interventions, trainee's attitude and transfer of training will impact positively on work performance, employee's welfare and development and service delivery in the Department. For development and training to survive and grow, expenditure from training should not be viewed as a cost but as a sound business investment, hence conclusions on the six themes respectively in relation to the posited research propositions.

Conclusions to research Proposition 1.

If the supervisor or employee does not reinforce what is learned in training, the training itself will be encapsulated.

The findings from interviews conducted are in agreement with literature reviewed on the reinforcement of what is learned in training by both the supervisor and employee. Under literature reviewed, "practice refers to the active use of training content" (Cascio, 1998). From the interviews conducted with Human Resource Utilization and Capacity Development (HRU and CD) experts from various Departments within Mpumalanga Province, the culture of the organisation is perceived as an impediment towards a successful implementation of the Departmental Workplace Skills Plan.

The Departmental WSP does not meet the business needs and managers do not support training. It is currently difficult to measure work performance since there are no

tools in place that can determine the impact made by training interventions. Based on literature reviewed and interviews conducted, this proposition is therefore accepted.

Conclusions to research Proposition 2.

Attitudes of trainees may also affect transfer of training

Literature reviewed on the attitudes of trainees on transfer of learning indicated that the purpose of employee training is job related learning and is aimed at improving employees' skills, knowledge and attitude so that they can perform their duties according to set standards (Nadler and Nadler, 1989). Research results from interviews conducted stated clearly that, participants and role players in the training and work environment should be committed to their roles and responsibilities.

Despite the fact that the Department is operating under tough and difficult cost curtailment measures and limited resources, it remains the responsibility of employees and trainees to ensure that the knowledge acquired and learnt is applied in the workplace environment. It is the responsibility of employees to be actively involved in training and they must be ready and willing to learn. Training needs should be linked to employee's key performance areas. Proposition 2 is also found to be acceptable.

The worrying concern is budgetary constraints and limited resources.

Conclusions to research Proposition 3.

The shift from traditional training to performance driven impact for training is vital

The research findings from both sources agreed on the importance of human resource development as the means of ensuring organisations maintain their competitiveness in an ever changing environment (Erasmus and Schenk, 2008).

Interviews conducted indicated that the Department's inability to comply with the Skills Development Levies, Act No.9 of 1999, resulted in training being under budgeted, with limited resources which, in turn, impact negatively on work performance and the delivery of services in the Department.

For development and training to survive and grow, expenditure from training should not be viewed as a cost but a sound business investment. Proposition 3 is also found to be correct and acceptable. Lack of relevant capacity to Human Resource Development unit is also critical and key in the Department according to the research findings. This proposition is accepted.

The concern is that most of the trainings conducted are irrelevant in terms of the business needs of the Department and they are not linked to the employee's key performance areas.

Conclusions to research Proposition 4.

Employee training is all about bringing change, improvement, progress and development.

Improved performance, in turn, implies that there have been measurable changes in knowledge, skills or social behaviour (Cascio, 2003). Emphasis on the improvement of employee's skills, knowledge and attitude is at the core purpose of training (Nadler and Nadler, 1989). The development of an assessment tool which will be used to measure the impact made by training interventions on work performance is critical and key in the Department.

The creation of an atmosphere and environment that will enable the application of acquired skills and knowledge is a concern since the Department is operating under critical financial conditions in terms of resources and capacity. Proposition 4 is also correct and acceptable.

Conclusions to research Proposition 5.

Evaluation and training should be perceived as an integrated skills development system.

Skills development should be perceived as an amalgamated reciprocal institutional coherence and co-ordinated through well structured and articulated programmes, integrated educational and training tracks, and strong linkages with the industrial environment (Van Dyk, 1992): Desi (2001). Interviewees clearly put emphasis on the need for multi - skilling, re - skilling and up - skilling of employees through training interventions. The need for conducting skills audits in the Department was highlighted by respondents which will assist in the prioritization of training needs. This proposition is also correct and acceptable.

Conclusions to research Proposition 6.

Government departments and organisations should maintain their competitiveness in an ever changing environment.

From the interviews conducted, service delivery training is market oriented and influenced by national and global market competitive pressures. Knowledge cannot be limited and training is an ongoing process. The literature reviewed indicated that companies with a higher average training expenditure per employee also have higher profits per employee (Cumming and Worley, 2005).

All organisations, firms and companies indicated the importance of investing the skills of employees through training and capacity building programmes (Netshitomboni, 2002).

The concern is that, considerable planning and follow up programme evaluation efforts are necessary in order to realise these returns. The proposition is found to be correct and acceptable.

6.3. Recommendations.

The findings discussed above have shown that there is a need for improvement with regard to service delivery training interventions in the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport. The following recommendations are therefore made as a beginning to improved service delivery through training interventions in the department.

Revitalization of the Departmental Workplace Skills Plan, training evaluation systems and measures need to be put in place if the department aspires to see the impact made by training interventions on work performance and service delivery. *(Research proposition 3 & 5)*

Improvement on service delivery can be created by realistic expectation from training programmes. The Department should allow for the development of skills that influence the ability to commercialise technological innovations. *(Research proposition 4)*

Training interventions should be aligned to the business needs and strategic objectives of the Department and the Workplace Skills Plan to enhance work performance and improvement on the delivery of services. *(Research proposition 4)*

The creation of an atmosphere and environment that will enable the application of acquired skills and knowledge. Compliance to Skills Development Levies Act no.9 of 1999 will significantly enhance work performance and the delivery of services through training interventions. *(Research proposition 1)*

Managers and employees in the training environment should be committed to their roles and responsibilities. Active involvement of trainees in training and readiness to learn will positively impact work performance and service delivery. *(Research proposition 1 & 2)*

Prioritisation of training is critical and key since resources are limited. For training and development to survive and grow, it must be demonstrated that expenditure for training is not a cost but a sound business investment. *(Research proposition 4)*

The development of skills should be viewed as an amalgamated reciprocal institutional coherence and co-ordinated through well structured and articulated programmes, integrated educational and training tracks and linkages with the industrial environment. *(Research proposition 5 & 6)*

Higher average training expenditure will eventually results in higher profits, and the conceptualization of skills development through institutional networks, integration and centrality of institutions could assist in giving effect to the Departmental goals and objectives. *(Research proposition 5 & 6)*

Course evaluation needs to be done to determine the relevancy and level of effectiveness, and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation mechanisms needs to be put in place to ensure uniformity in the application of principles by all sections. *(Research proposition 5)*

Training needs to be identified through a more professional way of conducting skills audits for prioritisation of training needs. The role and responsibilities of the Departmental Skills Development Facilitator need to be clearly defined and be supported by the management. *(Research proposition 3).*

Involvement of all relevant key stakeholders that are responsible for skills development and work integrated learning should participate in all established forums through a directive from the Office of the Premier. *(Research proposition 6)*

Mutual relationships with relevant SETA's and interface with budgetary processes will surely leverage training funding. *(Research proposition 6)*

6.4. Recommendations for future research.

- Explore the dynamics and challenges facing Human resource development and its impact on work performance. Given the literature reviewed and the research findings, this area can be an ongoing area for future research.
- Explore and attempt to paint a picture of the new demands and the way that the practice of human resources needs to change to remain a key player in the building of human capital. In view of the global economic meltdown and the challenges facing the government, it is imperative to review the demand of building human capital in the short and medium term. I therefore encourage prospective researchers to explore this area of human resource capital in future
- Engage and share ideas and best practices regarding training interventions in relation to work performance and service delivery. This area can also be an ongoing area of research in future, given the research findings and the literature reviewed.

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APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM

1. Research Purpose

The purpose of this research is to evaluate and assess the impact of training interventions in the department of Public Works, Roads and Transport within Mpumalanga Provincial Administration. The research is conducted as part of fulfillment of the requirements for the degree: Masters of management in Public policy: (University of Witwatersrand) and as such the research will be conducted by a student.

2. Researcher details:

Name:	Mr. D.L Mabuye
Cell:	071 609 4208
Tel:	013-766 6924.

3. Declaration of ethical standards by a researcher

- * The researcher undertakes to respect the rights of the participants in the research project.
- * Participant to the research will not receive any benefit for participation.
- * Participants in this research will not be exposed to any risk of losing their jobs
- * Participants have the following **rights** pertaining to the research.
 - A right not to participate in the research or withdraw your participation in the research at any time.

- A right to privacy, confidentiality and anonymity: All information provided by you shall be kept confidential and your name cannot be disclosed to anyone. Your privacy shall be respected at all time.
- A right to be informed about the purpose, objectives and outcomes of the research.

4. Duration

As participants you will be interviewed. The interview will take about twenty minutes of your time.

Consent by participant

I _____ hereby give consent to participate in the research project voluntarily. I am aware about my rights as stipulated above.

Respondent's Signature

Date

APPENDIX B.

SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE.

RESEARCH TOPIC: SERVICE DELIVERY TRAINING INTERVENTIONS IN THE
MPUMALANGA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, ROADS AND TRANSPORT.

DATE: _____

INTERVIEWER: _____

PURPOSE: TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ON TRAINING INTERVENTION IN
RELATION TO PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY IN MPUMALANGA PROVINCE.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. What are your views about training intervention in the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport from 2009 to 2012 on service delivery in Mpumalanga Province?

2. Have you notice any improvement on work performance after training intervention took place?

3. Why is it important to train and develop employees throughout their employment? Substantiate.

4. Why do you think it's necessary to conduct impact assessment on training interventions?

5. Why is it imperative to regularly review the training and development needs of employees?

Allow me to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your time that you have taken to answer these questions, this is much appreciated. (Obrigado).

TARGET GROUP:

- Human Resource Development practitioners.
- Senior Managers within Monitoring and Evaluation Units and Sections.
- Employees' immediate Supervisors.
- Regional Training Committees within the Department.