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Implementation of the Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT)

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT TOOL (MPAT)

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to investigate the factors that contribute to non-compliance with human resource management practices (HRM) in the public sector. The Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation was formed in 2009 with the aim to improve and encourage the utilisation of monitoring and evaluation in government in order to ensure good and acceptable improved performance. The focus of the study is on HRM practices in the public sector as implemented by the Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT) which is one of the programmes within the DPME.

The DPME (2012) observes that poor administration is a repeated habit across the main concerns of government and is contributing to poor quality of service that is delivered to the citizens. Without proper monitoring and evaluation systems it seems difficult to improve or change the current situation of non-compliance especially with regard to basic HRM regulations. The results of 2012/13 according to the DPME (2013) assessments show that, whilst some departments in South Africa made improvements on certain Key Performance Areas (KPA) of MPAT, namely Strategic Management, Governance and Accountability, and Financial Management, there has not yet been satisfactory development in the level of adherence with the legislative frameworks and national policies relating to HRM. This was confirmed by the Auditor-General's 2012 results, the Office of the Public Service Commission (OPSC) and the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA).

DPME has also identified the HRM KPA as the worst performer of the three areas. According to DPME (2011) there are some benchmarking countries that have similar systems with the same aspects that aims at improving the HRM practices in the public sector through the utilization of monitoring, assessment, reporting and evaluation systems. The research

methodology used in the study is mixed method which employs quantitative research that allow for the collection of numeric or numbers and qualitative which is applied more than the other in collecting and producing words. The research findings identified the following as some of the factors that contributes to non – compliance to HRM KPA; lack of capacity in the public sector and within the HR units, no positive drive and attitude, absence of monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) and performance assessment to ensure continuous improvements, poor communication between employer and employees and HR not regarded as the strategic business partner within departments.

The study concludes with the suggested strategies to be applied in order to ensure improvements in HRM practices for the national and provincial departments. The process of improving HRM practices in South African (SA) government departments requires attention to be given to the role of HRM practices such as human resources development, recruitment, organisational design, performance management development systems, management of diversity and disciplinary cases, together with a strong role and support from the policy departments such as the DPSA, OPSC, DPME, and Offices of the Premiers (OTP's).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study is a result of contributions from a number of people and I cannot mention all of them because the list is too long.

I would like to start by thanking the creator of heaven and earth the Almighty God for being my guidance and making it all doable.

I am highly indebted to my supervisor, Dr Matshabaphala, who has politely and patiently assisted me to improve this research study from the beginning to the end.

To my parents and my siblings, thank you very much for teaching me the important principle in life, to humble myself at all times in a quest to listen, hear and better myself whilst never being afraid to air my opinions.

To my lovely husband, Molefi Poole, and my two children, Marcus and Orearabile, thank you very much from the bottom of my heart for being patient with me whilst being loving and supportive.

Throughout I have been sharing ideas and notes with my colleagues at the DPME who have been very supportive and encouraging and I have learnt a lot from all of them and am grateful for being part of the MPAT team. My humble and deepest gratitude from the bottom of my heart goes to Dr Annatjie Moore who has inspired and mentored me ever since we met.

To my colleagues from different departments in the public sector who participated in this study, it has been my pleasure voicing your views on the trends, factors and status of the HRM practices since the implementation of MPAT at national and provincial spheres of government. I have seen from their eyes of hope that our country South

Africa can still be improved in a shared vision by all its public servants who are committed to better and improve the welfare of all citizens.

DECLARATION

I declare that this report is my own except where authors have been acknowledged. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in Public Policy to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management of the University of the Witwatersrand. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.

_____

Dieketseng
Gail Maphela

March 2015

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Capacity: According to Walters (2007) this is the ability of an individual, organisation and the community to perform their work successfully.

Co-ordination: As defined by Hannagan (2005) this is the incorporation of the day-to-day activities of an individual employee and directorates within the organisation into a combined effort that works towards the same goal.

Evaluation: As defined by DPME (2011), this is a time-bound exercise seeking to provide management, policy makers and stakeholders with credible data on the sustainability and relevance of a policy, programmes or intervention.

Human Resource: As defined by Hannagan (2005) this is a method of encouraging others to do things especially their jobs in a certain way that will lead them to achieving or exceeding the specific strategic goal.

Human Resource Management: This is defined by Tiwari (2007) as a distinctive approach to employment management which aspires to attract highly committed and skilled employees in order to achieve competitive advantage.

Human Resource Management Practices: These are defined as a set of policies and practices implemented by employees to ensure the survival of the organisation (Tan & Nasurdin, 2011).

Implementation: Defined as a specified set of activities designed to translate theories, plans and policies into practice (Fixsen, Naoom, Blasé, Friedman & Wallace, 2005).

Leadership: This is defined as the process of encouraging and also influencing other people to execute their activities in a certain way that will ensure achievement of a specific goal (Amos, Ristow & Ristow, 2004).

Manager: The person who exercises control and manages people to behave in an acceptable manner whilst helping the organisation to achieve their goals (Mescon, Albert and Khedouri, 1985).

Monitoring: As defined by Kusek and Rist (2004), this is a continuous systematic way of collecting information of specific indicators, programmes or policies to provide managers and stakeholders with progress on an ongoing intervention.

System: As defined by Senge (1990), this is a method used to analyze organized parts that continually affect each other over time, and operate towards a common purpose.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Human Resource Management (HRM) is derived from the private sector, primarily in the United States of America. However, the concept was not widely applied in the public sector until the 1990s when mainly developed countries like United Kingdom (UK), United States (US), Canada, New Zealand and Australia began to apply the concepts of HRM practices (Rioux, Bernthal & Wellins, 2000). HRM is a crucial function in any organisation and especially in the South African government where at the national and provincial spheres there are more than a million people who are responsible for the government budget and expenditure. Public employees are thus the most valued assets in government. This is further clarified by Amos, Ristow and Ristow (2004) when they explain that no organisation can exist without people and the value of any department or company lies in the intellectual capital of its employees.

Bendix (1996) points out that historically South Africa (SA) has not performed very well in most HR areas such as ; equal opportunity, skilled labour, AIDS, worker motivation, illiteracy, dependency ratio, human development index, and competent managers and in the field of labour relations (LR). The Presidency (2009) indicates that despite massive improvements in service rendered to areas that were previously disadvantage during the apartheid regime , public sector is still lacking the culture of continuous improvement because regardless of increased budget some basic service have deteriorated instead of improving. Crous (2004) emphasizes that the initiatives or programmes of government should be aimed toward improving the quality of life for all its citizens at all times.

1.2 MONITORING SYSTEMS AND HRM PERFORMANCE

Monitoring is defined as a continuous function that uses the systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an on-going development intervention with warnings of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives (Kusek & Rist, 2004). The DPSA (2000) defines monitoring and managing performance as the process of clarifying goals for the interest of the citizens by connecting activities, decisions to the goals, developing well communicated understanding of the objective and the operational issues, therefore to ensure that resources are directed to the relevant departmental strategic goals.

DPME (2012) argues that the most crucial objective of monitoring is not based on only providing information in a timely manner that could improve management decisions but also to ensure that monitoring results are actually considered and used to make informed decisions and influence learning in order to implement improvement plans. Hutto and Belote (2012) emphasises that the main goal of monitoring is not only to provide information in a timely way, it must also be provided in such a way that it improves managerial resolutions and ensure that monitoring outcomes are deliberated and utilised by departments (Nichols & Williams, 2006). One can argue that monitoring systems are critical in tracking, reporting and ensuring improvements in departments because without the knowledge of how the department is performing or how far the project is in terms of its milestones, the departmental targets and goals may not be met.

1.3 DEPARTMENT OF PERFORMANCE, MONITORING AND EVALUATION (DPME)

The DPME came into being a recognised government department in 2010 with a focus on improving performance by joining amongst the few as defined by the Presidency (2010) the development of a skilful and hardworking public service that is proud and receives full acknowledgment for rendering better quality services to its citizens. The DPME was established following the recognition that despite declines in revenue and the need to be prudent with resources there is a necessity to continue to impact positively on the lives of South Africans. Crous (2004) emphasizes that the initiatives or programmes of government should be aimed at improving the quality of life for all its citizens at all times.

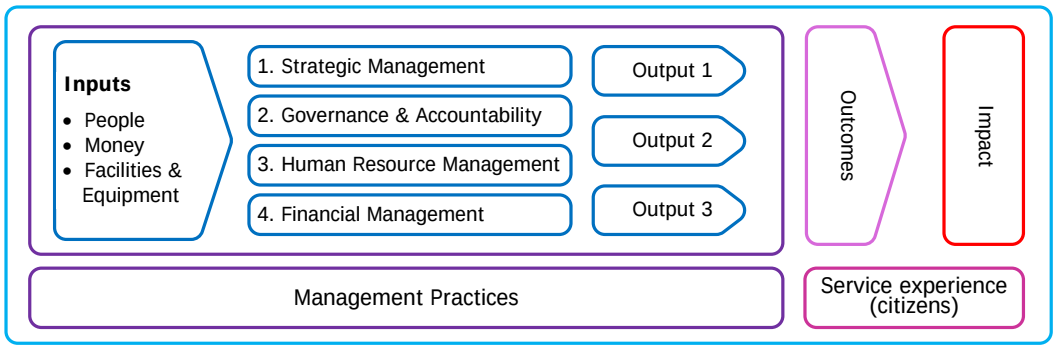
According to the Presidency (2009), there was a call to change the way officials in the public sector operate, not just by means of adjustments to existing policies, processes, systems and formats, but more broadly. The DPME was mandated to conduct robust monitoring and evaluation through the establishment of the Outcomes Monitoring and Evaluation branch (OME), the Institutional Performance Monitoring (IPM) unit, the Frontline Service Delivery (FSD) and Evaluation Unit within the department. In 2013 the National Planning Commission merged with the Department of Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation which led to the department being re-named Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation.

The DPME has come up with several tools and initiatives to improve and strengthen the use of M & E practices within the public service; MPAT is one of these initiatives, the whole aim being to improve service delivery, envisaged to be achieved by firstly improving management practices.

1.4 MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT TOOL (MPAT)

In 2010, the DPME obtained approval from the Cabinet to implement the Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT), which is conducted and administered on an annual basis by the IPM unit. MPAT uses principles to benchmark management practices by connecting inputs, activities and outputs which leads to outcomes and ultimately to impact (depicted in Figure 1 below), and even though it is still too soon to confirm the direct relationship between management or administrative practice and service delivery, the MPAT information entails that effective and efficient management practices at operational and decision making level leads to improved delivery (DPME, 2014). DPME (2014) explains that MPAT comprises four management Key Performance Areas (KPAs) which are inter-dependent and should be included in the whole management practices and service delivery system, namely; Strategic management, Governance and accountability, Human resource management and systems; and Financial management.

Figure1: Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT)



Source: DPME, 2013

According to the Presidency (2010), MPAT is built on the considerate that adherence with management legislations will lead to a better departmental performance and improved service delivery outcomes which in turn will contribute to better service delivery outputs, outcomes and impacts. The DPME (2014) explains that the MPAT assessments are designed to build internal self- introspection monitoring and evaluation capacity; this is done by the process of subjecting accounting officers and senior and line management to self-assessment against thirty-one key management performance areas and providing the evidence to support and back up their scores. Self-assessments scores are subjected to external peer moderation by senior subjects' practitioners and policy owners from the DPSA who are subject experts with wide and needed experience in the MPAT KPA's.

The DPME has successfully implemented three rounds of MPAT since 2011 to 2013. According to DPME (2014) there has been 100 per cent participation in the last two years by provincial and national departments and this incredible participation indicates the will from the departments to enrich their management practices and improve services that they deliver to the citizens. The study analyses and investigates the implementation of MPAT specifically in relation to the third KPA, which are the HRM systems.

MPAT is used by the DPME to track and report on the HRM performance of national and provincial departments. On-going tracking and reporting enables an organisation to develop improvement plans and it is thus crucial that departments regularly undertake internal assessments on their own even before the official MPAT assessment cycle is done, as it will inform management of its weaknesses and strengths on a timely basis, especially in relation to HRM. MPAT is also a government system which obtains the necessary data to ensure better decision-making in the next cycle after the flaws and shortcoming of any programmes have been brought to the attention of those responsible.

1.5 HRM PRACTICES

Schuler and Jackson (1987) define HRM practice as a coordination that attracts, develops, motivates, and retains employees to ensure the effective implementation and the survival of the organisation and its members. Minbaeva (2005) views HRM practices as an organised agreed management practices facilitated and used to improve and develop staff competencies that are beneficial to that specific organisation goal in order to produce sustainability, organisational competitiveness and knowledge. HRM practices relate to specific practices, formal policies, and philosophies that are designed to attract, develop, motivate and retain employees who can ensure the effective functioning and survival of the organisation (Tan & Nasurdin, 2011).

HRM practices can therefore be referred to as the departmental actions or practices used to manage the human resources by ensuring that the resources are utilised optimally, in a manner that organisational functions and strategic goals are met achieved and exceeded. MPAT in this concept sees HRM practices as legal guidelines or prescripts of the SA public sector which are consistent management practices developed and carried out in order to guarantee that institutional employees conduct their day to day duties diligently at all times in a quest to work towards realising the departmental specific goal and mandate.

1.6 BEST PRACTICE CASE STUDIES

According to Rioux, Bernthal and Wellins (2000), the top HR priorities for international and domestic departments have recognised the need for strong leadership, challenges of recruiting qualified employees and furthermore the need for organisations to have plans in place to retain the

talent they acquire. Below is a discussion of best practises in various countries, starting with Canada.

1.6.1. Canada

According to the Commonwealth Secretariat (2003), the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) together with Statistics Canada were tasked with the administering and implementing of a public service employee survey in 2009. Since then the Public Service Employee Survey has been conducted triennially; it collects information relating to employees workplaces, with the aims of addressing issues relating to diversity, career aspiration, learning and development needs. This was the first time the government of Canada was able to be acquainted with and solicit the views of employees across the public service.

Through the surveys, concerns were identified which led to the establishment of the office of the Chief Human Resources Officer (OCHRO), accommodated within TBS in 2009, responsible for recognizing, supporting and creating the instructions for Deputy Heads to take full responsibility for people management in their organisations and is also responsible to establish appropriate measurement, policy framework and core compensation services and programmes.

TBS (2009) explains that in 2003 the government of Canada decided to develop the Management Accountability Framework (MAF) which aimed to assess and report, amongst other indicators, on key HRM areas. TBS (2012) explains that MAF was developed, introduced and used to assess departments across the public sector including an HR indicator that emphasises the importance of having a department with people and a working environment that focuses on building capacity and professional leadership that will assure a confident and successful future for the government of Canada (TBS, 2009).

1.6.1.1 Canada challenges before MAF

According to the Commonwealth (2003), there were some crucial government concerns and challenges raised by employees in Canada during the 1999 employee survey, which included the following; the need for additional management support to employees, challenges in addressing harassment and discrimination in the workplace, urgent need to improve workplace well-being, recognition, workload, coaching, classification and staffing, lack of leadership, no proper management of labour relations; and finally the need to address career advancement and learning.

1.6.2. New Zealand

The State Services Commission (SSC), formerly the Public Service Commission, is an essential institution in the government of New Zealand. According to the SSC (1998), The primary role of the SSC is to ensure continuous performance improvement in all New Zealand government departments and it has many responsibilities as explained in the State Sector Act of 1988 that include; appointing and reviewing public service chief executives, promoting and developing senior leadership, providing advice on the training and career development of staff, reviewing the performance of each department, which is also done through the Performance Improvement Framework (PIF), and promoting, developing, and monitoring equal employment opportunities, policies and programmes (SSC, 1998).

From 1984, New Zealand made many difficult political decisions as it moved from a regulated to a market-based economy. The country planned to lift its performance in relation to implementation and delivery, and furthermore, in relation to the people space, New Zealand believed that

the engagement and performance of the State services should be improved (SSC, 2014).

1.6.2.1 Background to Performance Improvement Framework (PIF)

The PIF was established in 2011 after visits by the New Zealand government to the United Kingdom (UK) and was designed using the best organisational improvement models from the country's private sector as well as methodologies from other authorities, adapting them to the New Zealand public management system (State Services Commission, 2012). Te kawa and Guerin (2012) defines PIF as a framework used to assess an institution's ability to perform its daily functions and for the future PIF, and its readiness to solve issues that might arise finally PIF also suggests and indicate organisational weaknesses that needs to be improved to ensure its well placement for today and upcoming events and issues.

According to the SSC (2014), PIF assessed departments under four dimensions as follows; leadership, direction and delivery, external relationships, people development; and financial management. With specific interest in people development as an area that deals with HRM issues, the SSC (2014) monitors performance in relation to how professional is the leadership, linking it to employees development, how they manage their people performance and the level of staff engagement on management and organisational issues.

1.6.2.2 New Zealand before PIF

According to Te Kawa and Guerin (2012), before PIF the public and citizens had come up with their own analysis of what ought to be done to improve government and there were many negative reports from external agencies that were critical on the performance of the New Zealand government. The Commissioner wanted the public service to change that

times culture of government towards a new way of doing business by ensuring continuous creativity, improvement and innovation at all times even though some institution were already doing much better at ensuring skilful employees (SSC, 2014).

1.6.3 Kenya

Akiwumi (1998) elaborated on the fact that Kenya as a former British colony, only gaining independence in 1963 and becoming an independent Presidential Republic one year later, had the past of a colonial government regularly inflicted injustice and discrimination on the black majority and the indigenous owners of the land, which finally led to the decisive Mau Mau rebellion and a war of liberation. Reson and Maket (2012) argue that public service efficiency in delivery of services has been a challenge in many countries specifically to the developing and less-developed countries, where most of the public service arrangements and systems were inherited from colonial powers and were intended as a means to maintain control and exert authority. This administrative legacy has affected development processes in the developing countries, and one of the problems which the first independent government of Kenya faced was the existence of deep-rooted tribalism, attributed by some to the colonial powers interference in tribal dynamics and politics (Akiwumi, 1998).

1.6.3.1 Background to National Monitoring and Evaluation System (NIMES) in Kenya

NIMES was established in 2004 through a multi-stakeholder effort to track the implementation of policies, programmes and projects in government. The process included development partners such as the United Nations (UN) bodies, the Department for International Development (DFID) and the World Bank (WB) Ministry of State and Planning (MSP) (2011). Since 2008 Kenya has been implementing Vision 2030 that aims at making the

country become more competitive and prosperous by advocating for responsive, accountable and effective policies. Furthermore, Vision 2030 is a long-term plan that seeks to create a cohesive, equitable and just society based on democratic principles, where one of the strategies that the government uses NIMES for is to track and report progress achieved in meeting set goals by the MSP (2012).

According to MSP (2012), NIMES is further supported by the Kenya Constitution of 2010 which provides for the devolution of governance to the county level, transparency, fair representation in parliament, separation of powers and an independent judiciary, among other important pillars that are to be informed by a well-functioning evaluation system. Besides many achievements since the implementation of NIMES, there are still some challenges that need to be solved and improved with regard to institutionalisation of M & E system in Kenya to improve areas such as human capital, financial and infrastructural requirements and management which are inter-dependent and influence each other (MSP, 2011).

1.6.3.2 Human Resource challenges in Kenya

According to MSP (2012), the Human Resources (HR) development sector experienced several challenges in implementing the following targets, weak capacity for implementation of the revised labour laws, new laws have increased the workload for the implementing institutions, high levels of inadequate HR and financial resources to conduct recruitment processes and retain highly qualified employees present a challenge; and finally duplication and functional overlaps continue to create confusion within the public sector.

1.7 SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SECTOR HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

According to Akinnusi (2008), South Africa and the apartheid regime prior to the 1994 elections that gave birth to a democratic republic was characterised by inadequate HRM practices and this situation has not changed as expected due to challenges such as public sector under-performance driven by corruption and non-compliance to recruitment standards; a lack of performance culture; corrupt behaviour; and slow bureaucratic decision-making by leadership. Improvements have not happened as rapidly and effectively as required and expected, despite all the achievements of government since 1994. Many communities in South Africa have rightly become impatient with the quality, relevance and adequacy of government services and delivery (The Presidency, 2010).

According to Amos and Ristow (2004), SA public sector HRM practices are governed by the legislation listed below aiming to ensure skilful and developed work force that can be able to handle and solve challenges faced by its countries in a quest to improve the welfare of the SA citizens and these acts are as follows; Occupational Health and Safety Act No. 85 of 1993, Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1995 and Labour Relations Amendment Act No. 127 of 1998, South African Qualifications Act No. 58 of 1995, Basic Conditions of Employment Act No 104 of 1997, Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998, Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998, Skills Development Levies Act No. 9 of 1999, Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act No. 4 of 2000, and White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service of 2000.

The legislative mandate of the DPSA as explained by the Public Service Act (PSA) is to be responsible for establishing norms and standards for all

government departments specifically in relation to HRM practices. According to the (PSA) (1994), there are ten crucial HRM practices that must be adhered to and practised by all government departments in SA with support provided by the DPSA experts as the policy owner and caretaker for HRM. These are the following; recruitment procedures, appointment, job and occupational classification and grading, remuneration and other conditions of service, job assignments, the working environment, work facilities, training and development, employee performance management systems and practices and discipline.

National and Provincial departments under the leadership of their individual political Executive Authorities (EA) and Accounting Officers are responsible for the fair and consistent implementation of the above mentioned HRM practices utilizing the guidelines, frameworks and acts as provided by the DPSA. Each government department at national level has its own HRM unit which is responsible for the provisioning of support and advisory services on HRM policies and practice to all managers. The nine provinces either have centralized or decentralized HRM units which remain responsible for guiding, advising and supporting employees and managers in their respective organisations.

1.8 MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT TOOL (MPAT)

MPAT method is aligned and designed in relation to the similar public service management performance assessment practices by other countries such as New Zealand, Canada, and Kenya and was conceptualised drawing on experiences and lessons from these international countries (DPME, 2013).

Figure 2: MPAT Levels

Level	Description
Level 1	**Department is non-compliant with legal/regulatory requirements**
Level 2	Department is partially compliant with legal/regulatory requirements
Level 3	Department is fully compliant with legal/regulatory requirements
Level 4	Department is fully compliant with legal/regulatory requirements and is doing things smartly

Source: DPME (2012)

According to the Presidency (2010), national and provincial departments are expected to conduct their own self-assessment questionnaires and provide evidence to support their scorings. The scoring is rated from level 1 which is non-compliance, level 2 is partial compliance to regulatory prescripts, level 3 which means full compliance, and level 4 which is beyond compliance, normally referred to as working smartly. In order for a manager to achieve all MPAT standards he or she is required to ensure that his or her department or unit actions are in adherence to legislative policies, guides and procedures. MPAT standards on HRM are informed by the Constitutional principles on public service (Chapter 10), the Public Service Act (PSA) and the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) (DPME, 2014).

The Presidency (2010) explains that MPAT is based on the understanding that compliance with management regulations will contribute to improved departmental performance and, over time, to improved service delivery. According to the DPME (2011), a HRM system is measured against the following indicators:

Table 1: HRM MPAT INDICATORS

HRM MPAT INDICATORS	Author
HR planning (HRP) Deals with the existing and forthcoming labour force required to attain organisational objectives.	DPSA (2001) and Hannagan (2005)
Organisational design and implementation (OD) Defines the roles and responsibilities of all organisational staff members in realising the institutional goals and mandate.	
HR development planning(HRD) Addresses skills gaps of employees.	(DPSA, 1994)
Recruitment and Retention (R&R) Is very critical in ensuring that organisations are able to attract and develop skill full employees.	
Management of diversity Public service consists of equal diversity in terms of culture, religions and sexes.	DPSA (1998)
PMDS Level 1-12,SMS and HoD Enhance employee's performance towards improving service delivery.	DPSA ,2003
Management of disciplinary cases Government departments adhere to acceptable public service code of conduct when carrying out their responsibilities.	DPSA,2003

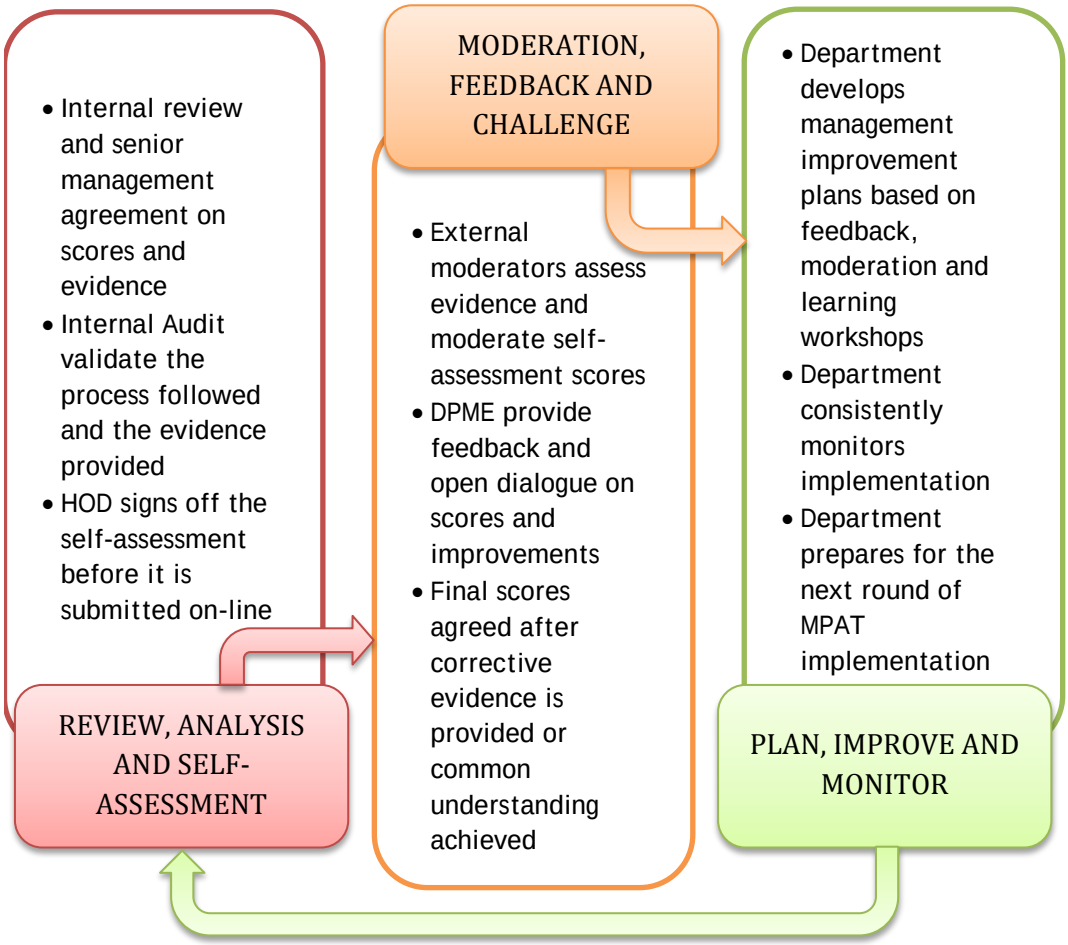
SOURCE: DPME, 2011

Figure 3 below depicts the whole MPAT process. This commences with the self -assessment which is conducted by senior management of the department in a meeting which must comprise all key line managers and internal auditors within each department where they discuss and agree on scores and evidence to support their scoring, and the improvements identified are expected to be time bound and linked to a responsible.

This process is followed by the approval and submission of both scores and evidence to the DPME by the accounting officers via the MPAT electronic system. Scores are either confirmed or reduced by the DPME moderators who are government employees from around SA with recognised skills and knowledge of HRM practices and policy experts from the DPSA. The feedback sessions on scores is discussed by DPME officials and all involved national and provincial departments to either agree on their scoring or submit more evidence only if it was omitted to improve scores where necessary. This process is referred to as the challenge period.

After presenting final scores to all structures and government clusters, including the Cabinet the results are made public. The DPME document learnings from good practice departments operating at level four so that the less highly scored organisations can learn and improve.

Figure 3: Complete MPAT Process



Source: DPME, 2014

1.9 SOUTH AFRICA HRM PRACTICES BEFORE AND DURING THE MPAT

The SA public service before 1994 employed predominantly white people, especially at the decision-making level which benefited the Afrikaans speaking white group. Post-1994, and the democratic elections, the SA Constitution stipulated that, "public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment management and personnel practices based on ability, objectives and fairness" (DPME, 2014). According to DPME (2012) in 2011 a total of 103 departments

participated in the MPAT process. As from 2012 to 2013 the DPME has successfully implemented the two MPAT cycles where all 155 departments at national and provincial spheres of government participated. These improved levels of participation indicate the willingness on departments to enhance their management practices by ensuring the creation of an environment that will facilitate the effective and efficient delivery of services to the SA citizens (DPME, 2014).

According to The Presidency (2010), the following HRM practices and accountability matters were regarded as urgent areas for improvement; amend, review and add an element of flexible hiring and firing into the civil service environment, urgently identify other ways of recognising, encouraging and measuring good performance other than the normal current method used called the performance management development system (PMDS) which is connected to monetary rewards, explain the necessity to administer the competency test for all senior members of service (SMS),ensure that disciplinary cases are dealt with and finalised within a reasonable policy timeframe so as to deal with corrupt public servants, ensure management of poor performance is dealt with following the proper procedures, keeping in mind that poor performance is often the result of poor recruitment procedures, the lack and limited capacity and absence of an organisational excellence performance culture.

Furthermore, in relation to the challenges faced by HRM, the Presidency (2010) indicated the following HR systems challenges experienced in the public sector, only 7 per cent of departments fill vacant posts in 90 days as required by regulations, HR systems do not succeed in retaining skilled staff, disciplinary procedures on average take over one year to be finalised, the Performance Management System is not well implemented and 35 per cent of public servants are unhappy due to dissatisfaction with management quality.

1.10 PROBLEM STATEMENT

In addition to the abovementioned HRM practice challenges in the SA public sector, the DPME (2012) MPAT findings show 66 percent level of non-compliance to basic HR regulations and HRM, therefore it was identified as the poorest performing KPA out of all four KPAs as measured by MPAT. These weaknesses are not new as they have also been emphasized by the Public Service Commission, the DPSA and the Auditor General of South Africa (AGSA) as areas of concern because effective HRM, professional and development public servants are vital to ensuring continuous improvement of government performance.

Despite the fact that HRM practices deal with administration services that are highly regulated and require appropriateness, adherence and consistency by public servants at all times, the widespread non-compliance with policies and procedures undermines the credibility of HR practices such as recruitment, selection and compensation of employees. Hence MPAT results of 2012 indicated that HRM practices remain in a critical state (DPME, 2013).

1.11. PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of the study is to investigate the factors that contribute to non- compliance with HRM practices in the public sector. The intention is also to interpret and analyze the findings of the SA public sector HRM practices and finally, to recommend strategies to be applied in order to ensure improvements in HRM practices at the national and provincial spheres of government.

1.12. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.12.1 Primary Research Question

1. What are the factors that contribute to non-compliance with HRM practices in the public sector?

1.12.2 Secondary Research Questions

2. What are the trends in HRM practices? (These could be, for example, trends in recruitment practices, management of diversity and management of disciplinary cases).
3. What are the strategies to be considered and applied by the national and provincial departments in order to guarantee improvements in HRM practices?

CHAPTER TWO

INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

One can define the literature review as a version of what is available in the public domain or what has been published on a specific subject by different scholars and authors. Literature review is very important as it entails learning and careful readings of other available knowledge by researchers and scholars leading towards responding or answering the research questions. Reviewed literatures included in journals, articles, books, magazines, newspapers, films, video and audiotapes. According to DePaul University (2012), one of the most vital foundations of literature review is basically reviewing the existing body of knowledge on a topic. This provides the starting point for a project as they help the researcher to discover the existing information on a subject.

Literature review goes beyond the search for information. It also identifies the existing study undertaken on the topic, aims to ensure that the researcher does not duplicate work that was done in the past, brings about or adds new knowledge to the topic that fits and highlights improvements and lessons to be learned from previous research on the same subject. One can explain that the most critical work undertaken by the literature analysis is to assist the researcher to collect information that is relevant to the subject matter as a means of trying to augment existing writing in an attempt to answer the research problem and discover something new and different.

2.2. SIGNIFICANCE OF LITERATURE REVIEW IN RESEARCH

Boote and Beile (2005) view the literature review as being vital in research as it assesses information related to the chosen area of study. Furthermore the review should describe, recapitulate, evaluate and clarify this literature. In order for the researcher to focus his or her study literature review must be employed in such a way that it indicates and highlights other scholar's information on the same subject matter.

2.3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Strauss and Corbin (1995) defines theory as a model which describes why the world is the way it is; furthermore theory allows the researcher to express someone's views and experiences as if he or she was part of the journey with the person.

2.3.1. Motivation theory

Vroom (1964) describes motivational theory as a process of choice made by persons from among alternative forms of voluntary action. An international study conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2009) shows that any company or government department that invest in staff and financial resources increases the effectiveness of government policies. This is further supported by Amos, Ristow and Ristow (2004), who explains that the right people are not only recruited, they are correctly selected. They also need to be managed and directed on a daily basis as this creates an enabling environment that inspires people to perform at their best. One can argue that the way organisations conduct and implement the HRM practices does have either positive or negative impact on its performance.

Since implementation of MPAT in 2011, there has been full participation by departments from both national and provincial spheres of government. The question is whether MPAT is improving management practices which are believed to improve service delivery or whether there are linkages or mutual impact of some kind.

Buchanan and Huczynski (1997) views motivational theory as some kind of internal mental process of being able maintain the goal driven behaviour. All these mentioned different definitions to the motivational theory are further supported by Abell (2013) by outlining the description of HRM as the management activity taken by organisations to recruit and motivate their employees, which means HRM includes policies programmes and plans from recruitment and selection techniques, using MPAT as a tool that measures, compares and develop a certain acceptable standard for good management practice, assesses the quality of these management practices across a wide range of management areas from HRP to management of disciplinary cases.

2.3.2. Knowledge management

While the field of Knowledge Management has been in existence and studied by many academics from various backgrounds of disciplines it is still associated with many challenges that need to be investigated and explored in the future. These challenges are the consequences of difficulties of translating theory into practices during the implementation. Change in a nutshell requires organizations to adjust and accept the need for continuous improvements at all times especially due to internal and external factors (Dierkes, Berthoin Antal, Child & Nonaka, 2003).

Basketville and Dulipovici (2006) argues that understanding current theories have been utilized or employed in such a way that they ensure that knowledge management is a developmental field. Together with

methods and aims, theories are a crucial way of claiming their part in *scientific rationality*. According to Reinhardt, Bornemann, Pawlowsky and Schneider (2003), knowledge is described as one of the most important investments in management as it attempts to develop an understanding that people's knowledge is apparently more vital than other resources such as machines and capital. According to Reinhardt, et al. (2003, p. 796), "Human capital is seen as a company's total workforce and its knowledge about the business. It is seen as crucial for marshaling the company's assets, both tangible and intangible."

According to Nonaka and Toyama (2003), knowledge management is when individuals or the department always tries to see the entire situation by interacting and sharing views, opinions and factual information with people who see the reality from other angles and thereby stimulate continuous improvement or revolving performance within the organisation to ensure relevance with the times.

2.3.3. Theory of human resources

HRM is defined as a new notion for employees with the new focus of re-inventing the importance and responsibilities of staff in relation to the strategic goals of the organisation. (Redman and Wilkinson, 2001). Monks (1992) further define the theory of HRM as being an instrument used to bully workers, and not allowing them to come with innovative and new ideas. One can describe HRM as the procedure used to manage employees in the organisation in pursuit of enriching and meeting the company strategic goal, because HRM is concerned with employees wellbeing in the department and the issues that affects and informs relationship between employee and employer in an institutions, (Hannagan, 2005).

One can argue that the HR theory could be referred to as a method of observing people as being encouraged by different things such as wealth, peer pressure, status, political association and well- paying job. However, this is further explained by (Porter, Gallager,Thompson and Young , 2003) that each different employee will pursue different objectives, as by nature different individuals brings different talents in the organisation and the way they carry out the same task will differ as well towards the fulfilment and achievement of the institutional goals. Furthermore, it suggests that it is up to the manager to find this potential talent and use it to meet and even exceed organisational objectives.

From a motivational perspective, the managerial task could be said to be clear; determine the best use of the workforce's resources, assist employees in the achievement of goals in an organisational context, introduce a philosophy that leads to greater employee participation in decision-making, and set up a situation where the organisation and the employee meet their goals at the same time (Porter, et al (2003). According to Moti (2014), the theoretical discipline is based primarily on the assumption that employees are individuals with varying goals and needs, and as such should not be thought of as basic business resources, similar to trucks and filing cabinets. It takes a positive view of workers, assuming that virtually all wish to contribute to the enterprise productively and that the main obstacles to their endeavours are lack of knowledge, insufficient training, and failure of process.

The HRM responsibility is thus merely to help the government organisation to achieve its strategic goal by simply attracting and developing employees whilst management or leadership must by all means manage them effectively. MPAT is about continuous improvement which requires change in behaviours. The theory of HRM includes some important aspects of MPAT but not to the extent of a broader perspective or all of them. The academic theory of human resource management is that

humans must be treated as such as they are the very important organisational asset and they must not be approached and treated like machines (Redman & Wilkinson, 2001).

2.3.4. Performance management

Performance management can be described as the way in which managers and leadership in the departments derive the best of the human resource at their disposal. This relates to rewards or recognition of performance. Performance Management is therefore defined as the procedures of deriving clear goals and targets that must be achieved by employees whether in units , teams or as individuals but at the end they are linked to rewards when target are met or exceeded (Hannagan, 2005).

Hannagan (2005) describes the following elements which must form part of performance management in every organization and they are; vision, mission statement and corporate objectives must be shared and communicated to all employees, individual performance targets set must be linked to the organisational objectives, progress towards achieving set targets must be monitored through a regular and formal review done to identify training needs, career development or rewards; and most importantly, the effectiveness of the whole process is evaluated against the overall performance of the entire organisation or department.

Swanepoel, Erasmus, Van Wyk and Schenk (2000) explain that the effective supervision of employee's performance is the absolute necessity for the achievement of the departmental goals. O'Callaghan (2005) suggests that performance management in most institutions is conducted in a way that tells a person what to do and that, "policing rather than treating it as an integral part of the manager and the employee's job" is the approach. It is a common belief in both the business and the academic worlds that the human resources of an organisation can be a source of

competitive advantage, provided that the policies for managing people are integrated with strategic business planning and organisational culture (Beer, Spector, Quinn Mills and Walton, 1984).

In South Africa at national and provincial level every government department is required by the law to have policies that govern performance management that are unique to that specific institution but are governed by the DPSA as the policy owner department. The latest academic researches has enthralled on bringing the linkages between HRM and organisational performance Manning (2010), and the body of literature is growing immensely in this field even though the linkage between HRM and performance is still questionable. There is a need to question the accuracy of the link between Human Resource Management (HRM) and performance. According to Akinnusi (2008), investment in human resources is very crucial for both private and public sector as they bring about healthy competitive environment whilst ensuring that employees are forever finding new way, motivations, innovation and creativeness to improve the departmental performance.

2.4 CONCEPTUAL THEORY

2.4.1 Theory of Change (TOC)

A Theory of Change (ToC) articulates underlying principles and expectations about what is required by targeted group and what plans need to be employed and applied to meet those assumptions (Rogers, 2014). A ToC states all the steps to be taken in order to realize and meet the given long term expected goal required and that results are achieved through the systematic road map (Van der Westhuizen & Abrahams, 2011). Weiss (1995) simply defines ToC as a number of agreed expectations that explains the steps to be taken in order to achieve a very long-term goal whilst on the other side Kusek and Rist (2004) defines ToC as similar to the logic model which is made up of four or even more

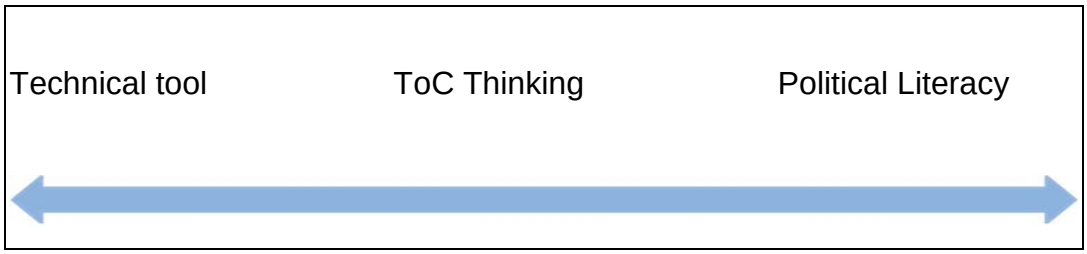
building blocks; outcomes, outputs, activities and inputs. According to Van der Westhuizen and Abrahams (2011), the evaluation of social interventions is an ongoing apprehension for most stakeholders, programme participants and the citizens in the case of the public sector. MPAT is also an evaluation intervention aiming to improve human resource practices in the public sector through applying the systematic steps of monitoring programmes or policies during their implementation.

ToC is used to monitor the implementation of any project as it allows for the feedback communication on whether the project or programme is still on track in terms of meeting the desired outcomes or change that is assumed in the beginning and also allows for some changes along the way where the programme or intervention seems not be yielding desired goals. MPAT encourages departments at national and provincial sphere of government to understand that monitoring and HRM is not only the responsibility of the HR practitioner or manager but is equally the task of all line managers and leadership in the organisation and should be implemented daily in carrying out duties.

Frankel and Gage (2007) defines ToC as the systematic small and big steps that are needed in order to realise an output, then an outcomes which leads to an impact at a later stage and the most important thing about ToC process is that it clearly defines and intensely describes what is needed to be done from activities and inputs in order to bring about the necessary results.

Figure 4 below depicts that in order to bring about change it is critical for an organisation to put in place processes to attract and recruit people with relevant technical tools and knowledge, who are excellent planners who have acquired the capabilities of influencing and teaching the political leadership about the programmes and objectives that aim at realising the needs of the citizens.

Figure 4: Theory of Change



Adopted from Source: Stein and Valters (2012)

Planners and top and line management must be able to guarantee the political commitment that is needed from executive authority to support programmes like MPAT. The commitment and support of leadership is critical during the intervention to ensure change happens. Leadership within the government departments must be able to assist and inform their Executive Authorities or political appointees about departmental mandates and what it takes to implement them. The DPME (2011) describes the main objectives of MPAT as being interconnected to the ToC and Figure 2 as follows; MPAT collates benchmarks for management performance, establishes the baseline performance of departments, provide managers with useful information to inform improvements, catalyses improvements in management practices, assists in developing agreed improvement strategies and provides targeted support to departments; and track improvements against the baseline performance.

According to Shapiro (2006), bringing new developments, interventions, programmes and ensuring change in any organisation, community or to an individual one need to involves actions plans or strategies that deals with the psychological being of the person, as it means new relationship, new networks and coordination and cooperative between different affiliation and group must be fostered and it is very powerful in resolving most government social challenges.

2.5 CONCLUSION

The literature on ToC proved to be essential for this study which examines and investigates the implementation of MPAT with reference to HRM practices in the SA public sector. The intention is to ensure that indicators that are developed to reach the planned goals are in place and structured in such a way that they serve as early warnings to the organisation, staff and public sector managers as to why an organisation is not meeting its objectives and what are the areas of weaknesses that should be improved. Hannagan (2005) argues that it is difficult to change an institution which does not acknowledge and accept the potential danger of its present way of doing things and management of change is thus one of the most critical skills of any manager, since it is a process of setting up new working methods to deal with changing circumstances.

Improvements can only be implemented when one is aware of shortcomings through continuous monitoring and reporting on progress, but most importantly, evaluation assists in identifying what went wrong, how the situation can it be improved and how to formulate actions or recommendation to ensure change happens. Bryman (2012) explain the purpose of change as moving the organisation from its current status to a different direction which meets and exceeds the organisation's desired objectives.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Bryman (2012), social research is motivated by developments and occurrences in the society. Kothari (1990) explains research as a careful search for different and latest opinions, theories and views in any discipline of knowledge is very technical in nature because it is an academic activity as it entails redefining problems, recommending decisions, accessing , managing , employing, assessing information, and eliminating, deducting and making final choices . This chapter indicates the research methodology used to explore the HRM practices in SA. The research approach is selected by examining the methods debate presented by different scholars. Rajasekar, Philominathan and Chinnathambi (2013) defines the research method as the processes in which different researchers carry out their work of relating, telling, analysing and assuming certain occurrences with the overall aims of focusing and enlighten the research plan and the work to be taken in that research.

Edwards (2004) warns researchers to be cautious when deciding on a method that will be applied in order to respond to the research question or questions. The basic and primary research applied can either be quantitative or qualitative or they can be combined meaning that both can be applied in one research study. However, for this study both approaches are used with less emphasis on quantitative research. This is because every research procedure is inseparably entrenched in assurances to that specific subject or known phenomenon by the researcher (Bryman, 2012).

Dawson (2002) advises that when the research methodology is first contemplated, the researcher must be able to distinguish or tell the difference between qualitative and quantitative approach. Furthermore, thinking about application of any of these methodologies it automatically forces the researcher to make a choice by conducting and identifying strengths and weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative data (Patton and Cochran, 2002). In the research, some questions advance themselves to numerical replies whilst others generate words. Research design outlines how an investigation is conducted, and includes issues such as how data is to be collected, using what instruments and the intended means for analysing the data that have been collected.

Albert Einstein observed that, “Not everything that can be counted counts and not everything that counts can be counted”. This explains why the research has undertaken the use of both qualitative and quantitative strategy which is normally referred to as mixed method research, with more emphasis and use of the qualitative rather than quantitative approach. Dawson (2002) warns researchers not to fall into the trap of thinking that either quantitative method is better than qualitative research, since none of them is superior to the other. Both have their own strengths and weaknesses that more or less complement each other.

3.2. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Patton and Cochran (2002) argue that qualitative research objectives are to convey understanding of some aspect of social life, for example, understanding people’s belief systems, culture, perspectives and experiences; most importantly it unveils ethical issues where consent and confidentiality from the researcher must be guaranteed. Marvasti (2004) further supports Patton and Cochran by saying that naturally everyday life is full of experiences which lead to people wanting to re-examine their

surroundings, since human beings are curious and researchers by nature, and are keen to give sense, understand and forecast their lives.

Bryman (2012) sees qualitative research as a method that uses words in the gathering and examination of information and it further emphasises that the academic researcher must write the study through the eyes of the participants in the researched topic. It is an interactive procedure of evaluating evidence whilst examining and exploring the what, where and when in reaching the resolution (Rajasekar, Philominathan & Chinnathambi, 2013). Patton and Cochran (2002) define qualitative research as categorized by its intentions of getting to know and understand some features of social happenings as it produces words during the process instead of statistics or numbers.

Bryman (2012) observes that this method emphasizes words in the collection and analysis of data. Qualitative research involves a number of different processes with many disciplinary background and system that can be utilised. One can argue that qualitative research is important for this study as it is not in numbers, as the objective of the application of the qualitative research method is to obtain a certain level of understanding the reasons behind certain occurrence or situation either academic or socially. This allows for an in-depth understanding of the situation or the subject being researched. Qualitative research is likely to be instinctive driven (Marvasti, 2004). Furthermore, qualitative research in this study is very exploratory as it investigates the following questions:

1. What are the factors that contribute to non-compliance with HRM practices in the public sector?
2. What are the trends in HRM practices? (These may be, for example, trends in recruitment practices, management of diversity and that of the disciplinary cases).

3. What are the strategies to be considered by national and provincial departments in order to guarantee improvements in HRM practices?

Cresswell (2008) further argues that, in qualitative research, the commitment is to explore the complex factors surrounding the central occurrence and present different meanings that participants hold. Qualitative is employed in such a way as mentioned by Bryman (2012) so as to expand upon and illustrate the quantitative findings. In qualitative research in order to get to the bottom and in-depth facts about certain phenomenon the researcher must be able to examine people attitudes and experience from the participants point of view not from what she or he wishes or assumed (Dawson, 2002). According to Marvasti (2004), qualitative research gives a very comprehensive description and examination of the worth of the human or participant's point of view as it was experience and tries to identify extensive overlap in practice and theory between these two methods.

3.3. QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Bryman (2012) refers to quantitative research as the approach that applies quantification during gathering and examination of data and testing of theories and represents data by means of numerical categories. This strategy is a linear series of steps from theory to conclusion. Rajasekar, Philominathan and Chinnathambi (2013) define quantitative research as the application of numbers therefore the end results are presented in either in tables or graphs. In this research study of the implementation of MPAT with specific reference to HRM practices, the survey is designed in such a way that it provides a quantitative graphic of trends on opinions of M&E and HRM employees working at national and provincial spheres of government. The study employed the convenient sampling because of the budget constraints, time limitation, targeted participants were M & E and

HRM practitioners at senior, middle and junior positions within the public sector, Participants must have knowledge and exposure to the MPAT process since 2011**.** According to Salkind (2010) referred to convenient sampling as the non-probability sampling which focuses on a sample that is easily reachable and willingly obtainable.

The study participants are two employees from each of the following provinces: Gauteng, Free State, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape, Western Cape, North West, Northern Cape and Limpopo. At national sphere of government employees who participated were totalling to twenty and in the data and the study national department are referred to as the tenth province.

Bryman (2012) further argues that in quantitative research there are four main preoccupations, which are:

a. Measurement which addresses issues of reliability and validity to ensure quality,
b. Causality which talks to examining the causes for certain phenomena,
c. Generalization meaning that the results can be applied to other individuals who did not respond to the questionnaire and
d. Replication which means that the research results must be objective at all times.

Dawson (2002) argues that quantitative research produces numbers and it is normally applied in a very large scale of surveys whereby the researcher conducts structured interviews, and this study has also followed the same procedure, however with a limited or lesser use of the statistical analysis research questionnaires were more lenient on than qualitative research methodology.

3.4 MIXED METHOD RESEARCH

According to Greener, Garacelli and Graham (1989), in recent year's research from different disciplines, for example, social programmes and education, have extended range and started to use both qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate and study a single phenomenon. Bryman (2012) describes mixed methods as the research that integrates quantitative and qualitative research application in a one research project or report.

According to Lingard, Albert and Levinson (2008), mixed methods includes characteristics from both qualitative and quantitative patterns in order to get to the interrelated discoveries , and the tactic for mixing methods must be justifiable. However, regarding this research there was more leniencies on qualitative; finally, the nature and timing of integration of the two methods don't really matter whether they were applied the same during gathering of data and its examination either be full or partial during data collection, analysis or interpretation. Greener et,al (1989) maintains that in quantitative and qualitative approaches, the logic requires them to be different from one another in terms of their biasness, strengths and weaknesses, even though they are used to assessing the same occurrence.

The application of both qualitative and quantitative research must be able to produce new insights and understanding of the occurrence or challenge much more clearly and better that using one method (Creswell 2008). According to Greene et, al (1989), quantitative research examines the level to which perceptions are shared and/or disseminated whilst in addition qualitative research tells the story. Mixed methods is applied in such a way that the overall strength of a study is greater on qualitative than quantitative approach. In this study quantitative graphical analysis is

further depicted by words in order to ensure an understanding of different opinions of the participants on the implementation of MPAT in relation to the HRM practices.

Byrman (2012) also explains that mixed method research can be classified according to the priority decision, meaning between the two the qualitative outweighs the quantitative, whilst on the other hand, quantitative precedes the qualitative in terms of sequence; and finally both strategies can yield very fruitful results especially when one produces unanticipated outcomes that can be clarified and agreeable by using the other. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) claim that mixed methods can assist in closing the gap between quantitative and qualitative research.

Furthermore to this, Greener et, al (1989) have proposed five purposes for mixed methods that encompass issues about procedures and the occurrence under investigation and these are:

a. Triangulation,
b. Complementarity,
c. Development,
d. Initiation, and
e. Expansion.

Fundamental to the importance of combining qualitative and quantitative method in this study allows the researcher to identify and generate results with the same understanding but which can be communicate differently by either numbers, words and can also be quantifiable and the data is able to give in-depths insights than one method can ever do (Lingard, Albert and Levinson, 2008). Regardless of their different weaknesses and strengths, qualitative and quantitative researchers agree that social research should be based on the world, issues, interactions, interviews and documents (Marvasti, 2004).

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

Data collection entails the usage of primary and secondary sources by means of analysis of existing documents and interviews. The forms of data collection applied in this study include the following:

3.5.1 Interviews

According to Gill, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick (2008), there are three fundamental kinds of research interviews: structured, unstructured and semi-structured. For this study the researcher has used the semi structured interview as it consists of several main critical questions that assist to describe the subject being investigated, whilst also allowing the interviewer or participants in the study to deviate or make use of other occurrence as an example either than the researched topic. For example, one of the concluding questions asked in this research questionnaire read as, “In your opinion, what are the strategies/plans/systems to be considered by national and provincial departments in order to guarantee improvements in HRM practices?” As demonstrated in this example, according to Marvasti (2004), unstructured interviews are a simple and plain process as they simply provide a guide or direction and allow interview participants to tell their stories (see interview questionnaire Annexure A).

Dawson (2002) further supports this by saying that the researcher always aims to ask not so many questions in an unstructured interview. This is done not to avoid effort, but rather to promote a connection between interviewer and interviewee especially where sensitive or intimate information might be revealed. The simplicity of unstructured interviews especially in comparison to the structured interviews, allows for the identification and explanation of information that is very vital to the

interviewee which was not regarded as relevant by the researcher in the beginning (Gill, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick, 2008).

Cresswell (2002) contends that it is very important to begin the qualitative research questions with the words ‘what’ or ‘how’ whilst the ‘why’ mostly implies a cause-and-effect type of thinking and is often used in quantitative research. Patton and Cochran (2002) advise that naturally interviews should be similar to day to day discussions and dialogues although the overall aim of the researcher is to gather data , which must be conducted in a more vigorous manner than conversation to ensure validity and reliability of the findings. This process ensures the usefulness of the results by answering what the researcher wanted to find out in the first place. Most importantly the research results must not indicate bias by the researcher and users must able to get answers on what was set to be explored and answered by the study. The setting and the purpose of the interview must be consistent as questions that are asked of individuals are expected to give meaningful responses since the interview process should resemble everyday life (Marvasti, 2004).

Participants are government employees at the national and provincial spheres of government from both M&E and HRM units, According to Creswell (2008); the main question is a wide-ranging interrogation that asks for an exploration of the dominant notion in a study. The researcher needs to be aware and respect the fact that participants might not like to share their views and experiences of the situation (Patton and Cochran, 2007). Dawson (2002) further explains that unstructured interviews in this case are sometimes seen as life history interviews as the researcher tries to capture a very clear snapshot of the overall experiences, opinions, facts and point of views of all the participants by encouraging and ensuring that they are free during the interview sessions.

3.5.2 Desktop research

For this research, most secondary information is easily accessible on the internet, libraries, newspaper archives, non-government organisations and government websites. Desktop allows the researcher to collect information by other authors and government departments or institutions long before even starting to work on the research. Glass (1976) further emphasizes the importance of extracting knowledge from accumulated studies however the process can be very complex.

3.5.2.1 Thematic analysis of data

Patton and Cochran (2002) argue that the importance of giving names to ideas and concepts is in order to be able to explain, describe, examine and share with others. Once this is done the research can be able to further compare the analytic data by asking questions and give them names to establish concepts.

3.5.2.2 Open coding

According to Patton and Cochran (2002), the process of analysing data and identifying themes is called Open Coding. There are many ways that data can be analysed either by coding and producing themes words by words, sentence by sentence or by paragraph and the content must be marked in order to give it a theme or code. Depending on the requirements of the research the end results of this process should allow the researcher to establish a framework to be examined and analysed (Patton and Cochran, 2002).

Khandkar (2009) argues that during the analysis of qualitative data the most critical undertaking is to discover themes that the investigators

identify before, during and after the gathering of data. These themes come from reviewing the literature, or from the features of the subject matter or occurrence that is being investigated for example experiences and views of the participants with regards to a specific occurrence in time and how they were affected, these characteristics are either repeated by different participants or they share and point similar bearings (Maxwell, 1996).

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) refers to **o**pen coding as reading through data many times and creating labels where there is repetition, key word concepts, metaphors and similes and identify quotes that seem potentially important by cutting and sorting in order to summarize and understand and obtain an idea of what is happening.

3.5.2.3 Axial coding

Neuman (2000) argue that axial coding focuses on reviewing and examining initial codes that took place in the first phase of analysing data and that more codes or total new thoughts may be identified over and over again. Patton and Cochran (2002) refer to axial coding as involving and identifying relationships among the open codes.

3.6 DETERMINING VALIDITY OF DATA

Creswell and Miller (2000) argue that there is a selection of terms for validity, such as authenticity, goodness, adequacy, trustworthiness and credibility. This requires researchers to demonstrate that their studies are credible. For the purpose of this research, triangulation of data sources is employed whereby the researchers applies and gather information from many different search engines in a quest to create themes.

3.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study was undertaken to investigate the implementation of MPAT with reference to the HRM systems KPA. The people who are using MPAT to develop HRM performance are all government departments at national and provincial spheres of government with the overall aim of improving service delivery to the people of SA.

3.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study, and in particular, interviews will be limited to HR and M&E specialists at national and provincial departments excluding the local sphere of government due to the fact that MPAT assesses performance at these levels only. This exclusion might have hindered significant and important findings that could lead to improvements of HRM at all three spheres of government. Another challenge is conducting comparative progress analysis on HRM practices since implementation of MPAT has not been extensive over time. The 2014 MPAT 1.4 results will only be published in June 2015. The participant responses already indicate a high level of improvement which might in some instance correspond with the 2012 and 2013 MPAT results. It is important to note that the study only refers to 2011 as the first implementation of MPAT but the results or scores are not to be considered in the research as the moderation process to validate the scores against evidence provided by the department did not take place or was very limited.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Resnik (2011), there are many reasons that the researchers need to adhere to in ensuring ethical standards in the research and they are as follows:

a. Promoting the intentions of the research study , by telling the truth and avoid mistakes,
b. Ensuring accountability, mutual trust and honesty,
c. Researchers must be mindful that the public can hold her or him accountable for the study,
d. Researcher must demonstrate high level of adherence to social responsibility, respect and compliance to the regulative frameworks on how the world or society operates.

The abovementioned reasons for adhering to ethical norms must be practised to ensure the well-being of the research. It is important to ensure that the research project does not interrupt or disrupt the lives of people being researched or the participants. All the participants in this study were interviewed at their most suitable times within the research timeframes and issues or subject of confidentiality were treated as such. Interviewees were informed of issues relating to consent and confidentiality and participants were allowed to decide on whether they prefer to sign a written consent agreement before the interview or whether verbal consent will suffice. The participants were informed about the research in a way that they readily understood.

3.10 RESEARCH MANAGEMENT

Rajasekar et, al (2013) advise researchers to be mindful that every work or research study in life can be improved and that is the natural human endeavour, however it is important to conduct research with maximum care by not focusing overly on detail since this may prevent finalisation of the work, and that the researcher must employ his or her devotion on the most critical parts of the research. Writing and providing the progress made on the research helps to form a solid basis for more advancement and also assists in identifying the gaps in the study.

3.11 TIMEFRAME

Patton and Cochran (2002) explain the timeframes as being how long it is going to take, the importance of identifying and developing indicators on the progress made on the research is very critical for example, research phases like holding research interviews and axial coding. The envisaged time frame to finalise this research is March 2015.

3.12 CONCLUSION

In social research that are basic practices that are commonly applied such as the process of reviewing literature, data gathering and analysis, and research findings. The selected research methodology is used to describe and analyse the implementation of MPAT at the national and provincial spheres of government in SA whilst scrutinizing the factors leading to non-compliance with HRM practices by the SA public sector. It is envisaged that the literature in this study will be added to the current limited data that addresses the need to improve the HRM practices in government departments. The research method applied in this study is mixed methods, meaning the employment of quantitative with more leniencies on qualitative research methods. Data is collected by means of desktop research using readily available literature on the topic, interviews and axial coding.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Tiwari (2012), ensuring effective HRM is challenging, unlike managing technology or capital for example, companies and departments need effective HRM systems in place. In the SA public sector in a quest to develop and improve the HRM practices, certain issues need to be urgently addressed and eradicated such as for example; there must be consequences to the high level of non-compliance, people's performance must be taken seriously and accounting officers must account for not adhering to the national HRM policies governing the national and provincial spheres of government. This is supported by the White Paper on HR in the public service which assigned managerial responsibility to achievement of desired results and held public servants accountable for their actions. Government should also conduct its business professionally, transparently and ethically in the quest to move away from personnel administration to HRM DPSA (1997).

HRM is an important asset of any organisation that should be approached and managed strategically within the departments. According to the DPME (2012) all the HR standards from the organisation design and implementation, recruitment practices ,management of diversity, performance management of Senior Management Service (SMS) and Head of Department's (HoD) need to be addressed to ensure improvements.

Compliance with HRM practices remains a red flag even though, according to Itika (2011), HR managers are guided by sets of rules and policies leading to the success of their countries and departments, the

challenge for HR managers is to know which rule to regard as critical and important during implementation process and if applied accordingly will that same rule lead to effective HRM at both national and provincial spheres of government. This study has focussed more on examining the factors that contribute to non-compliance with HRM practices and whether the implementation of MPAT has brought about improvement in the key performance management area of HRM systems.

4.2 AREAS OF HRM PRACTICES

Responses from the participants in this research are the opinions from thirty-eight officials in total from all nine provinces as well as national departments. The research sample is convenient sample from well experienced and knowledgeable M & E and HRM practitioners from national and provincial sphere of government. This report does not include opinion from State Security departments since due to the nature of their mandate and work they are not part of MPAT even though they may participate on a voluntary basis but their results are not published. Due to time constraints and financial implications for the researcher, the response rate envisaged was a minimum of thirty-six participants, meaning eighteen from national and eighteen from the provincial departments. The actual response was seventeen employees from national and twenty-one from the provinces.

Table 2 below provides the responses from the HRM and M&E government employees from different occupational designations at national and provincial spheres of government. They had to rate the trends on performance levels specifically in HRM and whether they had improved in their departments as the result of the Implementation of MPAT in the following HRM practices DPME (2012): HRP, OD, HRD, Recruitment and Retention strategy, Management of diversity, Delegation in terms of Public Service Act, Implementation of levels 1-12 of the Performance

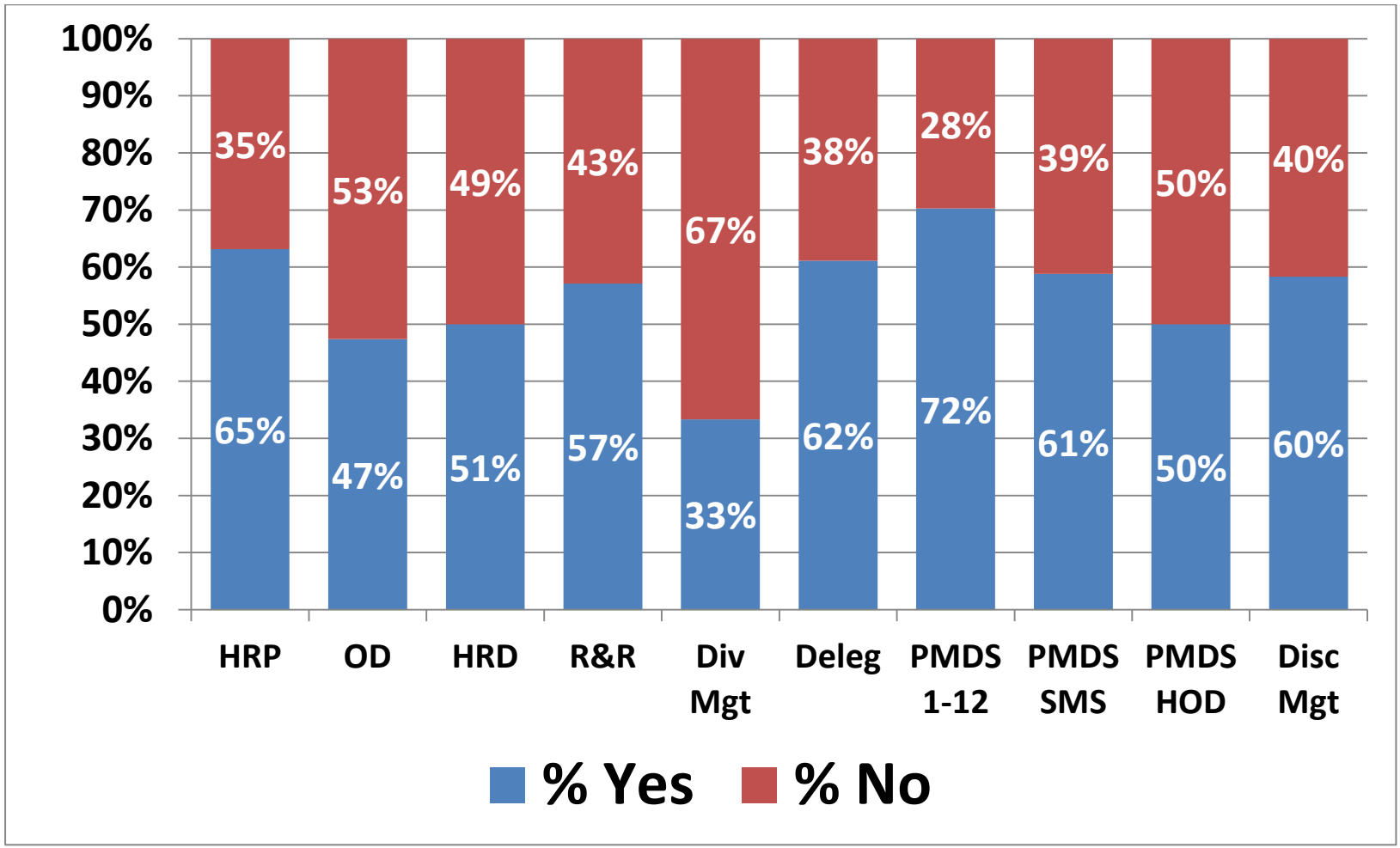
Management System, Implementation of senior management service (SMS), Implementation of senior management service for heads of department, and Management of Disciplinary cases. The report has also excluded the management of employee health and Wellness as it has only being implemented twice since the MPAT process. On Table 2 below responses from the participants is documented by means of “yes” MPAT has made improvements or “no”. MPAT did not bring about any improvement with reference to that specific standard or statement under KPA 3 HRM. It is also important to note that where the total of responses does not add up to thirty eight is where participants decided not to comment or indicate a no or yes answer.

Table 2: Research Participants Response to HRM practices Questionnaire

	HRP	OD	HRD	R&R	Diversity	Delegation PSA	PMDS 1-12S	PMDS SMS	PMDS HOD	Disciplinary Cases
Responses	38	38	38	35	36	36	37	34	33	36
Yes	25	18	19	20	12	22	26	20	16	21
Total % of Yes	65%	47.%	51%	57%	33%	62%	72%	61%	50%	60%
No	13	21	18	16	25	14	11	12	13	15
Total % of No	35%	53%	49%	43%	67%	38%	28%	39%	50%	40%

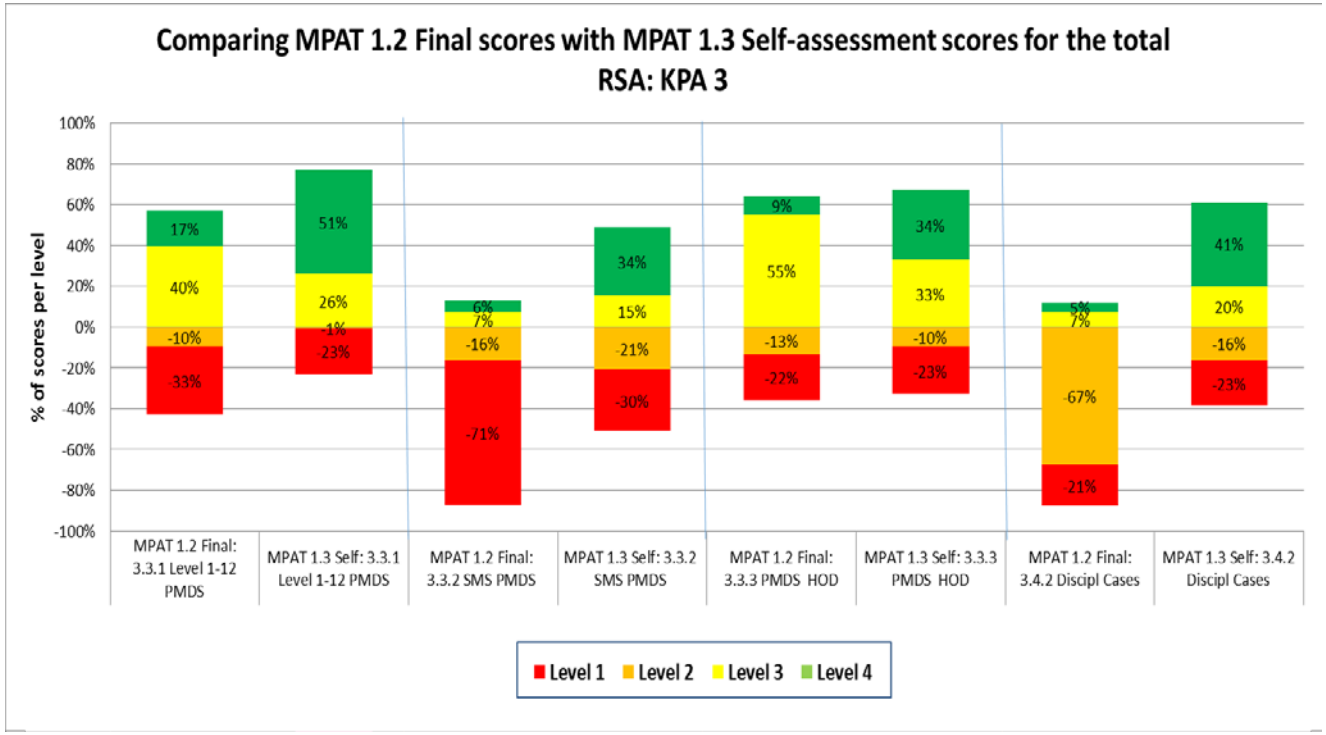
The Table is the reponses from the study participants (2015)

Graph 1: MPAT improvements on HRM practices : Participants Responses



MPAT improvements on HRM practices : Participants Responses HRM

Graph 2: MPAT Comparison 2012 & 2013



Source: DPME, 2014

4.2.1 HRP

Table 2 above show 100 per cent response rate indicating 65 per cent improvement since the implementation of MPAT in 2011, whilst only 35 per cent stated that HRP is still operating below the compliance level. According to DPME (2014) it critical to be mindful that for 2011 results, the self-assessment from the departments did not go through the moderated process in order to confirm the final scores or results, the moderated scores for HRP standard indicated that only 12 per cent of departments were adhering to the HRP standard. In 2012 MPAT 1.2 and the 2013 results for MPAT 1.3, only about 20 per cent compliance level was indicated, showing some level of improvement but not significant.

Graph 1 shows 65 per cent compliance on HRP which may be due to changes in the reporting timeframes for example the submission of HRP implementation reports has been moved from the 31st of March to 31st of May annually. This indicates that the department can now strive to meet the deadlines as it is not in conflict with the financial year end reports and other activities. This recommendation was requested through many mechanisms and channels of communication to the Minister in the Public Service of the DPSA, including via the MPAT process. Most of the departmental challenges on HRP relates to the co-ordination, skills level of HRM units repositioning for faciliation of the process and meeting the deadlines which is due to lack of proper planning. The study shows that only 35 per cent of the respondents as shown in Graph 1 and Graph 2 are still of the view that the MPAT process did not bring about improvements on the HRP at national and provincial level.

4.2.2. OD

Table 2 shows 100 per cent response and Graph 1 indicates only 47 per cent improvement since the implementation of MPAT in 2011, with 53 per cent indicating that departments are still expiriencing challenges on OD standard. The 47 per cent is almost the same as the DPME (2014) compliance results of 38 per cent operating within and even beyond the policy requirement levels as indicated in the 2012 results.

4.2.3 HRD

HRD Table 2 indicates 100 per cent participation on this standard with mprovement by 51 per cent which is beyond the compliance level. MPAT 1.2 compliance level achieved was about 16 per cent whilst improvement in MPAT 1.3 in 2013 was at 84 per cent compliance, indicating that many departments are operating smartly and adhering to most legal requirements as imposed by the DPSA as the policy department.

4.2.4 R & R

Graph 1 on R&R standard depicts that recruitment practice is managed significantly better by 57 per cent since the implementation of MPAT. The DPME (2014) indicates that in MPAT 1.2 R&R was compliant by only 37 per cent and improved to 90 per cent in MPAT 1.3.

4.2.5 Diversity

Table 2 shows that only 6 per cent of the respondents decided to be neutral or not partake the survey on diversity standard. The overall performance of the departmental improvement since the implementation of MPAT is at 33 per cent and 67 per cent of the departments do not adhere to the national policy that requires each institutions to have 50 percent

female employees and 2 per cent target of people with disabilities. (see Graph 1). This is also evident in the 2012 MPAT 1.2 score where non-compliance was at 97 per cent and in 2013 not meeting statutory requirements was at 79 per cent.

4.2.6 Delegations

Response rate to the Management of Public Service Act delegation was at 98 per cent, as shown in Table 1. Graph 1 indicates significant improvement of 62 per cent overall by departments since the implementation of MPAT. The MPAT 1.2 delegation in 2012 was at 47 per cent compliance and improved significantly to 83 per cent in 2013. The research results indicate that results are almost similar to that of MPAT 1.3 in 2013 which are above 50 per cent.

4.2.7. PMDS level 1-12

Table 2 shows that there was a 99 per cent response to the standard with only 1 per cent neutrality. On Graph 1 is depicted that departments perceived that improvement is at 72 per cent since the implementation of MPAT. This is a significantly high improvement level on compliance and it corresponds more with MPAT 1.2 which was at 57 per cent and continuosly improved to 77 per cent, so they are both far beyond 50 per cent and even 60 per cent.

4.2.8. PMDS SMS

PMDS for SMS performance level since MPAT indicated a rating of 61 per cent improvement on Graph 1 with non-improvement of 39 per cent. In comparison with MPAT 1.2 by the DPME (2014), the compliance level was very low at 13 per cent only with non-compliance against PMDS policies by a total of 71 per cent and improvements in MPAT 1.3 in 2013 by 49 per

cent, which was below policy requirements but nonetheless very close to 50 per cent.

4.2.9. PMDS HOD

Head of departments performance improvement since the implementation of MPAT as depicted in Graph 1 is at 50 per cent of compliance level with the other 50 per cent non-compliance. Departments' 2012 scores for HOD PMDS were 64 per cent and in 2013 improvements were at 67 per cent. These figures are more or less similar to the employees' perceptions of 50 per cent compliance.

4.2.10 Management of disciplinary cases

Management of disciplinary cases shows a signifant drop by 99 per cent as per Table 2. There is a compliance improvement level of 58 per cent since the implementation of MPAT and a non-compliance level of only 42 per cent as depicted in Graph 1. According to DPME (2014), the MPAT 2012 results show a compliance level of only 12 per cent in this standard and the improvement in 2013 was at 61 per cent. The 2013 improvements on management of disciplinary cases by national and provincial government departments corresponds with Graph 1 as indicated by the participants in this research.

4.3 FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO NON-COMPLIANCE WITH HRM PRACTICES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

4.3.1 Capacity of HRM units

According to Swanepoel, Erasmus, Van Wyk and Schenk (2003), HRM is viewed as managing all aspects such as attitude, skills, abilities, knowledge and energy from the employment relationship between the

organisation which is the employer and employees, who are people employed to do the work. It is furthermore important that an employment relationship that is beneficial for both employee and employer is created.

The research indicates a lack of capacity, knowledge and availability of required prescripts leads to non-usage of HRM legal documents during the implementation, furthermore HR positions are filled by some people who are either deployed or whose managers find them inadequate or redundant, while some of them have no relevant HR qualification or experience. The recent challenges in terms of centralised training for all public servants has led to increased challenges on structural training for HRM officials and all employees in the public sector by the National School of Governance. HRM staff is not well trained. There is a need to make the optimum use and correct placement of HR function.

Study has also identified that some HR problems are simply caused by officials whom are ignorant and do not take their work seriously. There are situations where senior management posts are vacant for a longer time than required by the national policy and departmental recruitment policy. Junior officials are not well equipped to manage the recruitment process especially when the vacant post in question is at a higher level and the panel is made of SMS only.

Poor organisational communication and delays in appropriately disseminating information to the employees within the departments is an issue of concern. HRM units do not always appreciate the strategic value of compliance matters which lead to HR issues not being regarded as the strategic issues to be included as agenda item during the top management meetings. HRM managers do not link or integrate compliance issues into one coherent strategy and therefore they feel overwhelmed by the number of frameworks. HRM employees lack sufficient awareness and proper on all HR prescripts and reporting time frames.

HR managers must strengthen the use of HR information for effective decision-making by the government as a whole or their individual departments. HR managers should try to ensure that they facilitate alignment of the HRP to the overall business strategy to support the achievement of the strategic objectives of the department. In the public sector and specifically in the HRM units, there is a lack of knowledge of HR prescripts and practices and since the implementation of MPAT it was realised that certain line managers were not aware of the directives or reporting requirements as envisaged by the policy makers. In the public sector as a whole, it is a norm to appoint HR people for lower level or junior positions with no delegation in place to make concrete decisions.

4.3.2 Capacity of public sector officials

Shortage of properly educated, skilled and experienced employees is a challenge in the public sector. The study identified the lack of capacity, especially in provinces, at senior and middle management due to political deployments that create a mismatch between posts and skills needed, especially when it comes to being able to strategically manage HRM issues. Challenges experienced regarding the lack of experience and knowledge, some officials are resistant to advice or guidance. In other departments, practitioners diligently commit themselves and carry out their tasks which are then blocked or hindered by senior and top management who do not co-operate in the required processes of approval.

There is an absence of adequate competencies in place. According to Swanepoel, Erasmus, Van Wyk and Schenk (2003), people decide to make career moves and apply for jobs for which they have no previous experience, and sometimes management decides to employ them regardless, because such people, even though they do not have the

required skills, may show the ability to learn and attain necessary skills to execute the responsibilities linked to the position. It has been discovered that departments do not have most of the required policies needed to address issues related to HRD, the job access strategic framework implementation plan and exit interviews.

The survey indicated that civil servants lack the drive to deliver services to the citizens; due to the lack of accountability and the absence of consequences management in the public sector. There is still a challenge in terms of records management where departments cannot prove their arguments with evidence where there are disputes, discrepancies or gaps in information. This is because certain documents were not submitted to the policy department and there is also no proper electronic filing or any other systems in place to provide evidence of a process.

There is a need to create and promote a sound, healthy, safe and supportive environment for employees as the current environment is not enabling for ensuring trust between employer and employee. The research shows limited supervision, accountability and motivation by senior management in government department. Due to labour relation act and other SA laws related to labour, job security is much guaranteed in the public sector and this sometimes has disadvantage the employer to dismiss any person or government employee due to non-performance or unethical behaviour as people are now affiliated to labour or trade unions.

Public servants are not properly inducted on their departmental policies and those who were inducted are in need of a refresher induction with compliance dates and priority areas of the current government administration. National Treasury (2014) highlights the importance of addressing and broadening access to employment as this will bring new and critical skills into the sector.

4.3.3 Political interference

Swanepoel, Erasmus, van Wyk and Schenk (2000) describe political interference as the ability to control the way things happen in the present realities of any organisation. However, in the legitimate context it refers to the right to obtain compliance and ensure it. In many organisations, the power and politics is where people have control and influence over the behaviour and decisions of others in the pursuit of their personal agendas, which may very often conflict with the mandate and the strategic goal of the institutions.

The study shows that political interference with HRM decisions is a challenge; this is due to the lack of understanding on how the mismanagement of HR issues affects service delivery in the public service. Sometimes non-compliance is caused by senior management or politicians when they want to appoint their friends into a certain position for which they are not qualified. Participants alluded to the issue of arrogance as another critical factor where senior managers and executive authority believe they are above the law and HRM prescripts are not applicable to them as leaders of the departments. Due to the 2014 national elections in SA most departments are still struggling to finalise and submit their HRP because of merging and separation of functions, particularly in the provinces.

4.3.4 Leadership commitment

According to Hannagan (2005), a managerial culture entails directing rational and controlled energy towards achievement of goals, optimal usage of all available resources. The overall qualities of a good manager is to be a problem-solver and in simplicity a manager is someone in an

organisation who is results driven by practically motivating all staff members under his or her supervision to behave in such a systematic manner that guarantee achievement of that specific institutions strategic goals.

Poor and low levels of commitment and support by the top management and leadership in the departments results in HR as being seen as merely a compliance matter and not a strategic function of the department that will enable the organisation to achieve its strategic objectives. Departments have neglected to strategically deal with HR issues. HRM matters are not included on the agenda for the top management meetings and when they are part of the agenda there is little discussion. In most cases HR issues are just noted instead of being vigorous deliberations. The management of HR which is the biggest asset of the public service, as it is a people-centred organisation that renders services to the citizens, is not well managed. Leadership within government institutions needs to take ownership for HRM and not view it as an HR task.

The reluctance of top management to involve them in managing HR matters means that HR is not considered as a strategic partner like financial and strategic management within the government institutions. This lack of commitment from top management to diligently follow the HRM processes sequentially is a problem which sometimes can be concluded or seen as total disregard of or lack of co-operation for compliance with rules, legislation and policies by top management. Leadership in the institutions is responsible for decision-making which, according to Swanepoel, Erasmus, Van Wyk and Schenk (2000), is one of the most fundamental and vital management responsibilities which allows for the identification of choice from amongst alternatives to solve a problem and meet the strategic goals of the department.

In some instances, accounting officers become too occupied and overlook their responsibility of checking compliance issues against HRM prescripts. In other cases, documents are either not approved with no reasons given or there is non-approval by means of no decision made on the issue. This lack of accountability by management, including the EAs, has a negative effect on compliance and performance. Another critical factor is the lack of availability of top management during or for consultation by HRM units. There is an absence of proper management of poor performance and even an understanding of the procedures involved in such a process. Leadership in the public service still lacks an understanding of the HR policies and prescripts.

National policies are not always adhered to by the responsible manager, for instance, the policy indicates internal promotion but the manager decides to headhunt to fill a post whilst pushing a personal agenda. Participants indicated that corruption increases because a large number of people are appointed through connections when line managers disregard HR managers or employees' advice during the recruitment process, furthermore line managers do not accept and execute their HR responsibilities.

4.3.5 Budget constraints

Another factor that contributes to the high level of non-compliance with HRM practices is the low budget allocated for access or recruitment of people with skills in government as the salary levels are not comparable with those of the private sector and there is less or no investment in skills development. The lack of budget undermines the ability to ensure capacity in the public sector. The National Treasury (2014) mentions that one of the government medium-term budget priorities is to attract and hire many unemployed young people in government departments so that they can be equipped to render quality service to citizens. The overall need to request

more resources must be linked to the ultimate goal for the mere existence of each government department of ensuring and improving the welfare of all SA citizens.

There is a lack of sufficient budget to address HR issues especially in relation to employees' health and wellness, which is critical in ensuring delivery of service to the citizens. Minister Gordhan in his 2014 budget speech National Treasury (2014) noted the importance of employment and investment in skills by taking steps to professionalise the public service and looking at circumstances of the country that oblige everyone in the public sector to live and spend modestly. The National Treasury (2014) also highlighted in the budget review the importance of professionalising the public service and strengthening accountability for the action taken by employees, managers and especially the accounting officers in relation to Public Financial Management Act. Government is proposing or working on new initiatives that aim to improve the quality of public service to achieve better outcomes by putting more resources into other areas of priority, as explained by National Treasury:

a. Joint venture between the NT and DPME to review ways to provide a better understanding of performance and value for money in government on areas such as education,
b. Office of the Accountant General housed at NT with the mandate to strengthen the control environment for government financial systems and
c. Budget for accommodation, consultants, travel and venue hire has been reduced since January 2014.

4.3.6 Poor planning

DPSA is experiencing high level of non-compliance to the submission due dates by the department and this is caused by poor planning by those

responsible. Task given to employees must be linked to time frames for completion just like managing a project. HR documents are not timeously approved by the accounting office or Directors-General and sometimes documents are also submitted late by HRM units for approval. DG's and EA's sometimes keep documents in their offices for long a period which causes delays and late submissions to the policy departments like DPSA and DPME. Many departments seem to be dealing with crisis management most of the time due to poor planning. Public sector employees are not adhering to HRM policies submission dates. The EA fails to conduct workshops to address compliance challenges after receiving reports from the oversight departments. Departments are also targets-driven rather than impact-driven which affects sustainability.

4.3.7 Lack of co-ordination

The National Treasury (2014) in their budget review emphasises the importance of improving co-ordination. There is a lack of co-ordination in the case of provinces between the Offices of the Premiers and individual departments. This poor co-ordination is also experienced between the Premiers' offices, DPSA and individual departments. Such a lack of co-operation and co-ordination is also a challenge within the department between different unit and individuals.

There is little clarity on which individual should attend to certain aspects of HR. Lack of co-operation by top management and EA to meet compliance dates is a problem and there is a perception that compliance means nothing or will not add value within their departments so management does not show an interest and disregards DPSA rules and policies.

4.3.8 Lack of Monitoring and Evaluation

Due to poor records management, departments sometimes fail to prove the existence of certain documents to the policy department as there is no

proper filing system in place. There is a weakness in management commitment on M&E systems for HR policies in place. When there is no monitoring there is also the absence of enforcement, lack of punitive measures and no proper improvement plans or strategies to ensure compliance. According to Kusek and Rist (2004) M&E is an influential instrument that can be utilised by public managers in an endeavour to improve the way government operates and enable achievement of the desired.

4.3.9 Centre of government policies

The study has identified that some DPSA policies for example Employee Health and Wellness, Diversity, HRP and Labour are not clear and do not provide enough guidance, which leads to departments trying to find their own way. Poor and incorrect interpretation of policies by HRM units and/or leadership seems to be another cause for high levels of non-compliance. Hannagan (2005) describes communication as the provisioning and dissemination of data, guidelines and directives which are meant to ensure that organisations are running smoothly and efficiently and employees are properly informed about developments.

Poor interpretation of policies also leads to incomplete and inadequate documentation, and problems with the implementation of such policies. There is limited clarity on directives, circulars and guidelines provided by the centre of government and in this instance more specific to the NT and DPSA. There is a lack of policies and strategies in place to operationalise the work and ensure proper implementation and compliance with HRM prescripts. Complying with unclear roles and responsibilities is difficult and is easily shifted to non-accountability.

There is no legislation or policy in place that allows for deviation; hence most HR non-conformity leads to non-compliance. Some HR policies seem to be at the developmental stage or out-dated and they either need

to be amended or updated in order to ensure relevance with the current HR context. It has been found throughout the study that the DPSA does not have an annual or even a five-year compliance calendar with all HR due dates that is sent to departments at the beginning of the financial year. Directives on different KPA 3 standards are sent in silos within the DPSA to all departments there's no streamline and integration of policies and timelines for amendments. This has resulted in late or non-submission of departmental policies, reports and plans to the DPSA. There is inconsistency between the Public Service Act and the Public Finance Management Act as to which one of the two acts is responsible or carries much weight in HR in the public sector. The complexity of some of the legal frameworks could contribute to non-compliance especially if they are to be disseminated widely. There is also limited awareness being promoted amongst staff by the policy custodians.

The skill set of the experts is reducing in the public service and when the implementing departments call the DPSA for policy advice and guidance around the policy implementation. In the DPSA, practitioners seeking advice get different responses from different people in the same department which causes more confusion as they contradict each other. The way in which DPSA policies are communicated by the departments is sometimes not clear or may be manipulated by individuals responsible for crafting the departmental policy using the DPSA guidelines.

According to Swanepoel, Erasmus, Van Wyk and Schenk (2000), communication in the institutions can be defined as the process by which people exchange information. This is important as it enables people to carry out their work harmoniously to achieve the objectives of the organisation. However, there are many obstacles that can harm the quality of communication and results in problems in HRM practices, such as when instructions are not interpreted correctly or where the language of a specific communication can also be a barrier. Simplicity is still important

especially when developing policies that required to be adhered to on day to day implementation of government programmes and projects and also this will warrant clear understanding of what is needed and how it must be done. That is a theory of change because if public servants knows what is expected of them they must plan at an activity level how to achieve those and even exceed those expectation.

4.4 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT SYSTEMS (PMDS)

Bohn (2010) refers to performance management as the process of measuring performance relating to the use of financial institutions resources, especially the use of the organisational capital by employees in meeting the department's objective goals**.** Lin and Lee (2011) argues that performance management must ensure development, capability and improvement in the organisational employee's performance and put systems in place that encourage organisations to operate successfully.

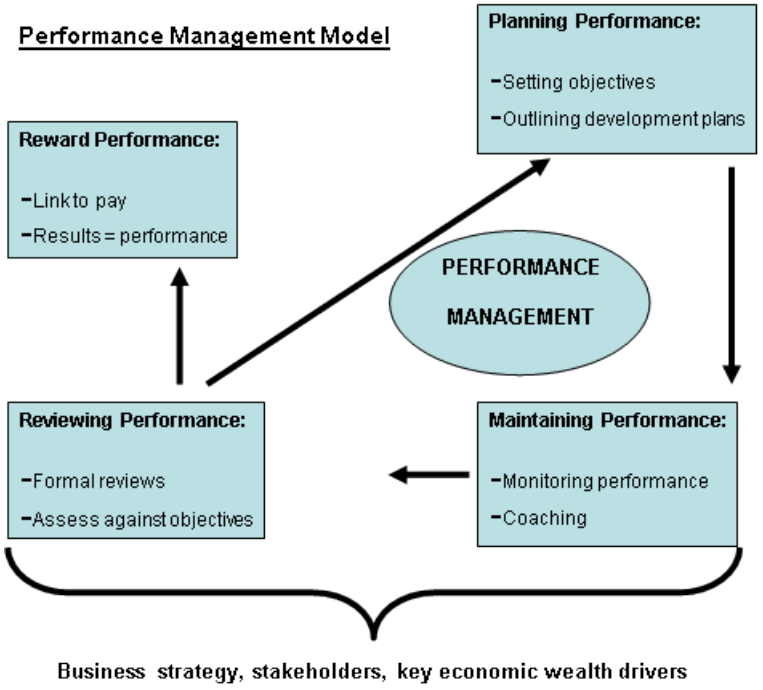
The study indicated a lack of proper performance management in place and absence of a performance culture and discipline in the SA public service and few consequences or sanctions are in place to deal with poor performance. Organisational culture is crucial as it refers to shared beliefs, values, norms, expectations, rituals and performances (Swanepoel, Erasmus, Van Wyk and Schenk, 2000). Hannagan (2005) refers to the organisational culture as simply being the way institutions or departments do things. Limited or non-consideration of personal matters has a serious impact on an individual's performance. There is furthermore a lack of accountability for non-implementation, where there are no or few consequences for lack of adherence to policies. Managers and employees are generally still receiving satisfactory ratings on their performance assessment reviews despite of service delivery evidence to the contrary.

Management of performance is negatively affected by line function managers who may sometimes still feel like it is a paper exercise that takes up too much of their time. In other departments the performance agreements and reviews are conducted with much dedication and accuracy but it is often the case that once the line managers are involved or get sanctioned or penalised on non-performance in certain areas, they will start to ensure that personnel responsible for executing these areas also receive similar non-performance ratings. The opposite is also envisaged, in that areas of good performance will be cascaded to personnel responsible for these successes.

Overall one can argue that Figure 5 below depicts that PMDS is very important in organisations and should be able to assist employees to focus on the departmental strategic and critical objectives to ensure continuous improvement, development and sustainability. Supervisors should agree with employees on indicators and targets to be met by staff. This is undertaken by means of a contract or performance agreement that is entered into between the two parties.

It is important for departments to develop their own internal monitoring system on progress made regarding their objective and departmental goals process vary as it can be conducted either on a monthly, quarterly and annually basis. This process allows one to correct actions where the departments' desired outcomes are not being met timeously by the staff and also allows for the adjustment of the timeframes and targets. The process also gives employees an opportunity to gather primary information from the supervisor as to whether they are progressing well in meeting agreed targets or not.

Figure 5: Performance Management Development System



Source: O'Callaghan (2005)

During every financial year after the annual assessment have been finalised it is very critical for the supervisor or responsible manager to be in a position to determine whether employees still requires further development to achieve and execute their responsibilities, by means of further education, coaching, mentoring, changing career paths or staff rotation. The PMDS process in SA government is linked to monetary rewards which makes it more complicated as remuneration is decided based on different performance levels as per the department's PMDS policy. Every department in SA at national and provincial level is supposed to have adopted its own policy or process from the national policy by DPSA to suit its own culture, size, mandate, nature of work and environment.

Hannagan (2005) describes the process of managing departmental performance as eventually cascading to the level of individual person working in the institution, where the individual has to know what is supposed to be done, meaning that performance systems are created to establish individual objectives in support of achieving the departmental strategic objective, and the progress of an individual is monitored in meeting the goal. The performance-based operation is vital to implementing national government and the country's priority policies (Lin and Lee, 2011). Furthermore, Hannagan (2005) relates the following elements that must be included in every individual's performance contract; organisational vision and objectives are shared and communicated to all employees, individual performance agreement is related to the objectives of the department, progress towards the achievement of objectives is monitored through a regular review, either quarterly or annual review. The process of review is conducted in order to establish where certain individuals requires different or specific training needs and to ensure successful implementation of the whole individual performance process, individual performance must be directly linked to that of the department.

PMDS is meant to encourage the culture of continuous improvement, coaching, feedback based on facts and willingness to develop, acknowledgment of good performance and management of low performance in the organisation. O'Callaghan (2005) sees the reality of this process as merely telling people what to do, by when, with what and finally policing them until the work is done, rather than a joint process between the employer and employee. O' Callaghan (2005) further explains in figure 3 the critical models of the performance management as follows; planning performance, maintaining performance, reviewing performance, and rewarding performance.

The above method is very crucial and can positively benefit the department, employer and employees in ensuring continuous improvement and development as its advantages are limitless. For example, communication and transparency are the key benefits of conducting the performance management process. During the planning phase both parties set and agree on objectives, targets and timeframes and the second phase allows for monitoring and feedback on performance and identified areas of development during the last phase, which is reward. Both parties already know what is expected and what the other deserves as it was communicated throughout the whole process.

4.5 CONCLUSION

According to Kusek and Rist (2004), government institutions are faced with an internal and external situation that demands improvements and development at all times. The trends and factors that contribute to non-compliance on HRM practices in the public sector as discussed above touches on all the current issues that need to be addressed in order to ensure that government employees and leadership work together in adhering to national policies as developed democratically. The notion of the HRM policies is to create a professional, skilful and able state that respond effectively and efficiently to the needs of its citizens.

The capable state comprises the leaders, EAs , top management planners, HRM unit and all government officials, for example in social sector , these people must be able to eliminate poverty in all previously disadvantage communities, with the education sector to improve the level and the quality of education, with human sectors to ensure security and houses for all, providing basic needs like water, electricity and sanitation, empowering and building the rural economy or addressing issues in the health sector, including fighting HIV and AIDS. All these are HRM

management practices that need to be addressed in order to achieve better ways of rendering services to the public.

MPAT intervention in HRM has brought new developments by introducing concept of change in all 155 organisation and individuals that departments need to develop and implement improvement, action plans or strategies that deals with identified areas of weaknesses on HRM practices in order to meet the requirements for a well-functioning department at level 4.This means new relationship, new networks, coordination and cooperation between different departments, DPME and DPSA was fostered and it is very important in resolving most government HR challenges. This is further described by the ToC process, as it clarifies what is needed to be done from activities and inputs in order to bring about the necessary results. HRM standards are clear in terms of the ToC as they articulate underlying principles and expectations about what the department must meet at level 3 in order to be regarded as a well-functioning and good practice department at level 4.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Since the implementation of MPAT 2011 with specific focus on the area of HRM which has always been moderated as the worst performer of all the four KPAs, at national and provincial level it is believed that the system enhances some management practices whilst others remain unchanged. There is a need to inculcate the culture of adherence and compliance with rules. There is no integration of policies by DPSA which causes even more confusion regarding the implementation of some HRM practices. The chapter will discuss the implementation of MPAT linkages to the conceptual theory, which is the ToC, followed by the identified improvements and challenges since the implementation of MPAT.

5.2 MPAT AS THEORY OF CHANGE (ToC)

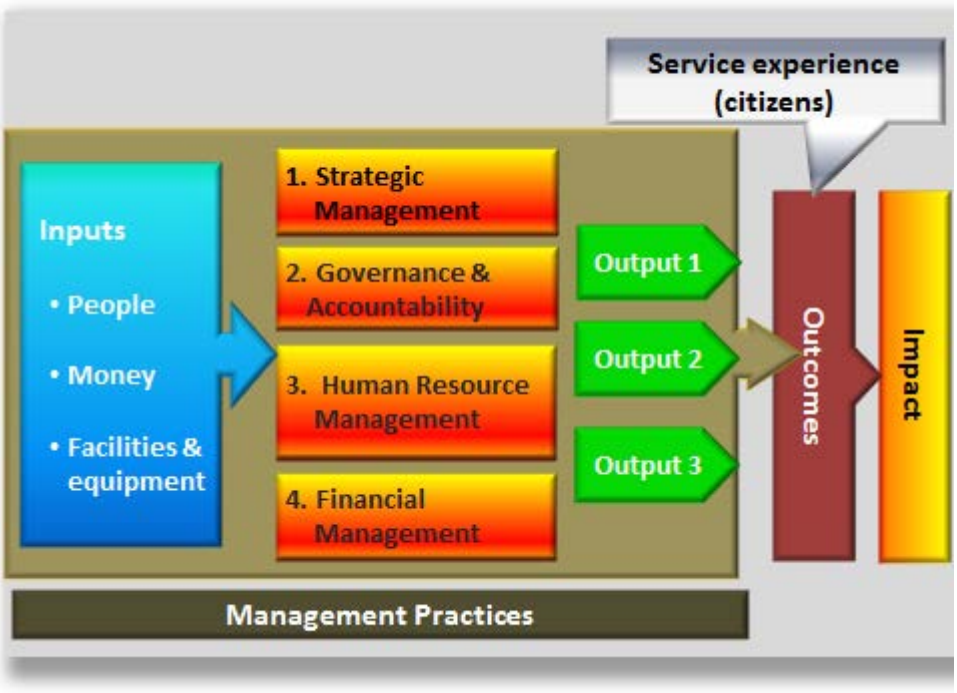
MPAT was introduced to the department in 2011 where departments were requested to conduct self-assessments. The results were acceptable and were purely non-moderated self-assessment scores. Evidence was not considered to validate the scores as these were supposed to indicate a pilot process allowing introspection from the departments side. Even so, the HRM was considered as the lowest performer compared to the other three KPAs.

Connell and Kubisch (1998) describes the TOC as a principle of how and why an intervention initiatives works.

The DPME (2012) argues in Figure 6 below that the way plans are developed and how employees , financial management and other capital

or resources are utilised , managed and administered in the departments have a major influence in the quality of outputs and outcomes that are produced by government and provided to the citizens. MPAT is created around the notion that good management practices are very important in improving government performance and they also serve as a precondition for providing effective and efficient services to the citizens (DPME, 2013). Connell and Kubisch (1998) argue that ToC is clear about its determination that aims to identify the outcomes, and the activities expected to ensure that outcomes are reached or met.

Figure 6: MPAT Framework



Source: DPME, 2012

5.2.1 How does MPAT work (ToC)

According to the DPME (2012), the MPAT process has the following six important phases as explained below.

Figure 7: Six phases of MPAT process

Collate Secondary Data	DPME collects and consolidates secondary data from transversal departments and oversight bodies.
Self-Assessment and Internal Audit verification	Departments conduct self-assessments through a structured process co-ordinated by the departmental MPAT Co-ordinator. Internal Audit verifies evidence. Senior Management deliberates on MPAT scores.
Internal Audit MPAT process report	Internal Audit prepares a brief report on process followed by implementing MPAT in department.
DG/HOD review and approval	Director-General/Head of Department reviews and approves final departmental self-assessment
Moderation and Feedback	External team led by DPME moderates the self-assessment. DPME discusses the moderated results with departments and submits MPAT results to Cabinet.
Improve and Monitor	Departments develop improvement strategies and monitor their implementation. Departments prepare for the next MPAT cycle.

Source: DPME (2012)

Even though the MPAT tool is simple the approach requires departments to be very effective and efficient during its application as evidence is required to confirm scores. Departments that are operating at level 4 are regarded as good practise even though not all of them are documented as case studies that are published and used as examples during the MPAT learning workshops. This is an additional phase to the MPAT process or a phase that was not there in the beginning. The idea behind this seventh phase and writing of the good practice cases as explained by the DPME (2012) is to identify underlying policies, processes and practices that have a direct bearing to improving government performance and institutionalising the culture of good management practices. This is also to ensure that government institutions learn from each other, networking platforms are being created between the practitioners of departments that are performing at level 4 and those that are not doing well can then draw on the ingredients for success. These are the results of the analysis from the lessons learned after the moderation from departments that are working smart and going beyond the call of duty to ensure that they do not simply comply with the rules but operate smartly.

MPAT on HRM standards from level 1 to level 3 is based on existing DPSA prescripts, policies, frameworks and also directives on government priorities from formal structures like Cabinet decisions and the Forum of South Africa Directors-General to ensure relevance with the policies of the current government, meaning that MPAT does not introduce new things to government departments but rather that these are policies that must be implemented already. At level 4 the MPAT process requires departments to demonstrate beyond compliance and smart indicators are used during moderation process at this level.

5.2.2. Why MPAT works (TOC)

According to DPME (2012), the MPAT process has already shown some progress and there has been continuous learning and improvements against its initial results since its inception furthermore departments performances are expected to improve yearly. The Department since 2014 has been using MPAT 1.2 - 2012 results and MPAT 1.3 - 2013 results. These provide a detailed and graphical comparison year-on-year to assess improvement on each of the MPAT standards. This is done to ensure and encourage improvement plans to be put in place by departments as to where they want to see themselves in 2015 and onwards. The success of MPAT depends on the ownership of the assessment process by management in the government departments, especially during the self -assessment phase, where leadership and top management score themselves and agree on areas that still require improvement. The deliberation by government departments at national and provincial level line managers is essential.

According to the DPME (2012), the following role-players are crucial and have been included in the MPAT process; DPME is the custodian and overall coordinator of MPAT in all spheres of government as it raises awareness and understanding and give support to department on the implementation of the MPAT process. DPME is also responsible for the collection, analysis and reporting to all formal government structures and oversight bodies on the final MPAT results annually. Transversal departments such as NT and DPSA provide secondary data to DPME and provide support and technical advice during the refinement of MPAT standards and moderation process. DPME (2012) also identified the following important MPAT roles and responsibilities:

Figure 8: Roles and responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Executive Authorities	• Ensure that their respective departments participate in MPAT and use the report cards to monitor management performance
Head of Department and Departmental Managers	• Participate in self-assessment process and submit evidence for areas of assessment that fall within their responsibility. • Develop improvement strategies if required • Ensures that self-assessment is completed in accordance with DPME (and provincial-specific procedures in the case of provinces) • Convenes the senior management deliberations on MPAT • Signs off on completed self-assessment and ensures that the department takes action to improve management practices
MPAT Coordinators, KPA Managers and Internal Auditors	• MPAT Co-ordinator is the contact with DPME • Whom guides the self-assessment and liaises with Internal Audit on confirmation and verification of evidence

Source: DPME, 2012

According to Connell and Kubisch (1998), the ToC should be evidence based, it should be doable by ensuring that economic will, technical skills, political, institutional and HR are available to carry and support the initiative; and emphasise the importance of testing programmes before implementation. According to DPME (2013) MPAT lessons from international countries indicated that such government initiatives make a huge impact in improving government performance whilst ensuring those in leadership and top management are held accountable as the process ensures ownership of the results by each organisation. The MPAT process was first introduced to all government departments at national and provincial level in 2011.

According to the DPME (2012), the participation of all national and provincial departments in 2011 MPAT 1.1 totalled to hundred and twelve. Due to the absence of moderation processes where evidence is validated against scores, the self-assessment scores were published and accepted as they were. This was taken as a pilot and even practice before the actual examination by the department that was conducted in the following year (2012) with evidence being interrogated to ensure validity. MPAT Provincial and Departmental Co-ordinators in each department are mostly the M&E managers or specialists and other managers responsible for different KPAs including managers for HRM. The process also included the responsibility of the Internal Auditor to confirm the existence of the supporting documentation within the departments and also the approval or sign-off of the scores from self-assessment and evidence by the accounting officer.

5.3. HRM IMPROVEMENTS SINCE MPAT

MPAT is able to raise awareness of most of the DPSA HRM policies that departments were not even aware of. Compliance and also continuation of MPAT will ensure that top management in departments are working on improving their weaknesses as the process allows for identification of strengths and weaknesses on HRM practices. Departments and management teams are well aware of their poor results and have the responsibility to consider the development of an improvement framework, monitoring the HRM unit and giving their support and advice to the line managers. The process through the documentation of good practice cases gives poor performing departments a chance to learn and set up meetings with good practice departments. They can also learn from departments that are operating at level 4 within their specific departments. The results are presented in a narrative format with graphs that compare the results and rank departments that are performing at level 4 per KPA standards, so that poor performing departments are urged to make contact with their counterparts to learn what works for them in order to take on or consider some elements that can be useful in their own institutions.

Good practice departments demonstrate a commitment and seriousness when executing their work which hopefully will have a positive effect on other departments who will then be keen to duplicate the achievements and become public servants who serve the people diligently. During the implementation of MPAT, HR managers realised that they do not integrate compliance issues into one coherent strategy and therefore feel overwhelmed by the number of frameworks.

The process also capacitates the employees who participate on MPAT on how to use electronic systems, the importance of evidence-based monitoring and knowledge in their HRM area of specialisation, such as

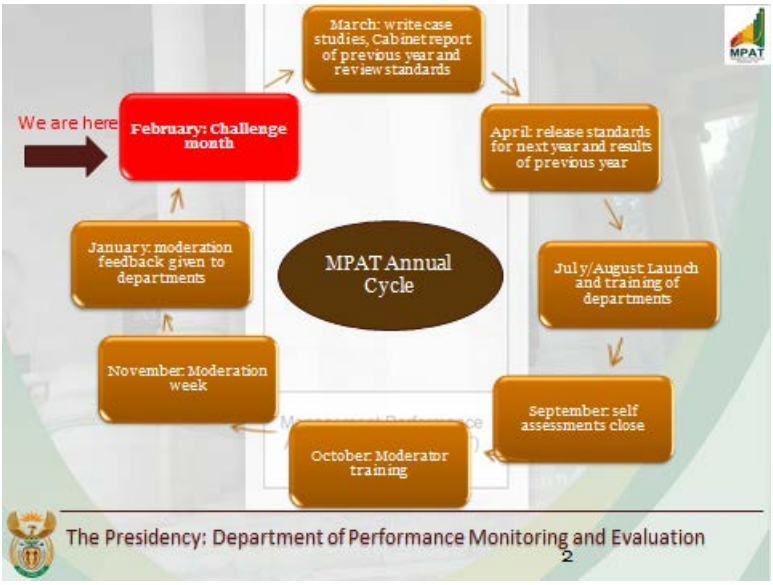
understanding the policy prescripts and different timeframes in the development of an HRP. Recognition of good practice departments through the case studies has created healthy competitive environments between government departments and assisted departments in starting to work towards proper internal monitoring and evaluations systems in HR. The importance of good records management has been established and also helps the departments to prepare themselves for the AG assessment.

MPAT has created critical awareness and the need for departments to start integrating their HRM issues, especially the HRP with the strategic plan. MPAT has also contributed to appointments and the creation of M&E units within government departments. This ensures ownership and accountability not only from the managers but also from the EA's to address issues relating to the performance assessments of DGs or HoD's.

Figure 9 below depicts the MPAT cycle from the self-assessment by departments until the release and publishing of the final MPAT scores. This cycle shows the importance of improving and ensuring proper communication, discussions between national and provincial departments, DPSA, NT and OTP's.

During every cycle there is some discussion and decisions are taken. For example, Figure 9 depicts annual training of moderators in October of every year. Moderators are practitioners from national and provincial spheres of government who have acquired experience and qualifications in the area of HRM for KPA 3 assessment. They are trained by the DPME specifically on how to use the MPAT system, understanding the methodology and advised during training by the DPSA on how to interpret MPAT standards in relation to the policy requirements and how to moderate departments.

Figure 9: MPAT Cycle



Source: DPME, 2014

The MPAT process has assisted departments by fostering and ensuring collaboration between departments, different sectors and the DPSA, by establishing platforms to discuss HRM standards, policies relating to those standards, and their meaning. These forums take place during MPAT launches, Master class, Learning Workshops and during the review of standards. All these deliberations happen once or twice every year at national level and in the provinces where participants include the DPME, DPSA, HRM practitioners and HRM moderators. These conversations and debates are necessary to ensure better understanding of the implementation of policies and improvements.

5.4. HRM CHALLENGES BEFORE AND DURING MPAT

MPAT audiences during the launches and workshops are normally government officials at different levels, from the Assistant Director to the higher levels which is the Deputy Director General levels. However, the majority of attendees are deputies and a director, meaning the audience is not always optimal because different people attend at different times and

most of them do not have the power to make changes and implement identified improvement plans. Departmental practitioners are at times frustrated as the MPAT process is still a bit lacking the 100% support and commitment from the politicians and leadership in some departments. According to DPME (2012), the MPAT was mandated to DPME in the Presidency by the Cabinet and the process is implemented and co-ordinated through the DPME at national level and OTP's at provincial level and both departments are highly recognised central government departments where DPME reports to the President and the OTP's report to the Premiers.

The process was well communicated to different structures that are attended by politicians like the President of the RSA, Premiers and their MECs, Ministers and their Deputies, Accounting Officers and Heads of Department and top management. It is critical to note that more than ever before; within the four MPAT KPAs the HRM requires managers to contribute to strive for continuous improvement of performance at all time. This entails innovations, leadership thinking and the development of corporate skills (Hannagan, 2005). This resonates very well with the notion of recruiting and developing managers and planners who are able to convince leadership and EA about the technical issues of different projects and programmes. Leadership in government is still not considering HRM as the strategic partner and HRM issues do not form part of the executive meetings or strategic planning agendas.

Hannagan (2005) explains that the strategic approach to HRM includes the integration of personnel and other HRM issues into the departmental overall planning and strategy formulation process. This entails incorporation of the brief summary of the institution's HRM policy into the mission statement, clear but short consideration of employees' consequences into the department's strategy and major new programmes, designing structures to suit the needs of employees to perform and

including the head of HRM or corporate services in strategic planning sessions and top management meetings as a standing member.

According to Walters (2007), the available information on capacity implies that there absolutely no situation where there's the absence of capacity at all, the problem that need to be investigated is whether current capacity is being identified and acknowledged, meaning that at times managers must try to support and give employees a chance to make mistakes whilst learning to perform better. The on-going training challenges experienced by departments when approaching the National School of Government makes it difficult to ensure timeous training, conducting of examinations and issuing of diplomas and certificates as envisaged due to the lack of capacity and the availability of facilitators to conduct training. This has a negative impact on development skills in government especially for newly appointed employees. Another critical challenge related to skills is that departments cannot see the value for money after taking employees for training. This is because employees are not given space to implement learning outcomes in the workplace but return to the same routine of work.

The skills shortage in HRM is a major challenge in government. This could mean that government employees and HRM staff lack or have no ability to perform their responsibilities and calls for a need to strengthen the ability of the current employees to perform. Employees need to be given space by the leadership, even if they make mistakes, to learn and improve. Walters (2007) simply sees capacity development as the process whereby people, institutions and the community at large are able to develop and maintain their capacity levels over time. Another factor beyond the control of leadership that has a negative effect on skills is the budget allocation, especially in provinces. PMDS is also another factor that can improve the skills shortages by assessing the actual performance of an individual and following sequential phases like supervisor and employees planning and agreeing on performance agreement objectives, indicators and targets.

Monitoring, feedback and coaching are very important before rewarding or managing poor performance as they promote a culture of transparency and communication in the department and guarantee capacity development of employees to perform well.

Building good relationship and involvement between employer and employee is very important for enhancing continuous learning, improvement and development. The rapport allows for HRM issues to be discussed during the top management meeting. This process allows information to be shared between employees and clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Managers are also able to go back to their units and staff members with a clear understanding on what needs to be included in their own and unit performance agreements. Planning and co-ordination seems to be a bigger challenge that affects compliance and performance as there do not seem to be consequences for not adhering to policy prescripts and for not meeting deadlines.

Policy communication from the DPSA to Ministers, OTPs, and MECs, as well as HRM Managers seems to be a challenge that needs urgent attention. The assessment of the HRM policies by the MPAT process is still not evident as most policies at both national and provincial level are still considered by HRM managers to be very complicated to implement and the challenges are being raised through the process by relevant practitioners.

Internal communication of scores within the departments does not happen as envisaged, and scores are communicated to the accounting officers, Heads of Department and the top management teams with the request to present to their structures and minister if the department allows. Most EA's do not request DPME to present results to them and only get their results during different forums; this can cause some anger especially when people are not satisfied with the performance of their specific department.

Even though information is sent to their Accounting Officers, more still needs to be done to improve communication with the EA's on the MPAT scores, and they need to be made aware specifically with HRM results that they and the line managers are the biggest contributors to the poor MPAT scores. In HRM, for example, in HRP the documents require approval of the EA or delegated authority and HR practitioners complain that it takes their MEC's or Ministers months to approve documents while some are not even approved with no reason being given for the refusal. The Head of HRM does not foster relations with the Chief of Staffs or Executive Managers in the EA's and DG's or HoD's offices, they do not have an idea of the HRM submission date or calendar dates per financial year as there is no proper communication between the two. The Chief Operational Officer does not assist to address the oversight so as to improve the communication level between different offices.

Recruitment is not conducted fairly, especially where the EA's interfere with the administration issues within the departments. Employees are told who they should appoint before even starting the selection process during recruitment. This is also the biggest contributor to the skills shortages in the public service and at the end the consequences will be that citizens do not get quality services at all, also leading to outcomes such as widespread community protests that characterise SA at present.

Another example is the delegation which has a direct impact on late submission of reports and policies to the DPSA and negatively impacts the recruitment process. A new directive was issued in August by DPSA (2014) identifying the following challenges with regard to delegations:

a. *Powers and duties are sometimes over-centralised to the detriment of service delivery; for example, national and provincial HoD's approve the appointment of level 12 positions in 65 per cent and 56*

per cent of instances respectively. There is a need to delegate level 12 and lower level appointments to branch heads;

b. *Inconsistencies in delegations between the different performer levels in departments;*
c. *Many of the delegations are outdated and in some instances signed by predecessors;*
d. *Personal and managerial factors can inhibit delegation;*
e. *When senior managers fail to delegate there is a strong likelihood that the responsibility for its execution will eventually be passed to others in the organisation, which creates additional staff, reporting, performance evaluation and communication burdens;*
f. *In the absence of clear delegation templates or with poorly developed job descriptions, staff members at all levels of the organisational hierarchy may not have a good understanding of what is expected of them and*
g. *Managers are sometimes more comfortable "doing" than "managing," which are fundamentally different jobs.*

The challenge facing the departments is either EA's do not delegate to the accounting officers then skip and delegate to the next performer level, either the Deputy Directors General or the Chief Directors, this is not acceptable and does not promote this spirit of delegation and empowerment in the public sector. The DPSA needs to workshop the EA's on how to exercise their delegation powers and how to delegate appropriately. This training needs to also be inculcated into the line managers to deal with the mentioned findings or challenges. In other departments and provinces, EA's are so involved in day-to-day running of the institutions they are even responsible for the appointment of level 12 positions, meaning that line managers are not delegated or given any authority to delegate down the hierarchy to ensure the appointment of such levels.

Diversity management across government is not implemented as envisaged and as departments reported in Graph 1, shows the views of government employees on the changes either positive or negative since the implementation of MPAT. Improvement towards compliance has only been by 33 per cent with 67 per cent still maintaining that there is no positive progress made in meeting both SMS female and disability targets even after the MPAT process was introduces. According to DPSA (2014), the representation of women in SMS levels at national and provincial levels of government is reached by only nineteen departments with 25 institutions meeting people with disabilities. The national target set by the current administration is for departments to have 50 per cent women SMS representatives and 2 per cent disability representatives. The DPSA 2014 report corresponds with the opinions of the research participants that the government at national and provincial levels in improving the diversity challenges. According to the DPSA (2013), gender issues and gender focal point employees should form part of management meetings where every line manager must report on gender impact included in their own programmes.

One can further argue that diversity challenges are not holistically addressed by the current Cabinet members and there's a lack of support from the politicians, leadership and management in the public sector, which makes it even more difficult to improve in this area. The Cabinet of SA itself as elected and with some members appointed by the Head of State does not represent diversity. Leaders tend to not lead by example. There is no implementation policy in place to compel and instruct departments to start adhering to the Employment Equity Plan Act during the recruitment process.

Management of employer and employee relations in the public sector is a serious challenge as in RSA; the DPSA (2007) indicates that government as the biggest source of income for many people in SA consists of

approximately 1.1 million workers. The compliance improvement since the implementation of MPAT indicates 60 per cent with only 40 per cent participants still perceiving that there are few positive changes in the management of disciplinary cases in their specific departments. Departments, specifically labour relations officers and managers, are struggling to finalise cases within the policy timeframe, some of the reasons for the delays being; lack of co-operation and co-ordination from departments is a serious challenge in meeting policy timeframes, shortage and availability of qualified presiding officers in the public service, co-operation from the line manager is a challenge during disciplinary processes, understanding procedures during the disciplinary process is still a challenge, government is losing many cases at labour court due to personal agendas that lead to discipline and suspension, corruption and complicated cases take longer to finalise, leadership prefers using state money to hire lawyers from the public sector rather the labour relations staff at their disposal and there is limited investment in capacitating labour relations officers.

5.4. CONCLUSION

Critical challenges that are facing departments and which contribute to non-compliance with HRM practices include the not adhering to cabinet prescribed delegation policy. However, it is critical for the DPSA to streamline or integrate all these policies to avoid duplication and reporting burdens on departments which leads to departments not bothering to comply at all.

Managing people is a critical skill required from public sector managers as the benefits of investing in employees ensures continuous development and skills capacity for a longer period. Hannagan (2005) argues that the human side of the department or institution covers very critical aspects such as manager or employee communications, psychology, employee

relations, training and development, motivation, and working environment. All these elements contribute to the employer and employee relationship.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

As indicated in the purpose statement, the researcher intended to investigate the factors that contribute to non-compliance with HRM practices in the public sector. In this chapter the study established and identified challenges and factors that made HRM practices at a very critical state that really requires a whole new approach.

6.2. HRM PRACTICES CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

The HRP is done in silos and is not integrated into the departmental strategic plan; therefore this has a negative impact on the public servants. HRP as defined by the PSC (2010) is about ensuring clear and proper alignment of the organizational structures and HR requirements, which cannot be achieved when there is no linkage and integration with the departmental strategic plan. The Presidency (2013) also indicates that the departments do not have structures that are supported by sufficient human resources.

Capacity appears to be a major problem across the public sector, caused by poor leadership within different institutions at both national and provincial government. Favoritism, nepotism and corruption appear to hinder dedicated HR managers and officials in conducting recruitment appropriately. The PSC (2010) clearly explains that the recruitment and selection and employee life cycle within an organisation should adhere to the following recruitment procedures; have an approved recruitment policy that complies with clear and detailed good practice standards, have a clear and fair recruitment and selection process, verify all employees'

qualifications before employment, advertise and fill all funded vacant posts within the policy timeframe, ensure that all advertised positions are approved by the accountable person with proper delegations before publishing and adhere as a department to the Skills Development Act.

Furthermore, the abovementioned recruitment and selection employee life cycle should also include issues of diversity that deal with the Employment Equity Act especially as this is identified as the underperforming area on HRM practice. Finally, most departments at national and provincial level do not meet the female SMS target of 50 per cent and people with disabilities of 2 per cent. There is a lack of commitment to the national HR policies as developed and prescribed by the DPSA, attributed at least in part to the political lack of commitment, understanding and disregard of the national policies and procedures in pursuit of personal agendas.

Redeployment of employees to the HRM unit with limited capacity, no previous experience, varying potential and also no willingness to learn is another capacity burden in the public sector. This has also contributed to the shortage of professional and qualified skills in HRM, for example in the area of the management of discipline cases, where there is a shortage of skilled presiding officers in government. The lack of skills is not only applicable to the HRM unit but there is also a shortage in other branches or chief directorates in the public sector. According to Callaghan (2005), the reality is that all individuals need to be told and agree on what is expected of them in their specific duties and what will happen if that is not achieved because if these standards are not set and emphasized on the outset employees normally becomes demotivated and demoralized and that has a negative bearing on the organizational overall performance.

PMDS and other methods must be developed in such a way that they improve the employees' performance in order to meet and exceed the organizational strategic goals, and to ensure this both supervisors and

employees must set clear and well defined goals and objectives (Lin and Lee, 2011). Managers furthermore fail to use the PMDS as a method of developing employees to ensure continuous improvements but rather use it as a yardstick for punishment of poor performing individuals and also to pursue their personal agendas as the system is linked to monetary rewards. Communication and feedback during the implementation of HR policies including PMDS is thus important and at present functions as a constraint in the public sector.

There is a lack of clear planning, co-ordination and communication of policies between the DPSA, OTP's and the departments. The DPSA is also not communicating to the relevant people or implementers as senior managers sometimes fail to provide needed data or manipulate information before disseminating or cascading it down at a very late stage, leaving HRM practitioners with limited time to interrogate reports and documents. The DPSA does not have an implementation guide for most of its policies and this has created challenges and confusion. Some of these HR polices are highly technical and complicated which makes it even harder to put them into practice, for example the absence of implementation guide on the OD functional assessment tool used to assess structures within the public sector before they are approved by the EA's. Many departments are using different functional assessment tools whilst others contract out service provider to perform this function which can easily be done in house with the assistance from the DPSA.

The M&E culture has not yet been well institutionalized in some government departments, both national and provincial. Most government institution are often called by the oversight bodies like the Office of the Public Protector, Portfolio Committees, the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA), Cabinet and other formal government structures to present their results related to achieving their objectives and targets,

because opposition parties, the Auditor-General and other stakeholders are more interested in outcomes than activities.

The only way departments can measure progress and demonstrate their true results and ensure improvements is through the utilization of the M&E systems. The feedback component regarding outcomes consequences from government actions has been missing in government, and there is now a realization that building an M&E system like the MPAT enables managers to make sound decisions (Kusek and Rist, 2004).

Anderson (2004) simplifies the term for ToC as a number of fixed perception that explains actions to be undertaken in order to achieve the long term goals and the connections between programmes or day-to-day implementation of policy activities and outcomes that should be featured at each phase. MPAT as a ToC emphasizes the organisation inputs like people, money, facilities and equipment that should be utilised through adherence to KPA like HRM practices, in order to get outputs that will positively impact and improve the lives of citizens. According to the DPME (2012), MPAT ensures learning, improvements and accountability which are a challenge in government, and this can only be achieved through the introduction of the ToC. Furthermore, Connell and Kubisch (1998) explain that ToC first determines its intended outcomes, what kinds of activities to action in order to achieve those outcomes. MPAT is possible, attainable and from level 1 to level 3 everything that is assessed is drawn from the existing government prescripts and frameworks. ToC must be tested first before being implemented. MPAT was piloted first in a few departments and provinces to ensure that identified challenges are dealt with effectively and efficiently before being fully communicated and institutionalized to all national and provincial departments.

ToC requires a participatory planning phase to ensure that all critical stakeholders are included and since MPAT 1.2 in 2012 and MPAT 1.3 in

2013 DPME managed to achieve 100 per cent participation of all national and provincial departments, which equates to 156 departments institutionalizing the MPAT process. Reeler (2007) argue that practitioners are the first people to identify problems and with the support of senior managers and initiative from them they must be able develop and monitor their own departmental improvement plans or action plans.

The methodology applied in this study is a mixture of both quantitative and less so the qualitative method. Cresswell (2003) argue that the application of both methods naturally or sometimes shows greater lenience on the other approach than the other one. Whether to prioritise one kind of information or the other depends entirely on the researches interests and what she or he want to emphasize in the study . The researcher's purpose was to investigate factors that cause HRM to be the most underperforming KPA as identified through the implementation of MPAT. Findings are presented graphically and explained through the application of qualitative methods. Mackey and Gass (2005) note that quantitative research generally starts with an experimental process which generates statistical data whilst qualitative methods are interpretive in nature and data cannot be quantified. Mixing the two in this study has allowed the researcher to present the findings in a quick graphical snapshot on the latest trends and performance levels in HRM since the implementation of MPAT, and also allows the researcher to get the analysis and opinions of participants on the main factors underlying the non-compliance with HRM practices.

HRM is faced with different challenges that are mostly caused by factors that can be resolved only if the senior management, leadership and EA can develop an interest in adhering to procedures and policies in place to ensure compliance and control. Most of the challenges on OD, Diversity and Management of Disciplinary cases are compliance issues and non-adherence is caused by lack of understanding, knowledge and disregard

for national policies which are meant to ensure flexibility whilst complying with frameworks and prescripts.

In HRP, PMDS participants are already seeing improvements in place since the implementation of MPAT and changes in attitude and effective and efficient practices are emerging in both national and provincial government. Capacity challenges for HRM units and in the public sector as a whole are caused by many factors such as redeployments, non-conformation with recruitment practices, political interference and leaders who are pushing their own personal agendas that may include corruption and nepotism. Delegations in the public sector are still not implemented as envisaged by the DPSA and more training needs to be conducted together with skills transfer to promote an understanding of how to properly delegate.

HRM is also not considered as a strategic partner at national and provincial government and this has resulted in HRM critical issues not being brought to the attention of line managers or leadership in the organisations. Support from line managers and leadership is critical to ensure the institutionalization of the MPAT process as this will also assist them to identify the weak areas that require more attention and redirect resources to ensure continuous improvements. MPAT clearly addresses issues relating to statements like what, how, where and why: what the change should be like based on predetermined outcomes; how the process should occur; who will do it or must be involved; and why the activities will then lead to the predetermined outcome as described by Walters (2007).

6.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the implementation of MPAT in 2011 there has been an enhancement with regard to the management practices in the public

sector. However, specifically in KPA3 which is HRM, regular HR forums must be co-ordinated by DPSA and OTP's to discuss new policies at national and provincial spheres of government even before approval of those policies. After approval of HR policies, the DPSA must, together with the DPME as the custodian for M&E, embark on national and provincial processes to workshop practitioners and give guidance and clarity to management on the implementation of policies, especially after sending out directives.

DPSA directives must be disseminated to departments with enough time to allow workshops or trainings on them before the date for the implementation. The DPSA must not wait for the OTP's to request these meetings but must initiate them especially once they realise the challenges with regard to the implementation of certain HR policies.

DPSA policy makers or experts must take account of the frustrations and experiences of the HR practitioners in order to develop relevant and practical solutions depending on the different environment of departments. The DPSA must provide the implementation guide or at least a manual to be utilised by departments during the implementation of HRM policies. The core government departments should understand that new policies and strategies do not solve the problem but instead complicate it further.

The DPSA, DPME and OTPs must start working together in ensuring capacity of HRM at departmental level to monitor progress, report and evaluate in order to ensure intervention if needed. The DPSA, DPME and OTPs must immediately discuss reports and results to ensure that reports presented to different structures on the same HR standards and policies correlate. The DPSA must give feedback on all reports that they request from departments to show that analysis is done and recommendations are properly communicated and monitored thereafter.

Synergy and collaboration between the centre of government departments and other departments is important and should enable policy implementation, meaning that the DPSA, DPME and OTP's must complement each other rather than being a blockage to implementation. OTP's must be transparent and ensure effective and effective communication to their provincial departments.

DG's specifically in the provinces must start playing an active role to ensure proper co-ordination and that important communication is disseminated to the relevant people.

The DPSA should develop an HR calendar that is distributed to all national and provincial DG's, HoD's, HRM managers, Line Managers, EA's Offices and to all HRM practitioners. Mandatory deadlines must be adhered to and there must be consequences for not meeting them. HRM managers must ensure that they provide a departmental-specific calendar that will be distributed to all involved parties including the managers in the Ministries to ensure compliance by EAs with the mandatory time frames.

Departments should be aware of their strengths and weaknesses and what is lacking is ensuring continuous improvements and support by senior managers. The DPME must find ways of monitoring and reporting to the relevant government structures on HRM improvement plans.

Line managers must strengthen the use and utilisation of HR information for effective decision-making. This must also entail the utilisation of good practice cases written by the DPME for benchmarking and learnings within the public sector. Departments must be open to learn from each other to ensure improvements. Overall national, provincial and local levels of government must be mindful that co-ordination between them is of the utmost importance as they exist for the common good which is to realise,

fulfil the basic needs of the people and improve the well-being of the citizens in the country.

Akkinnusi (2008) argues that human beings take precedence over all other resources like financial and capital resources, meaning that effective HRM practice is vital for the achievement of the department's strategic goals. One can argue and acknowledge that while factors affecting HRM as demonstrated in this study differ from one country to the other, there are cross-cutting issues faced by the government all over the world like the importance of ensuring and recognising the need to take care of its employees' well-being.

HRM must be a standing agenda item during the top management meetings and every line manager must report on programmes and link the report to HR issues. DPSA experts must assist departments to develop succession plans to avoid loss of institutional memory when an expert or leadership leaves the department. This seems to be a problem when systems are not in place to retain the knowledge and departmental information, and data must remain available, retrievable and utilised even after the person has left the department.

The DPSA and DPME must ensure that non-complying departments are reported on and the Cabinet ensures consequences for such, because without accountability nothing will ever change no matter how many reports are presented and submitted to parliament. Public managers must start acting in such a way that they can account for their actions and if they do not, then disciplinary measures as stipulated by the PSA must be implemented by the DPSA or the responsible manager, EA or even the president of the country himself.

Implementation of MPAT has brought about increased awareness of many HRM prescripts that managers were not even aware of and were not

reporting on, much less implementing in their respective departments. The challenge that must be addressed is for the DPSA to align their policies and integrate where possible to ensure streamlining and reduction of reporting fatigue in the public sector. The DPSA, Skills Education Training Authorities (SETAs), Labour, PSC and other departments must start incorporating and using one report to get information instead of asking for different reports containing the same data and content as this is a burden on the departments especially where there is a capacity challenge.

The National School of Government must consult the under-performing departments to identify their challenges and related training needs, by means of awarding bursaries, coaching or even mentoring. The National School of Government must not be the only institution responsible for training and induction of new and all government employees. Inductions must be conducted in such a way that employees understand the mandates on which their specific departments operate under, hence the induction must be conducted by experienced line managers with the guidance and the assistance of the HRM unit. This induction must not be conducted by lower level or junior staff as has been the case in the public sector, but must be included in each manager's performance agreement and they must be assessed against it. The HRM unit must start taking the learning through education seriously by not only awarding bursaries for university entry level but also for post-graduate studies as this will prolong the employees' stay in the organisation, increase employee satisfaction and enhance the retention strategy for critical positions and skills retention.

Continuous training in government is needed; especially the refresher courses to ensure change management is done correctly as it take time to be institutionalised. The refresher course is also critical for the DPSA experts in terms of familiarising themselves with current and latest HRM challenges and developments and how to overcome them. Non-

adherence to HR practices must be regarded as a serious finding for departments and should be included in the AG findings. The public sector, especially its leadership and management, must be aware and acknowledge that they are the ones who contribute more than the HR unit to the underperformance of HRM. They need to accept this and begin to change how they influence the recruitment, PMDS, Management of disciplinary cases and other HR processes.

Departments within the SA public service must discontinue the tendency of appointing people to higher positions who have never worked in government, with no experience or no understanding of HRM prescripts. They must at all times seek to attract people who are committed, or have potential and have attained much-needed skills. HRM units must be able to advise and support the line managers by being creative, imaginative and influence debates on HRM as they are the experts in the area.

Possible ways of addressing HRM challenges , include clarifying roles and responsibilities in line with the confirmed business process and development of highly committed, professional and skilful employees which ensures and support the organisations to quickly adapt and adjust to new changes and deploy new ways of achieving goals. Leadership performance must be aligned and linked to that of their departments as this will ensure accountability and consequences for non-performance. Hannagan (2005) argues that it is critical for the successful organisation to adopt their own cultures that is consistent on how things are done and meaning that in practice the ability of leaders to organise, control and change their organisations depends entirely on the culture that exists within that institution.

Leadership from the EA must start demonstrating the seriousness and need to lead by example, by complying with HRM policies so that those

that they are leading can do the same. This will ensure that HR will be regarded as a strategic partner. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) since its establishment has identified HR as one of its major strategies to be used in order to achieve regional integration, co-ordination and development, specifically in the public sector, and Hannagan (2005) advises that leadership must be able to appoint managers that are innovative and able to satisfy customers whilst reaching and even exceeding the organisational outcomes. In addition these managers must manage change because in the work environment change is the order of the day and this should come naturally. SADC can promote development through capacity development in the area of HR, and this can be done through tertiary education, on-the-job training and coaching.

Lessons learned through the implementation of MPAT which is a monitoring system that reports on the four KPA's including the HRM, is that managers in Africa as a whole in a quest to improve the welfare of the people they are serving as public servants must be able to transform policies into outputs through sequential activities that adhere to prescripts and frameworks to ensure control. Furthermore, managers in government must be able to explain what are they doing, how they do it and what are they planning or ought to do to achieve the outcomes. Manning (2010) indicates that there is a growing new knowledge by scholars aiming to consider and realise the linkages between HRM and performance; however, this concept raises many questions that still need to be answered. It is important to link the two because at the departmental level performance ultimately comes down to an individual's work.

Managers in the entire public service must be and put themselves in a position as planners to influence leadership, promote understanding, and support learning as they are the experts in the subject matter, especially HRM managers who must demonstrate to management that HR is a strategic partner in their organisation. HRM managers must take the lead

by being able to reflect organisational performance and link it to the competence of the people in that institution, indicate job constraints involved and identify underperformance caused by the nature of jobs and skills of employees involved in performing that job. If HR managers appropriately advise their leadership and top management on these issues the face of HRM in the public service will positively improve. Managers must be able to advise leadership and politicians accordingly with regard to their organisational work force needs, and this is where the intuition and experience HR managers must carry out and play their vital role during the recruitment process instead of delegating very junior staff to assist whom are not taken seriously by management or listened to when trying to advise, and who may be easily manipulated as they do not have delegation to make certain decisions.

Regarding lessons learned globally with specific reference to the Canadian public service, the Privy Council Office (2008) indicated that line managers within departments are the ones delegated to ensure capacity and skills to meet government priorities. This is crucial because leadership and management must know how best to allocate resources, by aligning their organisation's people capabilities with the strategic goals of the department. The whole public sector in SA, Africa and internationally must start moving towards M&E of the HRM practices if they want to improve government services rendered to the people. Lessons learned through the implementation of MPAT reveals that HRM is not entirely the responsibility of only the HR specialists, it is also the obligation of each and every manager, leader and supervisor in the department, and HR experts must be considered as planners and advisers in the organisation.

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