Assessment of alignment of Training, Development and Personal Development Plans of South African Parliament employees: A case study of the Research Unit

by

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Declaration

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Abstract

Parliament is an organ of State that performs oversight over the Executive; consequently, it is crucial for Members of Parliament in their various committees to be well informed on the programmes and projects of various departments. Staff members in Parliament, and particularly researchers, are the ones that assist members of Parliament with the content knowledge of departments. In the dynamic nature of departments and Parliament, researchers need training from time to time; so that they can better advise the Members of parliament. The main objective of this study was to determine and explore the obstacles that hinder alignment between training and development, and the Personal Development Programmes (PDPs) of researchers in the Research Unit. A sample comprising 36 researchers was involved in this study.

Using the mixed-method approach, where quantitative and qualitative methods were used sequentially, utilising questionnaires and interviews. The study found that researchers were not satisfied with the type of training to which they are exposed. This dissatisfaction is caused by various challenges, namely: Managers in the Research Unit fail to involve researchers in the planning phase of their training; although a training-needs analysis is done, researchers are not consulted on the form and type of training they need; funds are a challenge – to the extent that the Research Unit is unable to cater for each and every researcher's training needs; and after training, evaluation is not conducted – so that the Research Unit can know the effectiveness of training, which could inform the Research Unit on its future training schedule.

The study found that in answering the research question, the following obstacles were found to hinder the alignment between training and development, in addition to the researchers' personal development plans:

- The training policy is not adhered to because of the inadequate budget for training, as well as failing to respond to the employees' training needs;
- Where researchers without the necessary skills are appointed, the training provided is not aligned to the skills required;

- Even though the required skills are identified in the PDPs, the training provided does not appear to take the PDPs into consideration;
- The budget is too small to accommodate the skills needed; and this is not always communicated properly to the staff.

The study recommends the following: The Research Unit should ensure that ideally, it appoints researchers with the skills that are needed in Parliament. However, where this is not possible, training is required. It is fundamental that the appropriate training should be planned and provided for researchers requiring certain skills, in order to ensure that they perform their duties optimally. Managers should make sure that they communicate to researchers the details of their training budget, so that the researchers would know the kind of training for which they should apply.

It is also important that the training sourced for the researchers is appropriate. Furthermore, the Research Unit should increase their training budget to cater for most, if not all, the employees. Another recommendation is that the researchers would need to be involved in the planning of the training programmes. The Learning and Development Unit of Parliament should make certain that all the units in Parliament follow the policy when it comes to training and development. A model, Nadler's Critical-Events Model for training and development, is also recommended as a tool for an improved success rating in training and development in the Research Unit.

It should be taken into cognisance that this study is a case study. It cannot be a generalisation for the entire Parliament.

Opsomming

Die Parlement is ‘n staatsorgaan wat as deel van sy mandaat oorsig doen oor die uitvoerende funksies en uitvoerende amptelikes van die regering. Daarom is dit belangrik vir lede van die Parlement in hul verskeie kommittees om goed ingelig te wees oor die programme en projekte van die verskeie departemente. Werknemers by die Parlement, spesifiek die navorsers, is verantwoordelik daarvoor om die lede van die Parlement te ondersteun met inhoudskennis van die departemente se werk.

Weens die dinamiese aard van die departemente en die Parlement is dit nodig dat navorers opleiding ontvang van tyd tot tyd sodat hul beter toegerus is om lede van die Parlement te adviseer. Die hoof doelwit van hierdie studie was om vas te stel watter hindernisse die samewerking tussen opleiding en ontwikkeling, en die persoonlike ontwikkelingsprogramme van navrosers in die navorsingseenheid affekteer. ‘n Steekproef van 36 navorsers was gebruik vir hierdie doeleindes.

Deur die gemengde metode te gebruik waar kwantitatiewe en kwalitatiewe metodes saam gebruik word, was meningsopnames en onderhoude gebruik. Die studie het gevind dat navorsers ontevrede was met die soort opleiding wat hulle ontvang en kan aan ‘n paar faktore toegeskryf word, insluitend dat: bestuurders in die navorsingseenheid nie daarin slaag om navorsers te betrek by die beplanningsfase van opleiding nie; dat ten spyte van opleidingsbehoeftesanalises wat voltooi word, navorsers nie gekonsulteer word oor die soort en aard van opleiding wat hulle benodig nie; die begroting vir opleiding is ‘n beperkingsfaktor wat tot gevolg het dat die navorsingseenheid nie in staat is om aan die opleidingsbehoeftes van elke navorser te voldoen nie; dat evaluering na opleiding nie voltooi word nie, met ander woorde, dat die navorsingseenheid nie in staat is om die effektiwiteit van opleiding te bepaal om sodoende toekomstige opleiding in die navorsingseenheid te kan inlig nie.

Deur die navorsingsvraag te beantwoord het die studie verder gevind dat die volgende hindernisse die samewerking tussen opleiding en ontwikkeling bemoeilik, bo en behalwe die persoonlike ontwikkelingsplan van navorsers:

- Die opleidingsbeleid word nie streng nagevolg nie weens die onvoldoende begroting vir opleiding en omdat navorsers se opleidingsbehoeftes nie aangespreek word nie;
- Waar navorsers aangestel word wat nie die nodige vaardighede het nie, is die opleiding wat aangebied word nie in lyn met die vaardighede wat benodig word nie;
- Selfs in gevalle waar die verlangde vaardighede in persoonlike ontwikkelingsplan aangespreek word, blyk dit nie asof die persoonlike ontwikkelingsplan in ag geneem word in die opleiding wat verskaf word nie;
- Die begroting is te klein om die opleiding vir al die nodige vaardighede te akkomodeer en dit word nie altyd doeltreffend met werknemers gekommunikeer nie.

Die studie stel die volgende voor: die navorsingseendheid behoort te verseker dat navorsers aangestel word wat die vaardighede besit wat benodig word by die parlement. Waar dit nie moontlik is nie, is opleiding nodig. Dit is belangrik dat daar beplan word vir beskikbaarheid van toepaslike opleiding van navorsers sodat hulle hul rol optimaal vervul. Bestuurders behoort seker te maak dat hulle die besonderhede van die begroting vir opleiding kommunikeer met navorsers sodat daar vir die regte soort opleiding aansoek gedoen word.

Dit is verdermeer belangrik dat die opleiding wat aangebied word vir navorsers toepaslik is en dat die navorsingseenheid hul begroting vergroot om voorsiening te maak vir die meeste, as nie al die navorsers se behoeftes nie. Ander voorstelle sluit in dat die navorsers betrek word by die beplannngsfase van die opleidingsprogramme. Die Leer-en-Ontwikkelingseenheid van die Parlement behoort seker te maak dat al die eenhede van die Parlement die beleid vir opleiding en ontwikkeling nakom. ‘n Model, Nadler se Kritiese-Gebeure Model vir opleiding en ontwikkeling, word ook voorgestel as ‘n metode vir beter sukses van opleiding en ontwikkeling in die navorsingseenheid.

Dit moet in ag geneem word dat hierdie studie ‘n gevallestudie is. Dit kan dus nie as ‘n veralgemening van die hele Parlement gesien word nie.

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Parliament consists of two houses, the National Assembly (NA) and the National Council of Provinces (NCOP). In each of these houses, there are committees, which oversee government departments. Committees in the NA are known as Portfolio Committees; and in the NCOP they are known as Select Committees. Each committee has a researcher attached to it who advises and does research for the committee, when the departments come to account in parliament. The research provided by the researchers is to inform and arm the Members of Parliament (MPs) in the committee – so that they can engage robustly with the departmental officials.

During the engagement, MPs have to ask pertinent questions, so as to ensure that the service delivery materialises. For example, if a university comes to account to the Portfolio Committee on Higher Education and Training, the researcher would do research work that would lean towards governance, transformation, research output, student housing, student funding (National Students Financial Aid Scheme) access and success rate and the throughput rate of the students.

Thus, researchers need to be performing at a high level at all times, so that MPs can hold the Executive to account. Ideally, researchers with the necessary skills should be appointed; however, this is not always possible. In these cases, training may be required for people to operate at optimal levels at all times, and to ensure that employees are effective and efficient in their tasks. The focus of this research is not the recruitment and selection process, but rather on the training and development of already-appointed researchers in need of appropriate training to perform their duties optimally.

Grobler, Wärnich, Carrel, Elbert and Hatfield (2011: 253) view employee training and development as a key factor in meeting organisations' strategic and operational goals. According to Ludike (2007: 64), and Hunter (2012: 253), training and development (T&D) improves the organisational performance, as well as organisational effectiveness. Gibb (2006: 3) stresses that training and development should be co-ordinated very well, so that the individuals in an organisation perform

as desired. Thus, training and development should be focused; and they must be consistent with the developmental competencies of the employees. If training is directly linked to the specific skills needed in an organisation, it improves the performance of employees, as well as the performance of an organisation (Nel, Werner, Haasbroek, Poisat, Sono & Schultz: 2001: 467).

Consequently, researchers need to get training that will enhance their research skills, so that they can better assist the MPs in the committees. Training should not only equip the employees to perform; it must equip them to excel, in order for the organisation to be competitive (Ludike, 2007: 64). Researchers have to excel in their work, so that MPs can do their oversight properly.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Researchers have to be on top of their game as they must be able to supply Members of Parliament (MPs) with reliable information, in order to engage from an informed position with the Executive. However, in the recent past, MPs have been complaining about the mediocre work of researchers. These complaints by MPs are made in management meetings. The Research Unit manager attends those management meetings; and it is the Research Unit manager, who has been informing the Research Unit of the complaints from MPs. Some members went on to label the work produced by researchers as being just “copy and paste” of internet articles, which have little or no relevance to their sectors.

Although these allegations have not been tested or proved yet, they nevertheless deserve attention from the Research Unit, before the relations between researchers and MPs become strained. Up to now, no concerted effort has been made to respond to the MPs’ complaints.

The complaints by the MPs are happening against the backdrop of researchers who receive training that is not consistent with their Personal Development Plans (PDPs). Researchers for the past three years have asked via their PDPs to be trained, among other things, on quantitative data-analysis software, known as Statistical

Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) with no avail. The PDPs of researchers are aligned to their job requirements; and the management should also be able to attest to that, since it is their job to approve them. Rowold (2008: 32) argues that the relevant training of employees brings about positive attitude in their jobs; and they become more involved. Training aligned to PDPs should strengthen an employee's skills; and in this case, it would improve the research and analytical skills of the researchers.

Hunter (2012: 206) concurs with this statement by saying that one of the purposes of T&D is to improve work performance.

From the research problem of MPs complaining about the quality of research output and the misalignment of PDPs, the following research question is appropriate.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

- What are the obstacles that hinder the alignment between training and development, as well as the Personal Development Plans for researchers in the Research Unit?

1.3.1 Sub-questions

- What skills do researchers in the Research Unit have?
- What skills do researchers in the Research Unit need?
- What type of training do the researchers in the Research Unit need?
- What training needs do current PDPs reflect compared with the skills gap identified?
- What are the views of researchers on the training and development programmes offered by the Research Unit?
- What is the satisfaction level of employees in the Research Unit with the training provided?
- What are the factors that the Research Unit should take into consideration when identifying training programmes for research staff?

1.3.2 Objectives of the research

The main objective of the study was to explore and determine the obstacles that hinder the alignment between the training and the development received and the Personal Development Plans of researchers in the Research Unit. In order to achieve the main objective, the following sub-objectives were also be pursued:

- To assess the current skills that the researchers have in the Research Unit compared with the required skills for researchers needed in the Research Unit – thus determining the skills gap within the Research Unit.
    - With the above knowledge, one can then determine the type of training needed by the researchers in the Research Unit, and compare this with the current PDPs.
- To understand the views of researchers on training and development programmes that are offered by the Research Unit, and to assess the satisfaction levels of employees in the Research Unit with the training provided to them by the Unit.
    - From all of the above information, one can then identify the factors that need to be taken into consideration by the Research Unit when identifying the training needs and programmes.

1.4 THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.4.1 Research Paradigm

A research paradigm refers to the philosophy behind the research process; and it must suit the purpose of the research. As this researcher wanted to understand the issue under investigation – from the experiences of the respondents – the researcher deemed the interpretivist paradigm to be the most suitable paradigm for this research project. The interpretation of the situation by the respondents on the phenomenon under investigation is a matter of key importance (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 28); hence, the researcher used the interpretivist paradigm.

1.4.2 The Research Design

The research design is a plan or blueprint in terms of which a study is conducted (Babbie and Mouton, 2001: 74). The study used both the survey and the case study designs. The survey was utilised to obtain information from all the researchers in the Research Unit. The researcher distributed closed-ended questionnaires to the respondents. From the survey conducted, 10 respondents were conveniently chosen for interviews. The 10 researchers formed a case study. A case study provides a researcher with an opportunity to interact with real people in real situations, in order to gain more in-depth knowledge on the phenomenon under investigation (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000).

A case study focuses on gaining more understanding about a situation in a single unit (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 281). A case study design was used in this study; as it allowed the researcher to explore the phenomenon under investigation in detail (Creswell, 2007 in Fouché & Schurink, 2011: 321). The researcher used one unit for this study: the Research Unit.

1.4.3 The Research approach

The study used both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. These two approaches were conducted sequentially. The researcher started with a quantitative approach, followed by a qualitative approach. This study was exploratory in nature, as well as descriptive; since it was studying the phenomenon in its natural setting (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005: 133). According to Babbie and Mouton (2001: 79), the exploratory approach is used when a researcher wants to explore or examine a new interest. A descriptive study provides a detailed description of the phenomenon under investigation (Fouché & de Vos, 2011: 96).

In this study, the researchers in the Research Unit were participants; since they were directly involved with the phenomenon under investigation; and they have rich information required for the research.

1.4.4 Sample and sampling

Choosing a study sample is an important step in any research project; since it is seldom practical to study whole populations. However, in this case, the study was conducted in the Research Unit that has 46 researchers. As this number is manageable, the researcher conveniently used of all the researchers for the study in the quantitative approach; and conveniently chose 10 respondents for the qualitative approach, together with one Unit representative.

1.4.5 The Data-Collection Tools

- Questionnaires

The researcher undertook a survey by distributing questionnaires to all the researchers (46) in the unit. The questionnaire included a Likert scale, whereby the respondents responded by choosing the applicable answer. By using all researchers for the study, the researcher was able to generalise the findings on the Research Unit. After the analysis of the questionnaire had been done, semi-structured interviews followed, based on the findings of the questionnaire. The researcher chose 10 respondents – for the interviews – from among the researchers, together with one Unit representative.

- Interviews

Interviews are the predominant mode of data collection in qualitative research (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 289; Greeff, 2011: 342). The researcher used semi-structured interviews; as they allow the researcher to gain a detailed picture of each participant's beliefs about the phenomenon under investigation (Greeff, 2011: 351). According to Greeff (2011: 351), semi-structured interviews give both the researcher and the participants a degree of flexibility. The researcher was able to probe to get clarity, and to follow up on emerging trends during the interview; and in return, the participants were able to tell the story – exactly, as they are the ones experiencing it.

All the interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim, with the consent of the participants. Tape-recording of the interviews was done to ensure the trustworthiness of the results (Brown, 2013: 162).

1.4.6 The data analysis technique

The researcher used a questionnaire and interviews to collect the data. The quantitative data generated from the questionnaire was analysed by way of descriptive statistics; as they were numeric. In the descriptive analysis, the researcher looked at the central tendency (means), measures of dispersion (range) and frequency. The information produced tables, which were explained by via a narrative.

When analysing the qualitative data, the researcher used a constant-comparative method (Wahyuni, 2012: 76). The constant-comparative method has similar principles to thematic analysis since it extracts the themes from the text. This method provides a systematic way for identifying any difference that may emerge from the data. Wahyuni (2012: 76) states that constant-comparative method is preferred when the objective of the study is to reveal important processes and professional experiences.

1.5 THE TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE RESEARCH

The study was both quantitative and qualitative. Using both methods enabled the researcher to triangulate the information. The quantitative part of the study enabled the researcher to ensure the validity and the reliability of the study.

To evaluate the quality of the qualitative part, the following concepts were utilised (Wahyuni, 2012: 77; Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 277-278; Schurink, Fouché & de Vos, 2011: 419-421): credibility, which parallels internal validity; transferability, which resembles the external validity; dependability, which parallels the reliability and confirmability, which resembles objectivity.

1.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The relevant ethical issues were observed in this research. The following ethical issues were observed.

1.6.1 Informed consent

The researcher ensured that he got permission to conduct the research by informing the gatekeepers on the purpose of the research. The participants were informed on the purpose of the research; and they participated voluntarily. Hakim (2000 in Strydom, 2011: 117) states that written informed consent becomes a necessary condition – rather than a luxury or an impediment.

1.6.2 Deception of the respondents

The true purpose of the research was revealed from the start. The respondents were not enticed by any incentives to participate in the research.

1.6.3 Violation of privacy/confidentiality

The confidentiality of all the participants was assured by asking them to respond anonymously – and by using coded themes and pseudonyms. The pseudonyms were also used when reporting the findings. All the participants of the study participated voluntarily.

1.7 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

- Training: According to Erasmus, Loedolff, Mda and Nel (2010:2), training is used by organisations, in order to modify knowledge and skills, as well as the behaviour of the employees, so that they perform better.

- Development: It is managerial function to ensure that the employees have the requisite skills – by improving their knowledge, skills, abilities and other

necessary characteristics (Grobler, Wärnich, Carrel, Elbert & Hatfield, 2011: 340).

- Performance management: This is a system that organisations use to manage their employees' performance (Williams, 1998: 120). Julnes, Berry, Aristeguieta and Yang (2008: 6) state that performance management may lead to improved quality of policy-making and decision-making.

- Performance appraisal: This is the process of evaluating how well employees perform their jobs, when compared against a set of standards, and then communicating that information to the employees (Grobler, Wärnich, Carrel, Elbert & Hatfield, 2011: 293).

1.8 CHAPTER OUTLINE

- Chapter 1 will provide the background to the study, the problem statement, the research question, the research objectives, the research methodology, the trustworthiness of the research and the ethical considerations for the research.
- Chapter 2 comprises the literature review and the theoretical framework. This chapter will deal with the literature related to the study. The concepts that will be covered here include: specifically training and development, as a method to improve performance, performance management, performance reviews and performance appraisal.
- Chapter 3 will discuss the context and the relative legislative context of the study. It will provide the specific South African legislation guiding training and development in the public sector, and specifically the policies for the Research Unit, thereby presenting the background to the case study of this research.
- Chapter 4 will focus on the background to the case study, and any other related information.
- Chapter 5 will discuss the research design and the methodology.

- Chapter 6 will focus on the data presentation, the data interpretation and the data analysis, as well as the results and the findings. The quantitative data will be analysed statistically; and the qualitative data will be analysed thematically.
- Chapter 7 will present a summary of the chapters, the conclusion and the recommendations, strengths and limitations of the study, as well as some suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2: THE LITERATURE REVIEW: TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided the reader with the introduction and an overview of the dissertation. The concepts of training, development and performance management were introduced. The research methodology that will be utilised for the study was also introduced. This chapter delves more deeply into discussing the concepts of training development and performance management; and under each concept, the related concepts will be discussed in detail.

2.2 CONCEPTUALISING AND UNDERSTANDING TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

2.2.1 Definition of training and development

Fitzgerald (1992: 81) and Grobler et al. (2011: 340) define training as the acquisition of knowledge and skills for present tasks – and a tool that makes individuals successful in executing the tasks in their present jobs. According to Niazi (2011: 43), training and development refer to the process of obtaining or transferring knowledge, as well as the skills and abilities that are needed to carry out specific organisational tasks. Training focuses on the present job; and it is a planned and systematic process (Masadeh, 2012: 63). Training is needed because, according to Thang, Quang and Buyens (2010: 28), there are few people who come to work with a complete knowledge of the job and the experience necessary to execute the tasks of assigned job.

Consequently, training is used by organisations to modify knowledge and skills, as well as the behaviour of their employees (Erasmus, Loedolff & Mda, 2010: 2). Training is also needed, in order to improve the performance of the individual or the team, in addition to the organisational effectiveness (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009: 452; Khan, Khan & Khan, 2011: 63). According to Masadeh (2012: 64), training should ideally be supplemented by hands-on practical activities.

Development focuses beyond the current context; and it may focus over a period of three years or more (Fitzgerald, 1992: 81; Masadeh, 2012: 64). Aguinis and Kraiger (2009: 452) define development as a "*systemic effort affecting individuals' knowledge or skills – for the purpose of personal growth or future jobs*". Offering training and development opportunities to employees shows that the organisation cares about its employee (Amin, 2013: 1277).

2.2.2 Purpose of training and development

Dahl (1987: 345) states that for any organisation to be successful, it must be staffed with personnel that have the potential to perform the job at least satisfactorily. If employees are not performing at the required level, they then have to undergo training; and, according to Khan et al. (2011: 63), training should be focused, so as to improve employees' performance.

The purpose of training is to help people learn, and also develop the skills that are needed to do the work effectively and efficiently (Fitzgerald, 1992: 81; Dahl, 1987: 345). Thus, training has to be directed towards achieving the organisational goals and objectives. Internationally, organisations provide training and development programmes to their employees, in order to improve their skills and abilities (Jehanzeb & Bashir, 2012: 59), so as to satisfy the current and future manpower needs of an organisation (Masadeh, 2012: 63).

Grobler et al. (2011: 343) and Grobler, Wärnich, Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield (2002: 315 – 316) list the following six purposes of training and development:

- To improve the performance of employees that perform unsatisfactorily because of skill deficiencies. Training cannot solve all the problems of poor performance. However, it can minimise those problems. Sometimes, when the selection of new employees is done, organisations are not able to detect that the candidate does not possess the needed skills; this can be established only when the new employee assumes his/her duties. Therefore, that gap between what the individual can do and what the individual is supposed to do, can be closed by training. Sometimes, employees with potential, or with an aptitude to learn, can be promoted to senior positions, and then trained accordingly.

- To update the employee skills when a new system such as a new technology is introduced in an organisation. In the world of technology, there are always new updated programmes, which employees need to know, so that they can be applied for efficiency purposes. Consequently, training would be needed, whenever a new software programme is introduced into the system.
- To avoid managerial obsolescence. Managerial obsolescence occurs when managers cannot keep up with the new methods and processes that would enable them to do their work more effectively and more efficiently. Obisi (2011: 82) also affirms that training and development foster the initiative and the creativity of employees, and help to prevent obsolescence.
- To deal with organisational problems – because training is one way of solving organisational problems, such as conflict, absenteeism or labour turnover.
- To orientate new employees. It is also known as induction. There is a cliché that first impressions last. When new employees are hired, they form their impressions about the organisation and its managers. The impression may be favourable or unfavourable; and this may influence their job satisfaction and productivity. Therefore, it is crucial for organisations to orientate new employees, so that they can render them comfortable in their jobs.
- To prepare for promotion and managerial succession. In order to attract and retain employees, career pathing and career development are crucial in organisations. Therefore, training enables employees to gather the skills that would be needed for promotional posts. Grobler et al. (2011: 343) state that if an organisation fails to provide such training, it may lose its most promising employees.

2.2.3 Benefits of training and development

Training and development benefits both the individual and the organisation. Any changes that are brought about by training and development should result in improved job performance, or lead to positive changes that serve as antecedents of job performance (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009: 453). According to Masadeh (2012: 63), employees benefit from training in numerous ways, namely: improved skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviour. However, the effectiveness of training depends

on the method of delivery of the training, and also on the skill or task for which the employees are being trained (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009: 453). A study done in Northern India by Barber (2004) showed that on-the-job training leads to greater innovation and tacit skills (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009: 454).

Fitzgerald (1992: 81) states that employees embark on training, because they want to contribute positively to their organisations; and some want to achieve a high degree of success within their organisations. Training can be a success; or it can be a failure. Successful training is beneficial to the organisation; as, according to Fitzgerald (1992: 81), it changes the behaviour of the employees; since they can use the newly acquired knowledge and skills to do their jobs better. When employees perform their job with a high degree of success, they get job satisfaction (Masadeh, 2012: 63), which subsequently leads to better motivation and productivity.

Some employees enter into training, in order to get promotion (Amin, 2013: 1275). Obisi (2011: 82) says that training enables employees to grow in the organisation and rise to higher positions; and this increases the employee's earning power, as well as job security. The growth of employees in an organisation enhances their capabilities (Khan, Khan & Khan, 2011: 63).

Training employees shows that an organisation cares, since it invests in its prized assets. The benefit of an organisation is that it gets competitive advantage, since the employees may, subsequently, become more innovative and creative (Thang, Quang & Buyens, 2010: 28). This could be because they do not react to change, rather they create change themselves (Fitzgerald, 1992: 81). Apparently well-trained staff becomes flexible and open to changes that may be introduced in an organisation. Jehanzeb and Bashir (2012: 63) and Thang, Quang and Buyens (2010: 40) argue that organisations that are providing training and development programmes for their employees, achieve higher levels of employee satisfaction and lower levels of employee turnover and employee absenteeism.

2.2.4 Disadvantages of training and development

Despite the advantages of training employees to benefit both the individual and the organisation, there are nevertheless some disadvantages – and frequently more to the organisation:

- Training often carries a high cost to the organisation and if they have to cut their budget, they do not hesitate to start cutting from the training budget.
- Training takes time away from productive work. It is apparent that when staff go on training, they use the organisation's time. In this way, an organisation loses time, which could have been translated into money.
- Resignations and staff turnover. Employees are happy to be trained by employers, but the disadvantage is that they might resign when they have completed their training and obtained a new qualification, such as a certificate or a degree. One of the reasons to resign could be the lack of promotional opportunities for them in their current organisation (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009: 458).

2.2.5 The correct way of doing training and development

According to Fitzgerald (1992: 81), "*training must be tied to performance, otherwise, it is an event with little payback for the organisation".* If training is focused on the work performed by employees, and based on the key-performance indicators, it improves the performance of employees in an organisation, and it improves the organisational performance too (Erasmus et al., 2010: 2). Khan et al (2011: 63) state that if training incorporates organisational interests and its workforce, this could play a pivotal role in the achievement of its goals. Effective training and development depends on knowing what employees need to know, in order to perform at an optimal level in an organisation. During training, employees are empowered to make better decisions and to solve problems more effectively, because their skills and knowledge are enhanced (Obisi, 2011: 82). Therefore, organisations need to analyse their training needs, so as to get a positive return on their investment.

Training needs are essential, as they inform the organisation what is required for doing the job; and they assess what an individual can do (Pearce, 1997: 6). Actually, the analysis of training needs is inclusive of organisational, individual and task analysis. If an organisation simply throws training to employees, it may miss the mark by a long margin; as the training may cover some unnecessary areas. Elofson and Casey (n.d: 1) argue that if organisations want to avoid unnecessary training and the wasting of money, they need to determine the kind of training needed by the employees. Vital to this, is the conducting of a training-needs assessment.

The purpose of a training-needs assessment is to identify the performance requirements needed within an organisation, in order to help direct the resources to the areas of greatest need (Amin, 2013: 1274). According to Brown (2002: 569), there are four main reasons why needs analyses must be done before training programmes are developed. These reasons are:

- To identify problem areas in the organisation. Management should first know the problems of employees, so that a relevant training programme can be developed.
- To obtain management's support. Brown (2002: 569) claims that training should directly affect what happens in the manager's department, in order to obtain management's support. Also, if training can show that it would improve performance of employees, management can easily agree to the training of employees.
- To develop data for evaluation. It is crucial for a trainer to develop informational needs before conducting training, so that evaluation that is done after the training can be valid.
- To determine the costs and benefits of training. Trainers have to develop a cost-benefit analysis of the training they have conducted. Doing a thorough needs analysis assists managers to put a cost factor on the training needs (Brown, 2002: 570). For any organisation, training is appropriate when they can get more benefits than the money invested in the training.

The areas of greatest needs are those that fulfil the organisational goals and objectives for improved quality and production (Amin, 2013: 1274). In essence,

training needs assessments are done in order to identify the knowledge or skills gap of employees (the gap between what the employee knows, and what the employee is employed to do), so that an organisation can implement an appropriate programme to close that knowledge lacuna or skills gap. If an organisation performs the training needs assessment appropriately, this would enable the organisation to develop the relevant training programmes.

When the training needs have been identified, an organisation is able to put a training programme together. Brown (2002: 571) states that it is expensive to implement and develop a training programme; therefore, an analysis of training needs from the onset is crucial. The following are the ways in which training analyses can be done:

- Performance analysis: This approach begins by determining the relevant process and the job output. Afterwards, it would need to determine the tasks required to execute each job's output. This would then state what skills and knowledge are needed to execute and perform the various tasks.
- Task analysis: This approach is used to identify the needs of employees in organisations. According to Brown (2002: 573), "*Task analysis begins with job requirements; and [it] compares employee knowledge and skills to determine [the] training needs".* A gap between performance and job requirements is indicative of a need for training.
- Competency study: This approach starts by checking the competency knowledge that employees have and it then establishes the type of skill and knowledge needed to acquire the required competences. Training requires surveys to be done, in order to ascertain the type of training required. Erasmus et al. (2010: 87) list the following aspects as important when analysing the needs of an organisation:
    - Training volumes: It is important to know the number of employees to be trained, the number of courses to be offered, and the number of facilities needed.

- Training-record needs: Training records are needed for budgeting. Therefore, information, like the cost of training per student is needed. Training records are also needed for career planning.
- Cost-reduction needs: Most organisations regard training as an expense; and if they need to cut some costs in the budget, they first cut the training budget. If there were records of the previous training, then an organisation would be able to carry out a proper training assessment of the costs involved. If there are no records, training costs can be arbitrarily reduced.
- Legal requirements: By law, organisations are required to keep records of workplace skills, plans, learnerships, employment equity and the levies paid (Erasmus et al., 2010: 87).

Jehanzeb and Bashir (2012: 60) claim that employees would be more productive if organisations provide them with training that is relevant to their jobs, because Khan et al. (2011: 64) state that performance increases the effectiveness and efficiency of an organisation. Employees have to be made ready for training, and an organisation needs to create a conducive learning environment. When training is conducted, it should be done in a professional manner by a person with expertise in the subject matter (Elofson & Casey, n.d: 1). A training model relevant to the needs of the training should be chosen.

Training may take place on-the-job or out-of-the-job. Grobler et al. (2002: 323) state that: "*on-the-job training includes job rotation and lateral promotion, enlarged and enriched job responsibilities, job-instruction training, apprentice training, coaching, mentoring and committee assignments".* Jehanzeb and Bashir (2012: 60) argue that some organisations conduct in-house training, as it is cheaper and more beneficial to both the organisation and the individual employees. Khan et al. (2011: 64) concur by saying that one of the advantages of in-house training is that it saves costs and time.

Aguinis and Kraiger (2009:454) argue that a study conducted in India in 2004 showed that on-the-job training led to greater innovation and tacit skills. According to Aguinis and Kraiger (2009: 454), training may not only comprise procedural knowledge, but it may also enhance strategic knowledge.

On-the-job training is the type of training that is done by 90% of employers in South Africa (Grobler et al., 2002: 323). Khan et al. (2011: 64) state that "*on-the-job training helps employees to get knowledge of their job in a better way, because employees learn in a practical environment, as opposed to theoretical book knowledge".* Grobler et al. (2002: 323) list the following types of on-the-job training activities:

- Job rotation: this is also referred to as cross training; as the employees are placed in different jobs for a period of time, depending on the level of the job. If an employee is at a lower level, the rotation may take hours; but high-level employees may be rotated for longer periods of time, like a month.
- Enlarged and enriched job responsibilities: Some organisations give an employee more work; but this also gives an employee more autonomy. By giving the employee more work, the organisation is making it possible for the employee to know more about the organisation, which leads to an employee growing in the job and in the organisation.
- Job-instruction training: These are the steps that are followed when training employees; and these comprise: preparation, presentation, performance try-out and follow-up.
- Coaching: A manager sets up the goals that have to be achieved by an employee. Then, the manager provides assistance, so that the employee can achieve the goals; and he gives the employee constructive performance feedback. The manager allows the employee to participate in the decision-making. There should be trust, co-operation and mutual respect between the employee and the manager, in order for such coaching to be effective.
- Mentoring: Experienced managers are those who can mentor employees; and they have an ability to facilitate employee development. There are various benefits of mentoring. For example, the mentor advances the career of the mentee; and the mentor may also provide counselling about the work and any personal problems.
- Committee assignments: In organisations, there are committees that take a lot of the employees' time. This is an area that provides room for training; since the employees have an opportunity to solve the problems of the organisation within these committees.

There is also away-from-the-job training. This includes in-house programmes, as well as off-site programmes. In-house programmes are provided by the training and development unit within an organisation; alternatively, the training and development unit may use a consultant. Off-site programmes are held outside the work environment; and they are sponsored either by universities, or any other training institute.

After the training has been undertaken, an evaluation of the training should be done. The evaluation assists the organisation to measure the success of training. If the evaluation confirms that training has not been successful, the training programme might need to be changed (Elofson & Casey, n.d: 2).

2.2.6 The level of training needs

There are three levels of needs, namely: macro-level needs; meso-level needs; and micro-level needs.

- Macro-level needs are national and international training needs, which are based on worldwide trends. Organisations have to be proactive and be able to meet the training needs of employees in advance.

- Meso-level needs are at an organisational level; and they focus on the organisations as a whole. These, according to Erasmus et al. (2010: 126) are "*the changes of the objectives of an organisation, the availability and utilization of resources, as well as [the] changing organisational climate".* Meso-level needs can be derived from the performance problems that managers have identified during the performance management appraisal.

- Micro-level needs: There are two aspects of micro-level needs, namely: operational-level needs and individual performance level needs. Operational needs refer to the content of an employee's work. An organisation has to establish the competency that employees have in doing their work (Erasmus et al., 2010: 126). The employee competency focuses more on the knowledge and skills that an employee needs to do

the job. The individual is assessed to find out where she or he is lacking in terms of knowledge, skills and attitude. These gaps are identified by conducting a formal assessment. If there is a gap between the requirements of the job content and the individual performance, that gap is known as the training gap.

2.2.7 Techniques of needs assessment

There are four main techniques that an organisation can use for assessing the needs, namely: questionnaires; individual interviews; observations; and documentation.

- Questionnaires

Questionnaires are the most frequently used instruments to gather the data; consequently, at times they are abused. Erasmus et al. (2010: 132) say: "*If questionnaires are correctly used, they will provide a variety of information about the needs, problems, potential problems, employee perceptions, attitudes and opinions".* The advantage in the use of questionnaires is that they can reach many people in a short space of time; and they are relatively inexpensive, as well as anonymous, which allows people to respond without fear. If the questions in a questionnaire are poorly stated, then, they make it difficult for the free expression of unanticipated responses. One of the most commonly known disadvantages of a questionnaire is that they often yield a low return rate (Erasmus et al., 2010: 132). Vital to any questionnaire is that it should be designed to ask the right questions, in order to obtain the needed data.

- Individual interviews

Interviews are good if the information has to be collected on a face-to-face basis. Interviews are good to uncover the details of training needs, as well as the causes of problems (Erasmus et al., 2010: 133). Interviews are able to explore any unanticipated issues that could come up during the interview – something that a questionnaire is unable to do. Interviewing is a two-way communication process. It allows employees to gain insight into their own problems. They yield rich data and allow for spontaneous feedback (Brown, 2002: 575). The disadvantages of

interviews are that the results can be difficult to analyse and quantify (Erasmus et al., 2010: 133); and they are very time-consuming (Brown, 2002: 575). Frequently, the performance appraisal is a good interviewing instrument. It should include a discussion of the performance agreement undertaken; and it should, therefore, be a good indicator of the performance gaps, if any. Brown (2002: 575) says that performance appraisals can point out any candidates for promotion or bonuses.

- Observations

Erasmus et al. (2010: 134) maintain that: *"observations are good because they generate data that are relevant to the work environment".* Thus, disturbances and interruption at work are minimised. However, for observations to be successful, it requires highly skilled individuals on both the process and the content knowledge (Brown, 2002: 575).

- Documentation

The reports of employees should be able to tell managers of the training needs of the employees. This generates virtually no disturbance in the work of the employees. Erasmus et al. (2010: 134) state that this technique can "*provide excellent clues to trouble areas; and it can provide objective evidence".* For it to be successful, it requires a skilled data analyst, in order to identify any clear patterns and trends. The negative side of document reviews is that they can only reflect on the past (Brown, 2002: 576).

2.2.8 Nadler's Critical-Events Model for training and development

The success of training and development programmes depends largely on the plans formulated, as well as their implementation. Training and development plans of organisations are informed by the specific and relevant training and development model. Organisations choose certain models that they think would enable them to achieve their organisational goals. This study identified Nadler's Critical-Events Model for training and development, as the relevant model because it is responsive to the training needs of organisations, as well as the training needs of individuals, in order to carry out their duties effectively and efficiently.

Nadler's training model has nine steps, which are evaluated; and feedback is then given after every stage. If feedback identifies any problem during training, corrective measures are taken during training, in order to achieve the intended goals. These nine steps are discussed below.

1. Identifying the needs of the organisation. According to Nadler (1986: 17), organisations should not provide any training unless the training would respond to the problems identified. Furthermore, the training should not leave the problem unsolved. Organisations should be sharp in identifying problems, in order to choose the appropriate training. Organisations need to grow. Growth in organisations is affected by both the internal and external factors of the environment. Thus, organisations have to be able to know what affects them, in order to respond in a focused manner. This is where the type and nature of training that an organisation requires should be identified (Erasmus et al., 2010: 12) by doing the following (Nadler, 1987: 17 – 34):
    - Organisational analysis. This is done, in order to discover the organisational performance and its competitive advantage.
    - A performance analysis is done to know whether the employees are able to do their assigned tasks and duties, or not.
    - Decision-training helps to see whether there is a gap between what the employee has to do – and what the employee can do. If there is a gap here, a decision should be made for training.

2. Evaluation and feedback. For organisations to know the impact of any training they offer to their employees, they have to do an evaluation and give the feedback of the programme. This ensures that the programme speaks to the needs of the organisation. Evaluation and feedback should be done at every step of the programme, since it serves as a reflection tool, so that goals can be achieved. If evaluation and feedback show any unwanted or unplanned predicaments, then corrective measures can be carried out immediately.

3. Specific performance. It is very important for managers to specify their performance expectations to the employees. Erasmus et al. (2010:13) reiterate that during this step, an organisation should analyse the work of an

employee, in order to determine the content of the work. In this way, the standards whereby an employee's performance will be measured are communicated. Apparently, when employee performance is good, organisations become more effective; thus, organisations have to assess the effectiveness of their employees against the set performance standards. With training and development, organisations should be able to curtail or eradicate any sources that may lead to ineffectiveness on the part of the employees.

4. Identifying the training needs. Training needs should take into consideration the needs of both the employee and the organisation. According to Erasmus et al. (2010: 13), the training needs of employees should be able to identify the gap between the performance of an individual and the set standards. Only if the needs of employees have been identified, can the programme then be developed. The success of the programme depends on the accuracy with which this step is carried out. In the job description, there are stated, as well as implied needs.

5. Formulating the training objectives. The purpose of training should be clearly sketched out in the form of the training objectives, which will be measured against the employee performance. Nadler (1986: 113 -118) stated that the training needs should be categorised into specific behavioural objectives. These behavioural objectives are:
    - Performance: This relates to what an employee can do after the learning experience.
    - Condition: This is the context, or the situation in which the need will occur.
    - Criteria: These comprise the standards of performance expected.

    If the training objectives have been identified, then an organisation can formulate the training needs.

6. Compiling a syllabus. When compiling a syllabus, the emphasis should be on what has to be learned (content) and also the order in which this should be learned. Organisations should ensure that the syllabus is based on the

training objectives. Therefore, the content of training should enable students to achieve the training objectives (Erasmus et al., 2010: 13). The syllabus should include new subject content for the trainee and the trainer.

7. Selecting instructional strategies. The effectiveness of training depends on the method of delivery of the training, and also on the skill or the task being trained for (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009: 453). Training should be presented in a meaningful and enriching manner (Erasmus et al., 2010: 13). Instructional strategies should cover a wide variety of techniques and methods; and they should also suit the context and the aim of the training programme (Erasmus et al., 2010: 13). The training situation also has an influence on the training method that is to be utilised.

8. Acquiring instructional resources. Organisations should have a variety of resources, in order to ensure the successful presentation of a training programme. According to Gerbamn (2000 in Jehanzeb and Bashir, 2012: 60), "*Employee development programmes [should] include a variety of teaching techniques, a schedule and learning environment that ensures employees to improve their skills, and later [to] apply them on their jobs*". Nadler (1986: 186) says that obtaining instructional resources is a very important act; as it ensures the successful implementation of the programme. These resources are:
    - Physical resources. These comprise equipment, materials and facilities.
    - Financial resources. The cost effectiveness of training and the management of a training budget is very important.
    - Manpower resources/human resources. Facilitators, instructors and students form part of the training team.

9. Presentation of training. Preparation is a very important prerequisite for successful training. Thus, the trainer needs to verify that the trainees are notified of the course arrangements. There should be a commitment and buy-in from all those involved in the training programme (Nadler, 1986: 39). It is recommended that before training takes place, a pre-test is conducted and

after training post-test is conducted. The results of the post-test will show whether any type of learning did indeed take place. At the end of the training, an evaluation is conducted. Nadler however (1986: 224), maintained that evaluation at the end of the training is only limited to learning; and any performance improvement would only be confirmed in the workplace.

These nine steps are interlinked and vital; as each previous step informs the next one; and these should ultimately satisfy the organisational need – a loop that always has to be aligned.

2.2.9 Evaluation of training

Training should be evaluated, so that the future programmes can be improved. Evaluation is important as it informs the management, as well as the employees, whether the training was worthwhile, or whether it was futile. Grobler et al. (2002: 332) assert that the purpose of training and development evaluation is to determine whether any new skills and attitudes were learned. At the end of the training, questionnaires should be distributed to be completed and submitted by the trainees. These questionnaires need to be analysed, in order to ascertain whether the training was a success or a failure. Frequently, this can happen directly after training; but there could possibly be a post-training application in the workplace. Kirkpatrick (1987: 302) and Grobler et al. (2002: 333) break down the evaluation into four steps:

- Reaction: This stage refers to the extent to which the trainees enjoyed the training. However, this does not measure whether any learning actually took place. The reaction of an employee is highly subjective.

- Learning: During the reaction stage, there could be a favourable reaction from the trainees. However, that does not necessarily ensure that any learning actually took place (Kirkpatrick, 1987: 309). During learning, new skills and knowledge should be acquired, and attitudes should be changed. Employees are supposed to be assessed before and after the training. Then, after the training, it is expected that the scores of trainees should be higher than they were before the training.

- Behaviour: Future programmes depend to an extent on the effectiveness of the previous training programmes. The effectiveness should be measured in objective terms (Kirkpatrick, 1987: 315). Jehanzeb and Bashir (2012: 63) say that training affects the behaviour of the trainee. The learning of a new skill should bring about a positive change in the behaviour of an employee (Grobler et al. (2002: 333). The change in behaviour brings about constructive changes, which should improve the employees' performance.

- Results: Training is supposed to result in a more effective organisation (Grobler et al., 2002: 333). Training should have an impact on the organisational goals of productivity, quality and job satisfaction, as well as a decreased staff turnover.

2.2.10 Performance development plans

The best way of creating meaningful training and development plans is to look at two different, but related, planning tools (Fitzgerald, 1992: 81). These tools are performance plans and development plans. Fitzgerald (1992: 81) stated that *"performance plans should outline what is expected in terms of performance or results, and also how the results will be measured".* However, the development plans focus exclusively on the employees' growth and development (Fitzgerald, 1992: 81).

Development plans have a long-term focus; and they specify the courses to be taken by employees to improve their performance (Aguinis, 2014: 202). Development plans enable an organisation to plan its staffing, training and development. Ultimately, development plans ensure that organisations prepare their employees adequately to meet the future challenges in their jobs (Fitzgerald, 1992: 82).

Aguinis (2014: 202) argues that *"performance development plans should provide an action plan to improve in areas of weaknesses and [to] further develop areas of strength".*

According to Armstrong (1994: 51), performance development plans should consist of the following:

- Areas of performance that an employee feels need development;
- Things that an employee thinks they need to do to develop their performance;
- If they need further training in any aspect of their work; and
- What a manager needs to do to assist the employee to improve his/her performance.

According to Aguinis (2014: 203), the objectives of personal development plans are:

- To improve the performance in the current job;
- To sustain the performance in the current job;
- To prepare the employees for advancement; and
- To enrich employees' work experience.

Personal development plans are a part of the performance management cycle; therefore, it is vital for managers and employees to agree on a development plan before any review cycle can begin (Aguinis, 2014: 47).

2.3 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AS A SYSTEM TO DETERMINE THE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AND TO INFLUENCE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

2.3.1 Performance management defined

Organisations need to have a system that would enable them to manage their employees. The system used by organisations is performance management, which requires organisations to do performance planning and to assess employee performance (Williams, 1998: 12). Julnes, Berry, Aristigueta and Yang (2008: 6) and Haines III and St-Onge (2012: 1158) define performance management as a tool of learning from past experience, in order to avoid repeating the same mistakes.

Armstrong (1994: 23) and Williams (1998: 14) maintained that in order for performance management to be successful, there should be a shared understanding between a manager and the employees. Managers should strive for employee performance that would assist an organisation to achieve its objectives (Bacal, 1999: 11); and therefore, managers have to ensure that employees' activities and outputs are aligned to the organisational strategic goals (Aguinis, 2014: 3).

Castello (1994, cited in Williams, 1998: 16) purports that "performance management should support an organisation's overall business goals by linking [the] work of each individual employee or manager to the overall mission of the organisation". If the employee's activities and outputs are consistent with the organisational strategic goals, it becomes easy for an organisation to gain a competitive advantage (Aguinis, 2014: 3).

The effectiveness of a performance management system depends on the way it is implemented (Biron, Farndale & Paauwe, 2011: 1296). Armstrong (1994: 24) and Cabal (1999:18) argued that success in organisations depends on the type of performance management that an organisation has. Aguinis (2014: 5) states that *"a performance management system should provide valid information about performance that can be used for administrative actions, such as merit increases, promotions and transfers, as well as terminations".*

A good performance management system helps to keep employees engaged; and this makes employees committed, involved, empowered and passionate about their work (Aguinis, 2014: 7).

2.3.2 The aim of performance management

The central aim of performance management is to develop the potential of employees and to improve their performance (Armstrong, 1994: 25; Williams, 1998: 16; Julnes et al, 2008: 9). In order to improve the organisational effectiveness (Biron et al., 2011: 1294), Armstrong (1994: 24) stated that *"the overall aim of performance management is to establish a culture in which individuals and groups take responsibility for the continuous improvement of business process, and of their own skills and contributions".* It is critical to link organisational effectiveness to the business strategy of an organisation (Williams, 1998: 16) in order to have a competitive advantage (Armstrong, 1994: 76). According to Biron et al. (2011: 1294), organisational effectiveness demonstrates that organisational subsystems are working together to achieve the objectives of the organisation.

Managers have an opportunity to communicate (Bacal, 1999: 3) and to reinforce organisations' strategies by using performance management as a tool (Armstrong, 1994: 24). Communications provides a framework for the agreement on the targets that have to be achieved by individuals during the financial year. There should be mutual understanding between the manager and the employee on the target formulation, which according to Armstrong (1994: 25) increases the motivation and commitment of employees. Reaching consensus during the discussion makes working relations stronger. This results in the work being done effectively and efficiently.

2.3.3 The process of performance management

Organisations should regard performance management as an integral part of the continuing process of management, as it provides an organisation with performance information (Armstrong, 1994: 76). Taylor (2014: 8) states that: "*performance information is promoted as a valuable and versatile decision-making aid for public managers; and there are three uses of performance information, namely: to co-ordinate, to monitor and to diagnose*". Co-ordination refers to giving direct attention to the organisation's objectives; monitoring refers to measuring and reporting on performance; and diagnosis refers to assessing the cause-and-effect relationships between process performance, organisational learning and organisational performance (Taylor, 2014: 8).

Learning should be integrated with performance management, and the employees should be willing to take part in their development. Armstrong (1994: 77) stated that managers, as well as employees, should be encouraged to learn from the challenges they encounter, which are inherent in their day-to-day work. Learning is supposed to improve employee performance; and performance management is supposed to improve the quality of policies, as well as the decision-making in an organisation (Julnes et al., 2008: 6).

Bacal (1999: 3) viewed *"performance management as an ongoing communication process, undertaken in partnership, between an employee and his or her immediate supervisor that involves establishing clear expectations and understanding about the job functions the employee is expected to do".* Between assessments, managers need to ensure that they arrange time with their employees, to do some briefing; and they can then form patterns of these briefings (Armstrong, 1994: 77). By doing the briefings, the manager is building communication with the employees, which makes it easier to check progress and to identify any barriers to performance (Bacal, 1999: 29). When the barriers to performance have been identified, a training schedule is prepared for the employee – so that the same problems identified by the manager do not recur.

According to Verbeeten (2008: 442), managers are supposed to devise performance measures and agreements with the employees, so that the employees can have ownership of them. Within the performance agreements, there should be personal development plans and performance improvement plans (Armstrong, 1994: 41). These assist both the manager and the employees on the development needs of employees, in order to achieve the organisational goals. The personal development plans give managers a hint regarding what employees need to be trained on so that they can improve their performance.

It is vital for managers to give employees regular feedback in the form of quarterly performance reviews (Armstrong, 1994: 41), which would provide information on the training needs of the employees, or the training gap. At the end of the financial year, formal performance reviews should be conducted, which should lead to new performance agreements (Armstrong, 1994: 41). Performance reviews can reveal whether the employees require training, or not. Organisations differ in the way they offer training. This can either be formal in the form of a formal qualification, or informal – in the form of coaching, counselling or on-the-job training (Armstrong, 1994: 41).

At the end of the year, managers conduct a performance appraisal, which is a systemic description of an employee's strengths and weaknesses (Aguinis, 2014: 3).

Grobler et al. (2011: 293) describe performance appraisal as a process of evaluating how well employees perform their jobs when measured against a set of standards, and then communicating that information to the employees. Fletcher (2004: 5) says that for a performance appraisal to work, for both the appraiser and the appraisee, there should be something to gain. The appraisee should be given feedback, so that he or she can see his or her shortcomings, in order to improve on them. During feedback, employees should experience constructive engagement with their managers (Fletcher, 2004: 6). If during feedback, an appraisee becomes defensive, managers should deal with this reaction carefully (Fletcher, 2004: 6). Fletcher (2004: 6) argues that defensiveness heightens if the appraisal is, in any way, related to pay or promotion. The relationship between the appraiser and appraisee plays a crucial role during the performance appraisal. Fletcher (2004: 6) posits that if there are strained relations between the appraiser and the appraisee, it is unlikely that the appraisal would be accepted as fair and reasonable.

If employees meet a certain set standard, they get a performance related bonus (Verbeeten, 2008: 442). If they perform below the accepted standard, that calls for training. Grobler et al. (2011: 298) assert that the results of appraisal influence decisions on the training and development of the employees. However, Grobler et al. (2011: 298) argue that not all poor performance can be addressed by training and development; as some of the causes of poor performance could be attitudinal or emotional.

According to Grobler et al. (2011: 298), performance appraisal has two types of objectives, namely: evaluative and developmental objectives.

- Evaluative objective: The purpose of this performance is to look at past performance, in order to compensate employees in the form of bonus pay or a notch increase (Grobler et al., 2011: 298). Performance appraisal could look at a short-term objective, which is an increase in pay in the following year, or at a long-term objective for promotional purposes (Grobler et al., 2011: 298). Performance appraisal identifies those employees who might deserve a promotion, or perhaps some other desirable job changes.
- Developmental objective: The purpose of this performance appraisal is the development of employee skills and their motivation for future performance.

Employees need to get feedback from their managers to know how they are performing; and, according the Grobler et al. (2011: 298), employees also want to know how their supervisors (line managers) feel about their performance. Grobler et al. (2011: 298) state that feedback recognises the strengths and weaknesses in the past performance; and it then determines what should be done for the employee to improve his/her performance. The result of appraisal influences any decisions about the training and development of the employees (Grobler et al., 2011: 298).

2.4 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter has provided the reader with a wide scope of training, development and performance management literature. The purpose and benefits of training and development have been discussed. The correct way of doing training and development has also been discussed. Performance management was defined; and additionally, the purpose of performance management has been discussed in detail. It has showed the value of training and development, as well as how performance management determines the training needs of employees and the importance of its alignment to the overall organisational objectives. The main deductions from the literature are:

- Training and development is needed to improve employee performance, in order to achieve the organisational goals and objectives.
- Organisations that train their employees achieve high levels of employee satisfaction and low levels of employee turnover.
- In order for training to be effective, it should be directly linked to employees' key performance areas.
- Training needs analysis as a precursor to the implementation of training.
- Nadler's model clearly identifies the stages that an organisation should follow when conducting training for its employees.

- Training should be evaluated, in order to tell an organisation of the successes and failures of a training programme, in order to inform future training programmes.
- Performance management is essential to an organisation; as it indicates whether there is a training gap, which should be addressed by training.

The next chapter will present the contextual and legislative environment, in which training and development operate in the South African public sector, specifically Parliament and the Research Unit, which is the focus of this research.

CHAPTER 3: THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK UNDERPINNING TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature review chapter discussed training and development in detail and the role played by performance management in determining training and development needs. In this chapter, the legislative framework that informs the process of training and development, as well as performance management will be discussed. Furthermore, the policy on learning and the development of the Parliament of South Africa, will also be discussed, so as to contextualise the legislative framework.

3.2 LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

After the advent of democracy, a plethora of policies and Acts were promulgated, inclusive of employment-related policies and Acts. The purpose of these policies and Acts was to guide or direct people and organisations on how they should operate in the workplace. The statutes that are relevant to training and development are discussed below in some detail.

3.2.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996

The Constitution is the supreme law of the country; therefore, the provision of all South African statutes must conform to the basic principles contained in the Constitution (Nel, Werner, Poisat, Sono, du Plessis, Ngalo, van Hoek & Botha, 2011: 38). Chapter 10 of the Constitution deals with public administration; and section 195 (1) (h) in Chapter 10 of the Constitution states that good human resource management and career development practices – in order to maximise human potential – must be utilised (RSA, 1996). Public administration (section 195 (1) (c)) must be development-oriented, in order to improve the skills of the people; and additionally, high standards of professional ethics must be promoted (section 195 (1) (a).

It is clear that the Constitution advocates training and development of the people; so that they can be better equipped with the requisite skills to ensure that they discharge their duties effectively and efficiently.

3.2.2 National Qualifications Framework Act (No 67 of 2008)

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act is a comprehensive system approved by the Minister for the classification, registration, publication and articulation of quality-assured national qualifications (RSA, 2008). The NQF Act has the following objectives (RSA, 2008):

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

The NQF has a single integrated system, which comprises three co-ordinated qualifications. These are General and Further Education; Higher Education; and Trades and Occupations. Grobler, Wärnich, Carrel, Elbert, and Hatfield (2011: 379) state that the NQF Act does not only affect people in education; but it also has an influence on those people that are in employment. Therefore, the NQF Act has a direct impact on how education and training should happen (Grobler et al., 2011: 379). People in employment are affected when it comes to training and development; since people tend to take different routes in their training and development.

Some people can do short courses; while others do full qualifications: either degrees or diplomas. All these qualifications should fall within the NQF sub-frameworks; so that they can be credible. The implementation of the NQF is overseen by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). The role of SAQA is to ensure that all qualifications offered by institutions are credible and of high quality. The role of SAQA cannot be underestimated; since recently, there has been a proliferation of fraudulent qualifications in South Africa.

3.3.3 The National Skills Development Strategy

The National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) seeks to develop the skills of the South African workforce (DHET, 2011). The NSDS assumes that the workspace should be a learning environment; and the New Growth Path called for increased workplace training of workers already in employment; in order to improve their productivity and the overall growth and development of the economy. According to the NSDS, if people are trained, they can be self-employed; or they can secure work opportunities (DHET, 2011). It is critical that people should be adequately trained, so that they can participate in the economic as well as the social development of the country.

The Government developed National Skills Development Strategy III (NSDS III) to respond to the training needs of the country. NSDS III is the third National Skills Strategy which followed the integration of higher and further education and skills development into a single Department of Higher Education and Training. The NSDS III responds to various challenges in the country which are: inadequate skills levels and poor readiness for the labour market, unemployed youths, who lack the basic numeracy and literacy skills, shortage in artisans and technical skills and the lack of synergy between various post-school sub-systems. The response by the NSDS III to these challenges should result in the expansion of employment opportunities (DHET, 2011). The NSDS III responds to these challenges by disbursing grants, namely: mandatory and discretionary grants to the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs).

In South Africa, there are 21 SETAs, which are sector-specific; and all of them are involved in training: both for the employed and the unemployed candidates. The core responsibility of SETAs is to develop sector skills plans (SSP); and the SSPs should address the skills needed in the labour market.

The NSDS III states the following (DHET, 2011):

> "The SSPs must outline current and future learning and qualification needs of workers and their employers, and develop interventions that are agreed on by the stakeholders and can improve the match between education and training

supply and demand – the current and the projected needs of the sector and the sector employers. The SSPs are also a critical instrument for building a connected labour-market information system across all the sectors, which is an important evidence base for skills development and its impact".

3.3.4 The Employment Equity Act (No 55 of 1998)

The purpose of the Act is to achieve equity in the workplace (RSA, 1998) by:

- Promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of any unfair discrimination.
- Implementing affirmative-action measures to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by designated groups, in order to ensure their equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce.

Chapter 2 of the Act deals with unfair discrimination; while section 15 (2)(d)(ii) states that organisations must retain and develop people from the designated groups and implement appropriate training measures, including measures providing for skills development (RSA, 2008).

3.3.5 The Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 as amended

The Skills Development Act (SDA) provides an institutional framework to devise and implement national, sector and workplace strategies, to develop and improve the skills of the South African workforce (RSA, 1998). The Act also ensures that education and training in South Africa remain of high quality. The purpose of the Act is to develop the skills of the South African workforce (RSA, 1998). This is done, in order to improve the quality of life of workers, in order to improve their prospects of work and mobility, as well as promotion. When employees have been trained, their productivity improves and the competitiveness of the employer also increases. In the public sector, well-trained employees improve service delivery (RSA, 1998).

The SDA encourages employers to use the workplace as an active learning environment. According to the SDA, this is done by on-the-job training, which improves the opportunities of employees to acquire new skills. Training and

development should not be done arbitrarily; but they should be based on concrete data, which the skills audit within the Act makes it possible for employers and employees to know what training is needed. The essence of having the workplace as an active learning environment also opens space for new entrants to the labour market to gain work experience in the form of learnerships or internships. Learning organisations encourage their employees to participate in learning programmes. If organisations apply the Act fully, they can improve the performance of employees greatly, which would in turn improve the productivity of an organisation. For retrenched workers, it becomes easier to find another job or to re-enter the labour market if they are properly trained in market-related areas.

3.3.6 Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999

For training and development to occur, funds are necessary. The Skills Development Levies Act (SDLA) 9 of 1999 established the system of levy-financing, in order to fund skills development. Additional regulations under the SDLA provide for the allocation of grants by Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) (RSA, 1999). The SDLA ensures that funds are allocated to various organisations for developing the skills of employees. The Act introduced a 1% levy of the payroll of all organisations. Organisations that pay their levies are entitled to a portion of their contribution in the form of levy grants: either as mandatory grants or as discretionary grants.

Organisations should use these grants for training their employees in accredited programmes, which are linked to their sector skills plans. If organisations apply for these grants and use them appropriately, they will have more highly skilled personnel, which would improve their performance, and give an organisation the competitive edge. However, Grobler et al. (2011: 389) state that the Act has been criticised by other companies since it is viewed as another kind of tax, which has a negative impact on their profits, such that other companies have cut their training budgets, in order to make up for the money paid in levies.

3.3.7 White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service of 1997

The purpose of the White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service is to provide a policy framework that will facilitate the development of human resource practices, which support an effective and efficient public service geared for economic and social transformation (RSA, 1997). The White Paper regards human resource management as one of the strategic instruments of the transformation agenda for the public service. The White Paper stipulates that the values derived from the Constitution should underpin the human resource management in the public service. These values are: fairness, equity, accessibility, transparency, accountability, participation and professionalism (RSA, 1999).

The White Paper states that managing performance is a key human resource management tool to ensure that employees know what is expected of them. Managers need to know whether the employees are delivering the required objectives. Poor performance can be identified and improved; and good performance is recognised and rewarded. Performance management is an ongoing process, whereby the employer and the employee should strive together to improve the performance of the employees. Managers have a huge role to play in performance management; as they need to manage the performance of all their employees for the success of an organisation.

The White Paper states that employee performance should be assessed on the basis of a work plan covering a specified period (RSA, 1997). Managers should always explain clearly the responsibilities of the employees and the objectives that have to be achieved during the period under review. According to the White Paper, the performance assessment process should identify the strengths and the weaknesses, as well as the interventions to deal with the weaknesses. In dealing with the weaknesses, the White Paper states that training would be necessary. Additionally, also other methods like counselling, coaching and mentoring may also be used.

3.3.8 Parliament of South Africa (POSA) learning and development policy

The Parliament approved its policy on learning and development on 21 August 2009 and it has not been reviewed since then. Parliament is a national institution that serves the entire country. In order for Parliament to serve the country, it depends on a highly skilled and motivated workforce. It is, therefore, critical for Parliament to ensure that its employees are fully equipped to perform their functions well. Parliament's learning and development policy seeks to address any gaps that employees may have in discharging their duties (POSA, 2009).

The Policy states that Parliament should take positive steps to enhance the skills of its employees and to maximise their potential by aligning and developing their skills and competencies in line with the strategic plan of Parliament.

The Policy has the following objectives (POSA, 2009):

- To ensure that employees receive appropriate learning and development to support them in their current roles, and to cater for their personal development.
- To enable employees to improve their knowledge for their own benefit, and the benefit of Parliament, by obtaining the necessary educational qualifications.
- To identify, assess and recognise any prior learning.

The Policy stipulates that there are three provisions to fund employee training and development; and these are (POSA, 2009):

- Parliament funds training that is unique to Parliament, inclusive but not limited to the legislative process, the core business of Parliament and the work of committees of Parliament.
- Parliament funds training that is directed towards the general development of employees, based on the strategic objectives of Parliament. This type of training may include functional training, management development and computer skills.
- Parliament funds training that may be done by exchange programmes, or merely an induction programme for new employees.

The funding of employees is applicable to both contract and permanent employees. For contract employees, to be eligible for funding, they should be employed for a contract period of at least two to five years.

In order for training to be successful, it must be informed by the needs of the employees. The Policy states that training is needed for employees to get the necessary skills, knowledge and expertise to perform their jobs with competence. The Policy clearly stipulates that all learning programmes must be competency-based, and they should take into account the reason for developmental activity (POSA, 1999). Training should be measured for better results, in order to ensure the impact of training. Training should show improved performance and better service.

3.4 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

Training and development, as well as performance management are underpinned by various statutes, which all organisations should use to ensure that their workforce is highly trained, in order to perform at the optimal level. This chapter has discussed in detail these various legislations that underpin training and development and performance management. It is vital that all these statutes are informed by the Constitution since it is the supreme law of the country. Clearly, any legislation that is in contradiction of the Constitution is invalid.

The main correlations between the study and the legislation are: Training and development should be based on the PDPs of employees, and on the results of the performance assessment process; training of high quality should be offered to improve the skills of employees, in order to improve service delivery; and adequate funding should be made available for the training and development of employees.

The next chapter will deal with the case study background.

CHAPTER 4: BACKGROUND TO THE CASE STUDY AND RELATED INFORMATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with the legislative framework underpinning training and development in the public sector. Policies that deal with performance management, training and development in Parliament were also discussed. This chapter will give the background to the Research Unit; and the purpose of this chapter is to make the examiner as well as the reader of this study understand the Research Unit, which will be assessed in Chapter 5. The organogram of the Research Unit, its layout, as well as its demographics will be discussed. The discussion will also include policies that are related to training and development, in addition to the personal development plans of employees.

4.2 THE ROLE OF THE RESEARCH UNIT IN THE FUNCTIONING OF PARLIAMENT

Parliament performs three functions, namely: oversight, legislation and public participation; and these three functions are clearly spelt out in the Constitution. The role of oversight is to increase the responsiveness and accountability of government in delivering basic services. Oversight is conducted by the committees of Parliament. Before Members of Parliament (MPs) undertake an oversight visit, committee researchers undertake a pre-trip visit. The purpose of the pre-trip visit is for researchers to collect all the relevant information about the community to be visited by the committee. The researchers compile a comprehensive report of the information they collected in their pre-trip visit; and they share it with the MPs.

The information shared with MPs empowers them to be well versed in the challenges and the needs of the community to be visited. When MPs undertake the oversight visit, they are accompanied by the researchers. The role of researchers is to assist the MPs, while they are on the oversight visit, by recording key issues that emanate from the deliberation, which will be in the report of the oversight visit.

After the oversight visit, the researchers, together with the committee secretaries, compile a report. This report would have the key issues that emanated from the deliberations, as well as some recommendations for the department to implement. The report is adopted by the committee before it is tabled in Parliament.

Section 43 of the Constitution states that the legislative authority of the national, provincial and local spheres of government is vested in Parliament [National Assembly (NA) and the National Council of Provinces (NCOP)], and in the provincial legislatures and municipal councils, respectively. Parliament can pass legislation, repeal legislation or amend legislation.

When Parliament passes legislation, or repeals, or amends it, there should be enough information for MPs to make informed decisions. The information used by MPs should be based on evidence brought by researchers as this should assist them to make informed decisions and to achieve better outcomes. According to Strydom, Funke, Nienaber, Nortjie and Steyn (2010: 1), such evidence may be scientific, anecdotal, the expertise of the experts, the judgement of people and local knowledge and culture. Strydom et al. (2010: 1) further state that scientific evidence can be combined with other forms of information to provide evidence for policy development and practice. Researchers play a huge role, when it comes to scientific evidence, and when policies are developed in Parliament.

When Parliament passes legislation, it holds public hearings and it calls for submissions from the public. Involving the public is also known as public participation. Public participation is the process whereby Parliament and provincial legislatures consult with the people, i.e. with the interested or affected individuals, organisations and government entities, before making a decision (SALS, 2013: 25).

Section 59 for the NA and section 72 for the NCOP contemplate a democratic society that is participatory in nature. Public participation is a fundamental dimension of democracy; and it is a vital factor that strengthens democracy. The Constitution argues for the need for the realisation of participatory democracy, which calls for the active involvement and participation of the citizens (RSA, 1996).

Public participation serves to strengthen the institutions of representative democracy. The role of researchers is to analyse submissions from the public, and to put together a concise brief for the members of the committee. The research paper must

provide committee members with germane sector-specific information, which would assist them to appreciate the impact of the bill on the department and on society at large.

Some of the factors that influence decision-making, when it comes to policy development and formulation are socio-economic factors, as well as the credibility of the information at the disposal of the policy makers. This calls for researchers to be proficient in their research areas and to know their sectors comprehensively. The credibility of the information that researchers provide to MPs is of the utmost importance as it influences their decision-making. A researcher must also be able to communicate the information to the MPs – so that they can comprehend it. The information provided to MPs should be factual to prevent any bias; because knowledge is power.

Strydom et al. (2010: 3) put this more clearly by saying that researchers are the owners of knowledge; while MPs are the custodians of power. Knowledge is useful only if it is relevant to the legislation in question; thus, researchers have to provide quality germane information to the members of parliament. The information should also assist the committee members to have a robust debate with the department on the bill.

4.3 THE STRUCTURE OF PARLIAMENT

Parliament is managed by the Secretary to Parliament (StP); and the StP is assisted by two Deputy Secretaries. One of the Deputy Secretaries manages the Core Business of Parliament; while the other manages the Support Services. Under the Core Business of Parliament, there is a Division of Core Business Support and then, there is the Knowledge and Information Services section. The Research Unit is under the Knowledge and Information Services section. The Training and Development Unit falls under Support Services. The graphical structure of Parliament is shown below.

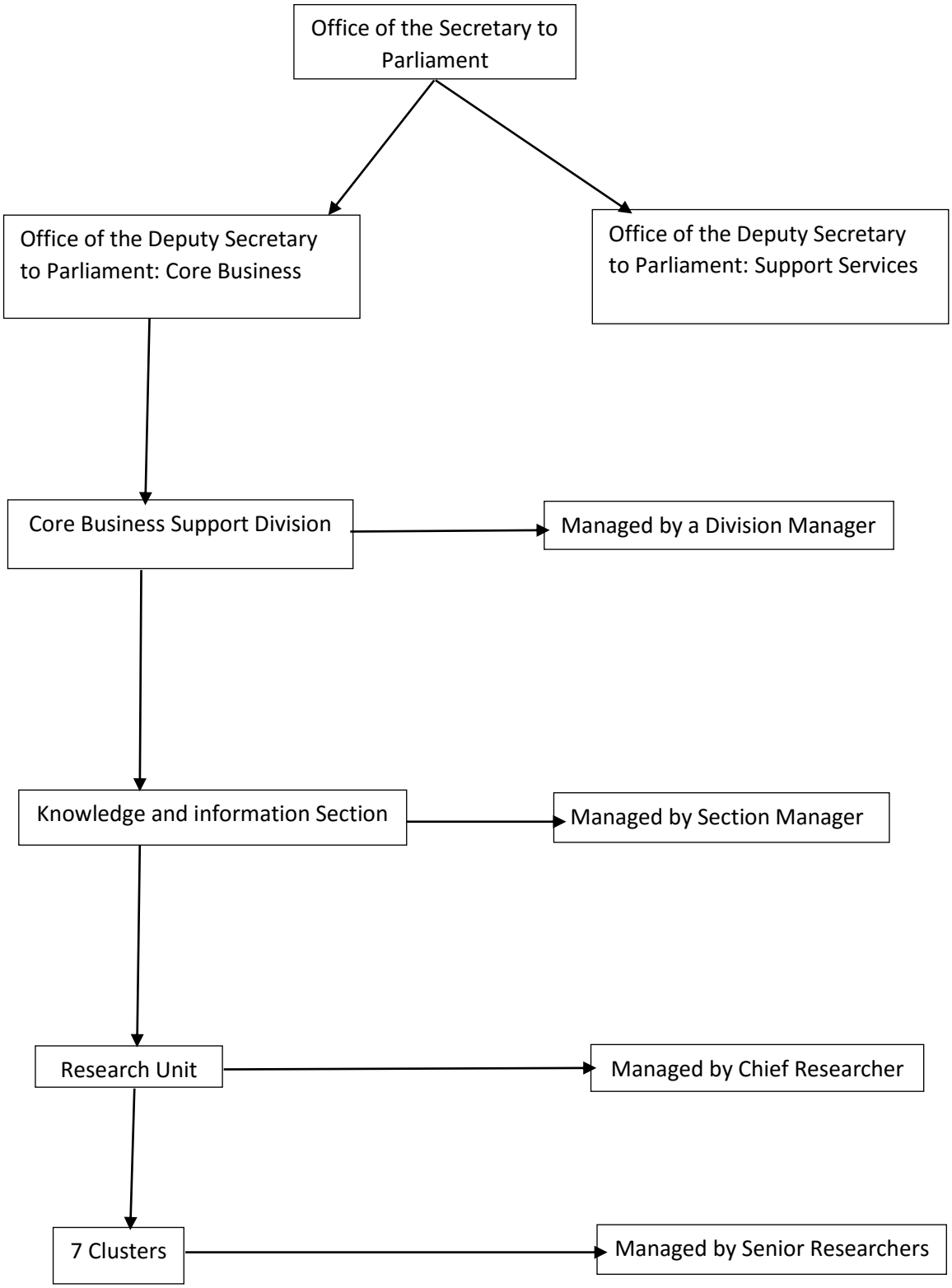

Figure 4.1 Graphical representation of the structure of Parliament of the RSA

4.4 THE STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH UNIT

The Research Unit is managed by a Chief Researcher and it has seven clusters that are managed by Senior Researchers. The clusters are as follows:

- Social and Public Services;
- Finance and Public Accounts;
- Social Vulnerable Groups and Private Members' Legislative Proposals;
- Trade and Economic Affairs;
- Education and Recreation;
- Intergovernmental and Resource Matters; and
- Justice, Security and Constitutional Affairs.

The demographics of the researchers in the Research Unit are as follows:

Table 4.1: Demographic characteristics of researchers in the Research Unit

Cluster	Total	Gender		Race			
		Female	Male	Black	Indian	Coloured	White
Social and Public Services	8	3	5	5	1	1	1
Finance and Public Accounts	6	3	3	5	0	1	0
Socially Vulnerable Groups and Members Legislative Proposals	3	3	0	0	0	2	1
Trade and Economic Affairs	11	3	8	8	1	1	1
Education and Recreation	4	2	2	3	0	1	0
Intergovernmental and Resource Matters	8	3	5	8	0	0	0
Justice, Security and Constitutional Affairs	6	3	3	2	0	1	3
Total	**46**	**20**	**26**	**31**	**2**	**7**	**6**

4.5 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES IN THE RESEARCH UNIT

It is standard practice that all employees in Parliament sign a performance contract every year. Along with the contract, employees submit their Performance Development Plans (PDP). The PDPs would have programmes that employees think

would capacitate functioning in their line of work. For example, administrators mainly choose secretariat-related programmes, like Microsoft Word or Microsoft Excel; while researchers choose programmes that would enhance their research skills, such as, for example, Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation and Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. Some researchers embark on postgraduate studies, either a Master's degree or a doctorate.

Training is needed in organisations. Thang, Quang and Buyens (2010: 28) state that there are few people who come to work with the complete knowledge of the job and experience is necessary to execute properly the tasks, or the assigned job. It is necessary for the Research Unit to ensure that they recruit people with the requisite skills that would be able to conduct research for Parliament. However, the focus is largely on the qualification, and not on the modules that one did in the qualification. For example, the Research Unit may need a researcher with a Master's degree in Education degree (M.Ed), and not specify whether the focus of study should be science education or language education.

If a person with a focus on language education is appointed, that person may struggle if he needs to do research in either science or mathematics education. All the researchers would, at a certain stage, be expected to analyse a Bill. Most researchers, who are either pure science graduates, or pure commerce graduates, had not dealt with that in their studies. Hence, training is needed.

Responding to some of the training needs, the Research Unit at times holds in-house training programmes. In-house training programmes are cheap and they keep employees in the workplace; and employees can then be easily accessible to the employer. These types of training are helpful since they equip researchers with the necessary technical skills to do their work. It is also vital that researchers understand that they work in a political environment and they need to be impartial at all times. Furthermore, they need to have emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills and to know their sectors well. In this regard, training becomes necessary in organisations, in order to modify knowledge and skills, as well as the behaviour of its employees (Erasmus, Loedolff, Mda & Nel, 2010: 2).

Parliament has a policy for learning and development. This policy is applicable equally to all employees of Parliament. The objectives of the learning and development policy are (Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, 2009):

- To ensure that employees receive appropriate learning and development to support them in their current roles, and to cater for their personal development.
- To enable employees to improve their knowledge – for their own benefit, and for the benefit of Parliament – by obtaining the necessary educational qualifications.

Parliament funds three types of training for its employees; and these are (Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, 2009):

- Training unique to Parliament, but not limited to the legislative process, the constitutional framework, the core business of Parliament and the work of the Committees.
- Training directed towards the general development of employees, based on the strategic objectives of Parliament.
- Exchange and/or induction.

These types of training are of critical importance to researchers as they enable researchers to hone their skills in the changing world. As the sectors evolve, training becomes essential, in order to become fully aware of the innovations in the sectors. Hence, the Research Unit at times organises refresher courses or workshops for the researchers dealing with legislation and other Parliament related work.

According to the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa (2009), learning and the development of employees should be informed by three key areas, namely:

- The needs of an employee to perform his/her job thoroughly.
- The needs arising from internal and external pressures, for example, the enactment of legislation, in order to prepare employees for changing responsibilities and duties.
- The employees' career and personal development.

The Learning and Development Policy of Parliament requires employees to identify their competency gaps, and to seek opportunities to upgrade their skills and the knowledge required in their current position; and to consider upgrading their formal qualification through further studies to prepare for any future responsibilities.

Parliament has a performance management policy, which outlines the measures that must be taken to ensure high performance from the employees. The measures are in line with the Learning and Development Policy, which allows for training and development of employees, according to the employees' need to improve their performance in their jobs.

4.6 POLICY PROCEDURE ON TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN PARLIAMENT AND IN THE RESEARCH UNIT

The policy procedure on training and development in Parliament unambiguously states that the training of all employees in Parliament should be based on their PDPs developed during the performance management process (POSA, 2009). Training interventions are co-ordinated by the Training and Development Unit after receiving the PDPs of the employees. The relevant Unit managers are expected to source the proposals and quotations from the service providers and to submit them to the Training and Development Unit for further processing. Once training has been approved, the Training and Development Unit has to facilitate such training by making the necessary arrangements (POSA, 2009).

The Research Unit has Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). These have a section on training. The training procedure in the Research Unit is aligned to the Parliament training procedure (POSA, 2009). The SOP states an employee can identify the type of training they want to attend, and provide information to the line manager. Training can be offered either inside or outside Parliament. The type of training that is allowed, according to the policy procedure comprises: on-site training, at regional level through exchange programmes, at international level through exchange with other Parliaments, and off-site through external consultants (POSA, 2009).

Parliament offers the following programmes: orientation programmes, on-the-job training, mentoring, coaching, short courses, refresher courses, part-time studies, learnerships, seminars, conferences and workshops (POSA, 2009). However, the policy merely lists the aforementioned programmes; but it is silent on the procedure that must be followed when training is planned; and also, it does not specify the frequency of training in a financial year.

4.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter has dealt with the background to the case study for this research, which is the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa and the structure of the Research Unit. The work done by the researchers in Parliament to enable MPs to succeed in their work has also been discussed. Lastly, the Learning and Development Policy of Parliament was discussed. The following deductions are made from this background: Parliament employs researchers, according to the needs of the Committee of Parliament and it puts them in clusters (cf. Table 4.1). Parliament recognises that employees need training from time to time and it offers a plethora of training for its employees, in order to improve their skills.

There is a policy on training and development, which is used by Parliament for employee training; and it is not prescriptive on the frequency of training per employee per year. Despite the legislation and policies, there still seems to be misalignment with its implementation in the Unit. This will be one of the issues under investigation in this research. The next chapter will deal with the research design and the methodology.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter explored the background to the case on which this research is based. This chapter is about the research methodology; and it deals with the research paradigm, the quantitative and qualitative research approaches, research design (survey and case study designs), sample and sampling procedures, data-collection methods and tools, the data-analysis technique, the trustworthiness of the research and the ethical considerations.

5.2 THE RESEARCH PARADIGM

It is important for research to be conducted within a specific paradigm (De Vos & Strydom, 2011: 41). A research paradigm refers to the philosophy behind the research process; and it must suit the purpose of the research. According to Jonker and Pennink (in Wahyuni, 2012: 69), it serves as a framework and guides the behaviour of the researcher. De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport (2011: 513) define a paradigm as "a framework, viewpoint or worldview based on people's philosophies and assumptions about the social world and the nature of knowledge". Guba and Denzin (1994: 108) state that "*inquiry paradigms define for the inquirer what they are about, and what falls within and outside the limits of legitimate enquiry".* Guba and Denzin (1994: 108) have selected an order they believe reflects a logical primacy as follows: the ontological question, the epistemological question and the methodological question.

The ontological question is about the form and nature of reality. The epistemological question is about the nature of the relationship between the knower and the would-be knower, as well as what can be known. The methodological question is about how the enquirer can go about finding out what he believes can be known.

The interpretation of the situation by the respondents on the phenomenon under investigation is key (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 28); hence, the researcher deemed the interpretivist paradigm to be the most suitable paradigm for this research project.

The interpretivist paradigm seeks to understand the subjective world of human experience; and it focuses on action (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000: 22). Interpretivism depicts the social world as a plurality of realities that are continuously created by people (Schulze & Kamper, 2012: 131; Perl & Noldon, 2000: 48). Interpretivism is ideal when a researcher wants to understand a social situation from the perspective of the participants, as this research seeks to do.

5.3 RESEARCH APPROACH: THE MIXED-METHOD APPROACH

The study used a mixed-method approach, which allows for the use of quantitative and qualitative research approaches complementarily. These two approaches were utilised sequentially, starting with the quantitative, and followed by the qualitative approach. The study was both descriptive and exploratory.

5.3.1 The Quantitative research method

The quantitative research approach quantifies constructs; and it uses quantitative measurement (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 49). The quantitative method relies on numerical data; and it uses a statistical procedure to analyse and draw conclusions from the data (Fouché & Delport, 2011: 63). Kumar (2005, in Fouché and Delport, 2011: 63) views the qualitative research approach as a structured approach, which is more appropriate for determining the extent of a phenomenon, and also for explaining the relationships between the variables. The quantitative research approach assumes that there is an objective way of arriving at generalisation; and it is value free. The data collected by the questionnaires were coded and entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis. Tables were produced with frequencies and percentages to show the preferences of the respondents for the type of training, the satisfaction levels of the employees on the training provided, and its effectiveness.

5.3.1.1 Descriptive

Babbie and Mouton (2001: 271) state that quantitative researchers have always been primarily interested in describing the action of the research participant. A descriptive study provides a detailed description of the phenomenon under investigation (Fouché & de Vos, 2011: 96). The researcher was able to describe the lived experiences of the researchers after collecting the empirical data. The description was textual narrative, as may be inferred from the numerical data that were collected by the questionnaire (cf. 5.3.1).

5.3.2 The qualitative research method

The primary goal of qualitative studies is to describe and understand a phenomenon (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 270), and to attempt to obtain insights into particular processes and practices that exist within a specific location and context (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). In a qualitative study, a researcher becomes more than just a participant observer; and he tries to put himself in the shoes of the people he is studying (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 271), so as to study human actions from the insider perspective (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 53).

Through this approach, the researcher was able to examine the experiences of the respondents, and to discover their understanding of the use of performance development plans in informing their training and developmental needs. The qualitative data were collected by means of semi-structured interviews. Trends and themes were produced from the data; and a comparative method of data analysis, to analyse the interview data, was used. Coding and categorisation of the data was performed and patterns and themes were produced.

5.3.2.1 Exploratory

The goal of qualitative research is defined as describing and understanding (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 53). Exploratory study is conducted, in order to gain insight into a situation or phenomenon (Fouché & de Vos, 2011: 95; Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 79).

The exploratory nature of the research enabled the researcher to gain insight into what researchers in the Research Unit regarded as challenges around training and development and performance management in Parliament. Miles and Huberman (1994) in Brown (2013: 161) argue that "an exploratory, qualitative approach has proven to be a useful way to study sensitive opinions, attitudes, preferences, and the behaviours of individuals, particularly when the opinions are reflections of larger underlying attitudinal constructs".

The exploratory nature of the research enabled the researcher not only to share in the understanding and perceptions of the researcher as participants in the study, but also to explore and build knowledge on how they understand the usage of performance development plans to inform their training needs. In view of the fact that this study had inherent values and attitudes involved, it was essential for an exploratory approach for the researcher to interact with the respondents. The interaction meant that the researcher became an integral part of the research process in the qualitative approach (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 271). The data were collected by means of interviews; and they were analysed thematically (cf. 5.3.2).

5.4 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is a plan or blueprint, in terms of which a study is conducted (Fouché & de Vos, 2005:132); and it is governed by the notion of fitness-for-purpose (Cohen, Marion & Morrison, 200: 73). For this reason, the researcher used both survey and case study design sequentially.

5.4.1 Case study designs

The researcher used a case study design in this study; as it allowed the researcher to explore the phenomenon under investigation in considerable detail (Creswell, 2007 in Fouché & Schurink, 2011: 321). Stake (2005: 443) says that case studies are a common way to do a qualitative inquiry. A case study provides a researcher with an opportunity to interact with real people in real situations, in order to gain

more in-depth knowledge about the phenomenon under investigation (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000: 182; Babbie and Mouton, 2001: 74). A case study focuses on gaining more understanding about the situation; and it seeks to understand the perceptions of the actors (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000: 182; Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 281).

Stake (2005: 445 – 446) identified three types of case studies. Firstly, if a study is done, in order to understand a particular case, that study has an intrinsic interest. Secondly, if a study is undertaken to provide insight into an issue, it is an instrumental case study. Thirdly, if a researcher undertakes multiple cases and studies them jointly, these then become a multiple-case study. Stakes (2005: 447) says that it is not easy to fit a case study into one type of case study since a case study may fit into two categories. This was also true for this study; as both intrinsic and instrumental-case studies were fitting; since the researcher wanted to understand a particular case – and also to acquire insight into the case. Researchers in the Research Unit and a Unit representative were included in the study since they have rich information of the case under study.

5.5 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING

Choosing a study sample is an important step in any research project; since it is rarely practical, efficient or ethical to study whole populations. In this study, the researcher used all the 46 researchers from the Research Unit for the survey and he purposefully chose 10 respondents from the 46 for follow-up interviews. The 10 respondents were adequate for the interviews as Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000: 93) as well as Marshall (1996: 523) state that samples of qualitative research tend to be small as this enables the researcher to extract thick rich data. However, the data should not be too small; as it may be difficult to achieve data saturation, theoretical saturation or information redundancy (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007: 242).

In the qualitative stage of the research, non-probability purposive sampling was used. In non-probability purposive sampling, the researcher handpicks the respondents on the basis of their typicality (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000: 102).

According to Marshall (1996: 523), in purposive sampling "the researcher actively selects the most productive sample to answer the research question". The researcher selected the respondents, in order to satisfy the specific needs of the research. The researcher selected 10 researchers, as respondents from the 46 respondents for the qualitative stage, in order to delve more deeply into the findings from the questionnaires. A Unit representative was also interviewed, in order to get the management's perspective on the issue under investigation.

5.5.1 Survey

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2013: 189), survey research involves acquiring information about one or more groups of people. In this research, the researcher required information about one group of people, which are researchers in Parliament of South Africa. Apparently, surveys are used to understand the characteristics, opinions, attitudes or previous experiences of the group (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013: 189). The researcher wanted to understand the experiences of the respondents of the training and development's relation to personal development plans in the Research Unit. The ultimate goal of a survey is to learn about a large population; and this makes it easier to generalise. Surveys are done either by face-to-face interviews or by written questionnaires.

All the researchers in the Research Unit were surveyed, so that the researcher would be able to generalise on the findings, and also to get everyone's view and understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The survey was conducted by distributing questionnaires to all the researchers (46) in the Research Unit.

5.6 THE RESEARCH METHOD

5.6.1 Access to participants and to the research site

The researcher sought permission to conduct the research from the Secretary to Parliament through the Division Manager (*See Appendix A: Request to conduct*

research document). The Secretary to Parliament serves as *gatekeeper* in the institution. The purpose of seeking the permission of the Secretary to Parliament and the Research Unit Manager was to ensure that the researcher gets access to the site and to the research participants. Only once the permission had been granted, was it possible that the researcher could start with the research process *(See Appendix B: Research Agreement*).

It was imperative that the researcher obtained permission from the gatekeepers, in order for them to remove any obstacles that might have existed in the research from the target participants' perspective.

5.6.2 Data-Collection instruments

- *Questionnaires*

The researcher used a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews to gather the data from the respondents. The questionnaire was chosen because it enabled the researcher to collect the data from a large sample. The researcher distributed the questionnaire to all the researchers in the Research Unit. A questionnaire has an advantage of being an economic instrument for collecting the data. Questionnaires were emailed to all the respondents and the researcher spoke telephonically to the respondents – explaining the purpose of the research. One of the disadvantages of a questionnaire is its low return rate. All the respondents who returned the questionnaire were thanked by the researcher. The population was 46, and 36 respondents returned their questionnaires; and that is a 78.3% return rate. (*See Appendix C for the questionnaire).*

- Semi-structured interviews

Interviews are the predominant mode of data collection in qualitative research (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 289; Greeff, 2011: 342). The researcher used semi-structured interviews on the Unit representative and the 10 purposely chosen respondents, from the 46 that were surveyed; since semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to gain a detailed picture of the participants' beliefs about the phenomenon under investigation (Greeff, 2011: 351). According to Greeff (2011: 351), semi-structured interviews give both the researcher and the participants a degree of flexibility; and according to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009: 30), "the

interviewer encourages respondents to describe as precisely as possible what they experience and feel and how they act".

According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009: 27), semi-structured interviews try to understand the everyday lived world from the perspectives of the respondents. Semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to probe and to get clarity and also to follow-up on any emerging trends during the interview; and in return, the participants were able to describe their lived experiences. It is important for the interviewer to cover both the facts and the meaning at the same time (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009: 30).

The interviews were conducted in Parliament, which was a convenient place for the respondents as this is their place of work. On average, each interview lasted approximately 50 minutes. The interviews were tape-recorded and then transcribed verbatim. Permission to tape-record the conversations was obtained from the respondents. Tape-recording the interviews ensures the trustworthiness of the results. Miles and Huberman (1994) cited in Brown (2013: 162) suggest that "the mechanical recording of the data and the verbatim accounts that are used when collecting the data are useful to ensure the trustworthiness of the results".

When the researcher was satisfied that the research question was answered, he ended the interviews and thanked the respondents. (*See Appendix D: for interview questions and the script of the researchers; and Appendix E: for the interview questions and the script of the Unit representative*).

5.7 DATA-ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE

The data obtained from the questionnaire were analysed by using simple descriptive statistical methods. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse the data.

For the qualitative data, the researcher used a comparative method of data analysis to analyse the interview data. The comparative method of data analysis involves coding and categorising the patterns and themes, which emerged from the interview

data (Wahyuni, 2012: 76). The researcher read and reread the scripts so as to ensure that he understood exactly what each respondent had said. After ensuring that the researcher had identified the units of meanings from the interview, it was then that the researcher coded the units of meaning and put them into themes (categorisation). The themes are presented in Chapter 6, supported by the verbatim responses from the interviewees.

5.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS: MEASURES TO ENSURE ITS APPLICATION

This study used both a quantitative and qualitative approach. To evaluate the quality of this research, the following concepts were utilised (Wahyuni, 2012: 77; Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 277-278; De Vos, 2005: 346-347): "credibility, which parallels internal validity; transferability, which resembles external validity; dependability, which parallels reliability; and confirmability, which resembles objectivity".

The researcher had an obligation to maintain trustworthiness throughout the study. Therefore, measures to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings guided this research. In an effort to achieve this, the researcher opted to follow Lincoln and Guba's model (1985) of trustworthiness, as depicted in Schurink, Fouché and De Vos (2011: 419 - 421) and Babbie and Mouton (2001: 276 – 278). In their model, Lincoln and Guba (1985), used the criterion for good qualitative research as found in the notion of trustworthiness: that is the neutrality of its findings (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 276). The four measures adopted from the model in this study were the following: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Schurink et al', 2011: 276 – 178; Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 419 – 421).

5.8.1 Credibility: the truth-value

The researcher had to ensure that there was truth-value in the data collection and analytical process. The researcher ensured the truth-value of the study by debriefing the participants, and also by doing member checking (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 276; Schurink et al., 2011: 420).

The aim of credibility, as the truth-value, is to show that the research is conducted in a manner that demonstrates that the contributors to the problem are accurately identified and described. As the researcher was conducting the research in an area where he also works, this made it possible to have prolonged engagement with the respondents (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 277).

5.8.2 Transferability: The applicability of the findings

Transferability refers to the extent that the findings can be applied in other contexts, or with other respondents (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 277; Schurink et al., 2011: 420). The researcher used purposive sampling, which allowed him to get specific information from a specific sample. Thick description of the findings, which gave sufficient description to be able to compare the findings with those from other contexts, was utilised by the researcher (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 277).

5.8.3 Dependability: consistency of the findings

Dependability asks a question: If the research were to be repeated with the same respondents or similar respondents in a similar context, would it yield the same or similar results (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 278). In order to have dependability, first there should be credibility (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 278). The researcher ensured that the findings were well documented, to ensure their dependability.

5.8.4 Confirmability: Objectivity/neutrality of the findings

Confirmability is the degree to which the findings are free from the bias of the researcher (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 278). The researcher guaranteed confirmability by recording the interviews, in order to get accurate raw data. This ensured that the findings could be confirmed by another researcher; and that analysis would only be on the data, as recorded, and on nothing else.

5.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The relevant ethical issues were observed in this research. The following form part of the ethical issues observed.

5.9.1 Informed consent

The researcher made sure that he obtained permission to conduct the research by informing the gatekeepers about the purpose of the research. The participants were informed about the purpose of the research; and they participated voluntarily. Hakim (in Strydom, 2011: 117) states that informed consent becomes a necessary condition, rather than a luxury or an impediment.

5.9.2 Deception of the respondents

The true purpose of the research was revealed from the start; as the respondents were informed of the purpose of the research. The respondents were not enticed by any incentives for their participation in the research.

5.9.3 Violation of privacy/confidentiality

The confidentiality of all the participants was assured by having them respond anonymously, and by using coded themes and pseudonyms. Names were not used when reporting the findings. All the participants of the study participated voluntarily.

5.10 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the research design and the methodology of the study were discussed in some detail. The researcher also explained the reasons for choosing the research design and the methodology in this study. The exploratory, descriptive qualitative approach was chosen, in order to understand the phenomenon under investigation within a natural setting. The study examined the impact of training and

the development of the performance of the researchers in the Research Unit. This impact was investigated by assessing the alignment of personal-development plans to the training provided by Parliament to the Research Unit. Each respondent was treated as a unit of analysis.

Both questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were utilised to collect the data. The measures to ensure ethics in the research and the trustworthiness of the findings were taken into consideration. The next chapter focuses on data interpretation and an analysis of the results.

CHAPTER 6: PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed the research methodology that was used in this study in detail. The research paradigm, the quantitative and qualitative research approaches, research design (survey and case study designs), sample and sampling procedures, data-collection methods and tools and the data-analysis technique were discussed.

This chapter presents the analysis, interpretation, discussion and the findings of the study. The chapter, however, starts with the research method that was used to collect the data; and it also explains the rationale in choosing the research method utilised. The details of the data-collection process are fully explained, as well as the data-collection tools. The data-analysis procedure is well documented. The findings are then presented, together with the statistically significant association between some of the variables.

6.2 SPECIFIC RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study investigated seven specific questions. Two of these questions focused on the skills that the researchers in the Research Unit have, or those they still need to acquire. One question focused on the type of training that researchers in the Research Unit need; while the other focused on the relationship between training, the needs of the employees and their current PDPs, as well as the skills gap that was identified. The last two questions focused on the satisfaction level of the employees in the Research Unit on training provided and the factors that the Research Unit needs to take into consideration when identifying the training needs and programmes for research staff.

The specific research questions were as follows:

Research question 1: What skills do researchers in the Research Unit have?

Research question 2: What skills do researchers in the Research Unit need?

Research question 3: What type of training do the researchers in the Research Unit need?

Research question 4: What training needs do current PDPs reflect, when compared with the skills gaps identified?

Research question 5: What are the views of researchers on the training and development programmes offered by the Research Unit?

Research question 6: What is the satisfaction level of the employees in the Research Unit as regards the training provided?

Research question 7: What are the factors that the Research Unit should take into consideration when identifying the training needs and the programmes for the research staff?

6.3 STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

The researcher used simple descriptive statistical methods; and the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) programme was used to analyse the data. All the variables were pre-coded to be able to enter them into the SPSS programme. The variables were assigned numerical codes, in order to facilitate the statistical analysis. The data were checked; then the codes were entered into the SPSS programme, and the data cleaning was done. Thereafter, the appropriate statistical procedures were executed.

The researcher did a frequency count in relation to the demographic characteristics of the sample, in order to determine the distribution of gender, race, the highest level of educational qualifications, the experience of the employees and the qualifications that some employees are still pursuing. A frequency count was also done relating to the type of training preferred by the employees, the satisfaction levels of the employees on the training provided to the employees in the Research Unit, and the relationship between the training provided and the PDPs of the employees.

The outcomes of all the afore-mentioned analyses are well documented in the sections below.

6.4 THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Tables 6.1a, 6.1b, 6.1c, 6.1d and 6.1e. Table 6.1f displays the relation between the experiences of the respondents in the Research Unit (Parliament) and their current studies. A total of 36 employees in the Research Unit participated in the study.

Table 6.1a: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Gender characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender:		
Male	21	58.3
Female	15	41.7
Total	36	100.0

Table 6.1b: Racial groups

Racial characteristics	Frequency	Per cent
Racial groups		
Black	24	66.6
Coloured	5	13.9
Indian	1	2.8
White	6	16.7
Total	36	100.0

Table 6.1c: Qualification characteristics of the respondents

Qualification characteristics	Frequency	Per cent
Honours	10	27.8
Masters	23	63.9
PhD	3	8.3
Total	36	100.0

Table 6.1d: Current studies of the respondents

Current studies characteristics	Frequency	Per cent
Not studying	23	63.9
Short Courses	1	2.8
Masters	7	19.4
PhD	5	13.9
Total	36	100.0

Table 6.1e: Experiences of the respondents

Experience characteristics	Frequency	Per cent
No. of years in the RU		
Less than a year	1	2.8
Between 1 and 5 years	17	47.2
More than 5 years	18	50
Total	36	100.0

The statistics show that there were more males (21) than females (15) who responded in this study. The racial spread of the respondents comprised 24 Blacks, five (5) Coloureds, six (6) Whites and one (1) Indian. The qualification levels of the respondents were as follows: three of the respondents have Honours' degrees; 23 respondents have a Master's degree; while 3 have Doctorates. Some of the respondents were engaged in studies. However, 23 were not studying. One respondent is doing a short course; seven of the respondents are studying towards a Master's degree and five (5) of the respondents are studying towards PhDs.

Table 6.1f: Relation between Experience of respondents and their current studies

	Current Studies				
Experience	**Masters**	**None**	**PhD**	**Short Course**	**Grand Total**
1 - 5 years	2	11	4	0	17
Less than a year	0	0	0	1	1
More than 5 years	5	12	1	0	18
Grand Total	**7**	**23**	**5**	**1**	**36**

The data indicate that 36.1% (13 out of 36) of the respondents are studying towards different qualifications. One of the respondents who has been in Parliament for less than a year is doing a short course; while the other respondents are pursuing postgraduate qualifications. Two of the four respondents who have been in Parliament between one and five years are studying towards Master's and doctoral degrees, respectively; while 11 are not studying. Five respondents, who have been in Parliament for more than five years are studying towards Master's degrees; and one is doing a Doctorate.

Twelve (12) respondents, who have been in Parliament more than five years, are not currently studying. In total the number of respondents who are not studying is 23.

6.5 THE DATA PRESENTATION

6.5.1 Presentation of the quantitative data

In this section, the data are presented, according to the research question. However, the first two questions will be addressed later in the qualitative section of the data presentation. The items or questions in the questionnaires were developed by using the literature that was reviewed in Chapter 2 of the study, as well as the training requirements and policy of Parliament and the Research Unit (cf. Chapter 4).

a. **Research question 3**: What type of training do the researchers in the Research Unit need?

Table 6.2 shows the proportion of respondents who agreed, were neutral or disagreed with various items in relation to the training provided by the Research Unit.

Table 6.2: Types of training attended by staff over the years

Items	Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
We attend training once a quarter	0	0	5	13.9	31	86.1	36	100
We attend training once in six months	2	5.5	6	16.7	28	77.8	36	100
We attended training once a year	11	30.6	9	25	16	44.4	36	100
Training is always given a sufficient duration	9	25	10	27.8	17	47.2	36	100
Training is always well planned	8	22.2	9	25	19	52.8	36	100
I prefer on-the-job training	20	55.6	12	33.3	4	10.3	36	100
I prefer out-of-the job training	16	44.4	13	36.1	7	19.4	36	100
In the last two years, I have attended two internal training programmes	21	58.3	2	5.5	13	36.1	36	100
In the last two years, I have attended two external training programmes	29	81	4	10.3	3	8.3	36	100

The Research Unit does offer training to the researchers in the Unit. The Policy is silent on the frequency or the regularity of training in a financial year. The question on the frequency of training was in the questionnaire; and various responses were given, as written below. The data show that the Research Unit does not hold quarterly training programmes in response to quarterly performance reviews, as suggested in the literature in Chapter 2 (Armstrong, 1994: 41). Consequently, 31 (86.1%) out of the 36 respondents disagreed that they ever attended training per quarter; while 13.9% were not sure. Only 2 (5.5%) agreed that they attended training once in six months; while 28 (77.8%) disagreed that they attended training in six months; and 5.5% were not sure.

Eleven (30.6%) declared that they attended training once a year; but 44.4% did not attend training even once a year. The preference of the type of training by the respondents differed. Some preferred on-the-job training (55.6%); while others

preferred off-the-job training (44.4%). The respondents have attended both internal training programmes in the last two years (58.3%) and two external training programmes in the last two years (81%). Only eight (8) respondents agreed that training was always well planned; while nine (9) agreed that the training is given sufficient duration. Most respondents disagreed that training is always well-planned (52.8%) and that training is given sufficient duration (47.2%).

b. **Research question 4:** What training needs do current PDPs reflect compared to the skills gap identified?

Table 6.3 below illustrates whether the training offered to employees is in line with their development needs, or not.

Table 6.3: Training needs in relation to the performance and PDPs of the respondents

Items	**Agree**		**Neutral**		**Disagree**		**Total**	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Training is always consistent with the needs of the employees	5	13.9	13	36.1	18	50	36	100
The training that I have attended in the last two years was relevant to my work	19	52.8	10	27.8	7	19.4	36	100
Training is always useful in my line of work	17	47.2	13	36.1	6	16.7	36	100
Training is done on the basis of development needs	7	19.4	13	36.1	16	44.4	36	100
Training offered is always linked to my PDP	4	11.1	12	33.3	20	55.6	36	100
Training always fills the gaps revealed by the Performance Management Development System (PMDS)	4	11.1	10	27.8	22	61.1	36	100
Our performance is always taken into consideration when training is put together	3	8.3	14	38.9	19	52.8	36	100
Training is linked to the business strategy of the organisation	10	27.8	13	36.1	13	33.3	36	100

The policy does not state how often training should be held in a financial year. Thus, the regularity of training may depend on the need and the availability of resources. Although the Research Unit offers training to its employees, 50% of the respondents disagree that such training is always consistent with their needs; while 13.9% agreed; and 36.1% were not sure whether the training offered was consistent with their needs. As many as 52.8% of the respondents agreed that the training that they had attended in the last two years was relevant to their work; but 19.4% disagreed; whereas 27.8% were not sure. A total of 47.2% admitted that the training was useful to their line of work; but 16.7% disagreed; and 36.1% were not sure.

A majority of the respondents (44.4%) disagreed that training was done on the basis of the developmental needs, and 19.4% agreed; while 36.1% were not sure. As many as 55.6% of the respondents stated that the training offered was not always linked to their PDPs, and only 11.1% agreed; while 33.3% were not sure. Most of the respondents (61.1%) disagreed that the training fills the gaps revealed by the Performance Management Development System (PMDS); while only 11.1% agreed; and 27.8% were not sure. A majority of the respondents (52.8%) disagreed that their performance was always taken into consideration when training is put together; while only 8.3% agreed; and 38.9% were neutral.

The number of respondents who agreed (27.8%) that training is linked to the business strategy of the organisation was almost equal to the number of respondents who disagreed (33.3%); and 36.1% were not sure whether the training was linked, in any way, to the business strategy of the organisation.

c. **Research question 6:** What are the satisfaction levels of the employees in the Research Unit on the training provided?

Table 6.4: Satisfaction levels of respondents on the training provided by the Research Unit

Items	Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Training is helpful for personal growth	7	19	12	33	17	47	36	100
Our training is of a high standard	7	19	16	44	13	36	36	100
I like attending training	23	64	6	17	7	19	36	100
Training increases my level of motivation	20	56	7	19	9	25	36	100
Training makes me do my work with more enthusiasm	16	44	11	31	9	25	36	100
Training increases my productivity and performance	16	44	12	33	8	22	36	100
The attitude of the employees has been improved by training	6	17	21	58	9	25	36	100
Training has caused the employees to become more self-reliant	9	25	19	53	8	22	36	100
I am satisfied with the effectiveness of the training programmes	10	28	13	36	13	36	36	100
Training has made me to be more committed in my work	5	14	18	50	13	36	36	100

According to 47% of the respondents, training was not helpful for their personal growth; but 19% stated that training is helpful to their personal growth. A majority of the respondents (44%) were not sure whether training provided is of a high standard and 36% disagreed that training provided is of high standard. Only 15 agreed that they were provided with training of a high standard. Most respondents (64%) liked attending training; but 19% did not like attending training; and 17% were not sure.

According to 56% of the respondents, training increases their level of motivation; while 25% disagreed; and 19% were not sure.

The number of respondents who agreed that training makes them perform their work with more enthusiasm comprised 44%; while those who disagreed amounted to 25%; and 31% were not sure. A majority (44%) of the respondents agreed that training increases their productivity and performance, while 22% disagree and 33% were not sure. A total of 58% of the respondents were not sure whether their attitude had improved; while 17% of the respondents agreed; and 25% disagreed. Training has rendered 25% of the respondents self-reliant; but 22% disagree; while 53% were not sure. Only 28% of the respondents were satisfied with the effectiveness of the training programmes; while 36% were not satisfied; and another 36% were not sure. Most of the respondents (50%) were not sure whether training had made them more committed in their work; while 36% disagreed; and only 14% agreed.

6.5.2 Presentation of the qualitative data

a. Skills that researchers have in the Research Unit

Table 6.5: Skills that researchers have and skills they still need to be trained in

SKILLS THEY HAVE	SKILLS THEY NEED
• Report writing	• Appropriation skills
• Data analysis	• Advanced computer training
• Interviewing	• Analysis of budget and financial management
• Surveying	• Software used to analyse the data (SPSS and STATA)
• Research methodology	• Advanced-project management
• Documentary reviewing	• Monitoring and evaluation
• Presentation skills (PowerPoint)	• Public financial analysis
• Basic Project Management	• Strategic management
• Qualitative analysis	• Advanced research

• Planning	• Analysis of legislation
• Collecting, recording and organising the data (data cleaning)	• Policy formulation and policy review
• Interpreting the data	• Impact assessment
• Project design	• Data-base skills
• Problem analysis	• Advanced excel
• Research proposal writing	• Sector-specific training
	• Socio-economic modelling
	• Analysis of Bills
	• Policy costing
	• Analysis of Departments' financial statements

Table 6.5 above displays the skills that the researchers have and the skills they still need to acquire, as identified by the participants. The lowest qualification that researchers have is an Honours' degree. Ten employees in the sample have Honours' degrees; 23 have Masters; while three have Doctorates. The Unit representative thinks that it is important for researchers to have academic research skills, which they have, according to their qualifications; and they give a researcher the basics for conducting research. However, a researcher needs to understand the context that Parliament is a political environment and the people that a researcher works with, including MPs, may have different views. The response below is from the Unit representative.

> *"You see academic skills are your basics; but there are other skills that you need to have when working in Parliament. The one, you must firstly understand your context, the political environment, you must also understand that you are working sometimes with very divergent views, so you need to be somebody who can process these divergent views. Remember, you are serving all parties, and you have to be objective as a staff member, you have got to be professional as a staff member; you also have to be able to synthesize large amounts of information, and present that then to the*

members. Consequently, it requires a knowledge of the sector; and it requires other skillsets from the person; it also requires maturity to work in a sometimes very difficult environment in a sense where you do not have the answers for everything. Sometimes you are not the expert; sometimes you are there to facilitate information flows. And there might be people that you are providing information to, who are more expert than yourself.

So, you have to play different roles at different times…… If you have strengths in some areas; and you have trouble in other areas, your stay here is not going to be very pleasant…Basically, you have to know your sector, so it is a combination of all those things combined".

Responses from the respondents during the interviews indicate that they have a plethora of skills, which are diverse; and to a large extent, they should be able to do their required work, even though it may be at less than the required level. The following responses from the interviews corroborate the list in table 6.5.

Respondent 1:

"I have various research skills, which are both qualitative and quantitative. I also have critical data-analysis skills, and I know how to conduct interviews. I know how to conduct surveys, and I am good in report writing. as well as statistical methods, and also-data analysis."

Respondent 2:

"I am good in legislative analysis, budget analysis, annual report analysis and policy analysis. I prepare background papers for international study tours, for debates and plenaries using my research skills. Using my research skills, I also prepare briefs for international delegates to Parliament, and others, like the Pan African Parliament, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and the European Union sessions. These briefs cover a vast range of topics, which could be on terrorism, cross-border crime, etc."

Respondent 3:

"I work in a policy environment; and our research is always in line with government policies. I have established the following skills for my research: policy review, policy analysis, and policy formulation. It is crucial, in our line of work, to ensure that we understand how to monitor and evaluate the policies of government. Thus, I have knowledge of monitoring and evaluation. I know pretty well how to analyse legislation, and also to do an impact assessment of programmes and the projects of government."

Respondent 4:

"I know how to conceptualise a research project. I know how to conduct an intensive literature review and proposal writing. I am good in data collection, using different research methods and techniques. I know how to do data capturing, data cleaning and data analysis. I do research report write-ups very well; and I am good in presenting and defending research findings. I have published in peer-reviewed academic journals; and I have also mentored new researchers. I review the work of other researchers, as well; and I can conduct a quality assurance on other peers' work".

b. Skills that researchers still require in the Research Unit

Table 6.5 reveals that, although the respondents have a range of skills; they still are lacking in other skills, which are essential for them when doing some of their work. The skills they still need are crucial for them to execute their work and acquiring these skills would add value to their work. The Unit representative is of the opinion that researchers in Parliament have to be multi-skilled; and they have to have knowledge on multiple sectors. The context (Parliament) also plays a big role in how a researcher fits in since the areas that they have to conduct research in are always dynamic and evolving. The Unit representative had this to say:

"Look, researchers are required to do a range of different tasks; they are required to be very multi-skilled; they are required to have knowledge of multiple sectors here in Parliament. Therefore, while they are researchers for an area, that area is

broad. For me, that is the first difficulty. In other parliaments, and in the private sector, where we require one person to do something, they have broken down those tasks into separate other areas. For example, trade and industry, I have one person (researcher); and that person has to cover various areas (industrial development, small business development, competition issues, etc...There are about 6 to 7 areas.) And even within those areas, they can be broken down. You have trade, bilaterals, multilaterals, international institution. So, that person has to be an expert in all those areas, which is rather unfair. So, it requires staff with multiple skills, some of them being: emotional intelligence (EQ), content knowledge skills, some of them, just personality skills, how to get on with people. Because this place (Parliament) is about people and the interaction of people. If you have strengths in some areas and you have got trouble in other areas, your stay here is not going to be very pleasant. You have to develop skills in all your areas. So, how to get on with people, how do you get on in complex or difficult situations. Basically, you have to know your sector; so, it is all those things combined."

Thus, researchers have to keep abreast in their fields (sectors); and ensure that they provide the correct information. The following responses reveal the type of training the researchers still need, which could make them more efficient in their work.

Respondent 1:

"I really need training on statistical analysis, using either STATA or SPSS. I know that both qualitative and quantitative data can be analysed using certain software; but I do not know which ones; hence, I need this training so much."

Respondent 2:

"As I work in a policy environment, I need to know how to analyse a Bill, and also a cost policy; and also how to do legislative analysis. I also need training on advanced project management, monitoring and evaluation, and also in public financial analysis."

c. The relation between training provided and skills required

In line with the policy of Parliament, which states that employees have to be trained according to their needs, the Research Unit should then offer training to its employees. The Unit representative stated that every year, during the performance appraisal time, they engage researchers on their training needs. This information is then filtered through to the Chief Researcher, in order to compile training programmes. However, the Unit representative conceded that the budget, at times, becomes an impediment for training to be conducted, according to the needs of the researchers. There are also workshops that are held by the Research Unit, which may be viewed by some researchers as not helpful; as they might have attended them previously. His verbatim words were:

> *"We, every year, engage the researchers, what do they view as their training needs, on what they would like to attend for their training. We always ensure that there is a mixture of both academic training and sector-specific training in the form of conferences and workshops. What we then do is filtered through to our Chief Researcher; and a plan for the unit is laid out. Taking into account the budget, then we look at allocating researchers, what they have applied for".*

Sometimes, training offered by the Research Unit is viewed as not that helpful to researchers; since in most cases, it does not address their needs. In their responses during interviews, the respondents unequivocally stated that sometimes training is too general; or at times, it is just sector-specific; and being sector-specific does not cater for all the attendees. Sometimes, the training offered by the Research Unit seems too basic for the attendees, so much so, respondent 6 said:

> *"The Research Unit once booked a legislative analysis course at an institution of higher learning for all the employees in the unit to attend. However, I think it was a mistake for the Research Unit to think that the training was applicable to everyone. For example, people with legal qualifications – and there are researchers with Masters of Law (LLM); so, they do not need basic legislative analysis. For that matter, I did that in my undergraduate qualification. Importantly, the facilitator had no clue on the nature of our work. The facilitator did not even know how parliament functions. The facilitator had no clue of our short time-frames, with which we work. If I had a choice, I would have skipped that training*

and asked to be trained on budget analysis, which is a necessary part of my output".

Sometimes, the training that is provided does meet the employees' expectations; and this corroborates with the Unit representative; as he stated that managers engage researchers on their training needs. Respondent 8 said:

"I attended three trainings; and I am glad to say, that those trainings met my expectations. They dealt with key specific issues that we work with here in Parliament, which are: the costing of the Bill and the budget Review, as well as the Recommendations Report".

Respondent 9 stated unambiguously that training that he had attended had no relation to the work that he does. He further stated that this happens because they are not consulted when the training is planned so they just get told that training will be held on a certain day on a particular topic. His verbatim words were:

"Training is offered sporadically; but even that training is never related to the training I require. To be honest, there is absolutely no relation between the training offered by the Research Unit and the skills I require to perform my duties. Some training offered is sector-based; thus, this makes it irrelevant to the other attendees. I do attend these sessions – even though they may be irrelevant to me – because the unit gets discounted on the fees, based on the number of those who take up the training. It is expensive for the Research Unit to cater for each and every researcher in the unit for training; hence, it conducts group training".

d. Training needs, as reflected in the PDPs, in comparison to the skills gap identified during the performance assessment

All the respondents stated that they sign their performance contracts, along with their PDPs. Their PDPs are in line with the gaps that were revealed by their performance assessments in the previous year. However, not all the courses that they want to be trained on can be achieved within one financial year. Researchers need to be proactive and identify the courses they want to attend, and notify their line managers about them. Then, the prioritisation can be done by the management and the respective researcher would know whether the available funds permit him to attend

the course. There are also training workshops that are organised by the Research Unit, which all the researchers are supposed to attend.

The Unit representative had this to say about the training needs that are reflected in the PDPs of the researchers:

> *"Look, clearly the budget holder is our Manager (Chief Researcher); we have had that discussion with her now, where she has told us, we did not have the funds. Then, we told the clusters that they cannot apply. Then the budgets came through; and we were told that there is a certain amount, you can put in applications. So, one has to choose a good one, which is quite comprehensive; and then one has to do the smaller ones, the free ones. You know what I am trying to say; so, we do prioritise; and we also ask the colleagues, the researchers, to do their prioritisation themselves. So, you choose the one you want to go to, which is a bit pricey; or you want to go to the other one, which is a bit cheaper; but unfortunately, you cannot do both. Therefore, you do have the choice. So, we as the managers do not choose for the researchers. They choose courses themselves".*

However, some of the respondents admitted that their PDPs had not been changed in three years; as those areas they identified were never attended to in terms of training; such that some have stated that the PDP is just a paper exercise as it never addresses the needs of the employees in the Research Unit. Their responses are explicitly written here below.

Respondent 1:

> *"Since 2012, I have written areas in which I need training on my PDP; however, whatever I write on my PDP does not get done. I have now realised that in the RU and in Parliament, as a whole, there is funding for training and development in line with our PDPs; but this is not taken seriously. Every year, when I enquire about the training needs, I am told that there is no funding for training. This then renders the whole PDP exercise useless – and a waste of time and energy".*

Respondent 10 had this to say:

"My PDP has remained unchanged for at least two performance cycles; because none of the training has been provided. I have been requesting in-depth training in areas, such as policy development, monitoring and evaluation. However, these training needs have not yet been fulfilled."

The respondents suggest that there is no correlation between their PDPs and the training provided by the RU; as they fill their PDPs; but the training that is provided does not always agree with their PDPs. Respondent 6 had this to say:

"Although I have consistently written my intended courses to study for my development, there has been no chance to attend them. So, in my view; there is no synergy between the PDPs and the training offered. Our training needs, as employees, are not taken into consideration. I think that most of the time there are inadequate resources for training and development."

e. The impact of training on personal development, as well as on professional development.

Although the respondents attended training in the Unit, there seems to have been very little impact from the training on either their personal or professional development. Nonetheless, some researchers have attended training that had an impact on their professional development. Two respondents had this to say:

Respondent 1:

"The training that I attended had very little impact. In most cases, I am unable to apply the training to my day-to-day work – with the exception of training in budget analysis and the like. If training is provided by in-house facilitators, it becomes more beneficial; as they know our line of work; but the downside in that kind of training does not come with a certificate. So, it becomes difficult to prove competency."

Respondent 2:

"The training I attended on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) has enhanced my skill and understanding of the processes involved in M&E. The training on legislative analysis improved my knowledge on the legislative process; and

also, the budget analysis workshop that I attended had a positive impact on my own analysis of the budget of departments and its entities that the committee oversees".

Some of the respondents suggested that the training that had been attended by the researchers outside Parliament had more impact on their professional development, so much so, that respondent 8 had this to say:

"Apart from budget training, none of the RU-offered training has been helpful or needed in my work. I identified a two-week Research Methods and Development course presented at the University of Cape Town in conjunction with Rutgers University researchers in 2013, which I requested to attend; and I was allowed to do so. The practical nature of this course helped me a great deal in conceptualising and finalising my proactive briefs and also in the LLM thesis that I was busy with at that time".

f. Factors that the Research Unit should take into consideration when identifying the training needs and the programmes for the research staff.

All the respondents unanimously agreed that there are innumerable factors that the Unit needs to take into consideration, when setting up training; and these factors range from considering their PDPs to making use of the results of performance assessment. As far as the researchers are concerned, some of these factors are not taken into consideration; and the responses of the researchers below are a testimony to that.

Respondent 1:

"RU should consider our PDPs, when deciding on our training; or at least, individuals should be consulted before decisions about what training would be considered is taken. Secondly, a few days of training are just not sufficient to address gaps; thus, the time taken for training should also be considered."

Respondent 2:

> *"Before training and development programmes are organised, the RU should make efforts, through individual and organisational appraisals, to identify the training needs. After the training and development programmes have been conducted, an evaluation should be done to ascertain the effectiveness of the programme in line with the needs, which were identified."*

Respondent 3:

> *"The Human Resource Unit in Parliament should become more involved in the training and development of all the staff; and that includes ensuring that the training requested is provided within the timeframes specified. Professional development should be provided; or else, we run the risk of stagnating as researchers."*

Respondent 4:

> *"There is a disjuncture between the Learning and Development Unit and the Human Resource Division with what other Units want, including the RU. Furthermore, there is no recognition of the acquired information by the RU, nor by Parliament; because some of us have acquired more than one level of academic achievement, but that is not considered."*

6.6 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study has explored and described the training processes that have been followed by the Research Unit in the Parliament of South Africa. Central to this discussion, is whether the training has been provided in line with the needs of employees (researchers); and what the factors are that the Research Unit should take into consideration, when putting training programmes together.

6.6.1 Skills of the researchers and their training needs

All the researchers in the Research Unit have a postgraduate qualification, which denotes that they have been taught and learned the research methods during their

time as students. The lowest qualification that the researchers hold is an Honours' degree. A total of 23 (63.9%) respondents in the sample had a Master's degree, and this represents more than half of the sample; and three respondents have a doctorate degree (PhD). However, having a postgraduate qualification does not necessarily mean that a person would know everything about research. To ensure that researchers gain more knowledge about research, some are studying towards further postgraduate qualifications (seven are studying towards Master's degrees and five are studying towards doctorates).

Of these respondents, who have been in Parliament for more than five years, five are studying towards a Master's degree; and one is studying towards a PhD. Of those who have been in Parliament between one and five years, two are studying towards a Master's degree; and four are studying towards a PhD. Hunter (2012: 206) states that studying or training improves work performance. Those who are studying are sponsored (bursary recipients) by Parliament – in line with its policy on learning and development. This policy states that Parliament enables employees to improve their knowledge for their own benefits and for the benefit of Parliament, by obtaining the necessary qualifications. This demonstrates that the researchers understand that they need to enhance their knowledge; in order to be successful in executing their tasks (Fitzgerald, 1992: 81; Grobler et al., 2011: 240); and also to capacitate themselves and improve the organisational effectiveness.

The study found that researchers needed to be trained on various skills; and some of the skills are, albeit non-exhaustive: statistical data analysis, using SPSS and STATA, advanced Excel training, policy costing and bill costing (see Table 6.5). Training is needed; because, according to Thang et al. (2010: 28), there are few people who come to work with a complete knowledge of the job and experience necessary to execute the tasks or the assigned job. Above and beyond the technical skills to do their work, researchers need to understand that they work in a political environment; and they need to be impartial all the time; and furthermore, they need to have emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills, and to know their sectors well.

Thus, training becomes necessary in organisations, in order to modify knowledge, skills, as well as the behaviour of its employees (Erasmus et al., 2010: 2). As the

sectors evolve, training becomes essential to be well aware of the new innovations in the sectors; hence, the Research Unit at times organises refresher courses or workshops for the researchers.

The study found that the majority of researchers do not get specific training, according to their needs. However, Masadeh (2012: 63) argues that training should focus on the present job; and it should be systematically planned. In the Research Unit, the training seems not to be systematically planned; as sometimes, its training is generic to all the employees; while at times, some researchers may have not included this type of training in their training needs. Inadequacy of funding plays a huge role in the type and method of training offered to the employees; as it makes it virtually impossible for the Research Unit to cater for each and every employee's training needs. Since, according to Grobler et al. (2011: 343), training is to improve employee performance and to update employee skills, it is imperative for the Research Unit to take the researchers' needs into consideration, when the training is compiled.

Apparently, when the training is not in line with the needs of the employees, it cannot improve employee performance or update their skills. According to Erasmus et al. (2010: 13), the training needs of the employees are central to their training; as they are able to identify the gap between the performance of an individual and the set standards. Only if the needs of the employees have been identified, can the programme then be developed.

Rowold (2008: 32) argues that the relevant training of employees brings about a positive attitude in their jobs; and they become more involved. However, in this study, only 17% of the respondents agreed that training actually improves their attitude.

The study found that managers engage researchers on their training needs; and when they have completed the engagement, they forward the researcher's needs to the Chief Researcher. However, some researchers do not see the essence of their engagements on their training needs; as they do not get the types of courses they need for training. Consequently, only 13.9% of the respondents agreed that their

training is consistent with their training needs. Employees embark on training; since they want to contribute positively to their organisations (Fitzgerald, 1992: 81); but if they do not get training on what they want, such training may be a futile exercise.

Researchers do not always seem to understand that there are other issues, like funding, that make it impossible for all their training needs to be met. This is indicative of poor communication lines between the researchers and the managers; because, if there was a feedback from the managers to explain the reason for not providing training for some researchers, they would probably understand why their training needs are not met. Communication is fundamental in an organisation; as it makes it easier to identify the barriers that relate to the training and performance of employees (Bacal, 1999: 29).

6.6.2 Type and quality of training provided by the Research Unit

The success of a training programme depends largely on the plans, as well as on the implementation of the programme. Training should be a systematic process (Masadeh, 2012: 63). Further, effective training depends on knowing what employees need, in order to perform at the optimal level; and, according to Aguinis and Kraiger (2009: 453), the effectiveness of training depends on the method of delivery, and on the skill or the task being trained. Frequently, the training offered by the Research Unit does not respond to the needs of most of the researchers; although, the managers engage researchers on their training needs. It is then crucial for an organisation to conduct a training-needs survey, in order to ascertain the type of training needed by its employees (Erasmus et al., 2010: 87).

The Research Unit exposes its employees to both on-the-job training programmes (internally) and off-the-job training programmes (externally) and these types of training are clearly stipulated in the policy procedure for training and development. It is essential to provide various forms and methods of training because Aguinis and Kraiger (2009: 453) argue that the effectiveness of training depends on the method of delivery of the training. Although various types and methods of training are stated in the policy procedure, inadequate funding makes it impossible for them to be

realised. Even though the Research Unit holds internal training in the form of refresher workshops; some of these workshops may not be needed by some of the researchers. The Skills Development Act (97 of 1998) encourages employers to use their workplace as an active learning environment by doing on-the-job training.

The study shows that a majority of employees preferred on-the-job training, which is consistent with Khan et al. (2011: 64) who say it is better to be trained on-the-job as this brings about the practical part, as opposed to theoretical book knowledge only. Training should ideally be supplemented by hands-on practical activity (Masadeh, 2012: 64). Nonetheless, the majority of respondents (81%) attended external training programmes. The external training programmes were viewed as better in terms of content than internal programmes; hence, they were better attended. The majority of external training programmes attended are in stark contrast with that proposed by Grobler et al. (2002: 323), who maintain that on-the-job training is done by 90 per cent of employers in South Africa.

Training often carries a high cost to the organisation (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009: 458); thus, the Research Unit needs to ensure that the training offered to employees, be it internally or externally, is effective, in order to get a return on the investment. Interestingly, the training attended outside Parliament had more impact on employees' professional development than did internal training. Training should have an impact on the organisational goals of productivity, quality and job satisfaction, as well as a decrease in staff turnover (Grobler et al., 2002: 333).

6.6.3 Satisfaction levels of employees on the training provided by the Research Unit

The majority of employees (63.9%) like attending training courses; because it increases their level of motivation. Masadeh (2012: 63) states that when employees are trained, they perform their work with a high degree of success; and that makes them obtain job satisfaction. Most respondents stated that the training offered by the Research Unit is not of high standard. Consequently, they were not satisfied with its effectiveness. This is in stark contrast to the Skills Development Act (97 of 1998); as

it states that training provided should be of high quality, so as to develop and improve the skills in the workplace. Training is supposed to positively affect the behaviour of a trainee (Jehanzeb & Bashir, 2012: 63), in order to improve organisational effectiveness (Ludike, 2007: 64; Hunter, 2012: 253). However, the study found that most of the respondents were not satisfied with the effectiveness of the training provided by the Research Unit.

One of the ways of finding out whether training has been effective or not, is to do evaluation after training, which, according to Elofson and Casey (n.d: 2) enables the managers to plan better for future training. Future training programmes depend on the effectiveness of the previous programme (Kirkpatrick, 1987: 315). After evaluation has been done, feedback is necessary. Apparently, in the Research Unit, training rarely gets evaluated; and even if it is evaluated, there is no feedback to the trainees. Nadler (1986: 224) states that it is vital to do evaluation after training, so as to ascertain what the employees have learned.

6.6.4 The use of Personal Development Plans (PDPs) on developing training and development programmes

Managers in the Research Unit conduct a performance assessment of their employees every year; and this enables them to identify those areas where employees have deficiencies. The White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service of 1997, states that performance management should identify the strengths and weaknesses of the employees; and these should be dealt with by training and development (see Julnes et al. 2008: 6; Grobler et al. 2011: 298). PDPs should be accustomed to addressing the areas of weaknesses of employees, according to the directive of the policy. The objectives of the PDPs are to improve and sustain performance in current jobs; and prepare employees for advancement; and also to enrich employee's work experience (Aguinis, 2014: 203). The PDPs of employees should reflect exactly the kind of training they require, based on their training needs. However, the training provided by the Research Unit does not respond to most employees' PDPs. Furthermore, the policy states that the training of all employees in Parliament should be based on their PDPs, which are developed

during the performance management process. Not linking training to PDPs, is a setback to an organisation; because Fitzgerald (1992: 81) stated that training that is not linked to employee performance would provide little payback to the organisation.

The tools that organisations should use to create meaningful training are performance plans and personal development plans (Fitzgerald, 1992: 81). Nonetheless, training should also incorporate organisational interests (Khan et al., 2011: 63). Hence, the Research Unit sometimes organises refresher courses that it deems to be fit for researchers. The Research Unit uses PDPs for planning their programmes of training; but their training programmes are unable to cater for every employee. Consequently, some researchers think that PDPs are not considered, when training programmes are put together. The budget of the Research Unit is unable to cater for every researcher's training needs; but this fact is not communicated to them.

The study discovered that, in addition to not responding to some employees' PDPs, the Research Unit rejected the application of some employees, who wanted to attend training outside Parliament; because of a shortage of funds; although there is a clause in the policy, in which employees can identify the type of training they want to attend. On a positive note, recently some employees have had their applications for training approved – because of the availability of funds. And this augurs well for the training and development of staff.

6.6.5 Process of putting together training and development programmes by the Research Unit

The purpose of training and development is to improve the performance of employees, who perform unsatisfactorily; hence, it is vital for the employer to consult employees, when setting up training and development programmes. The Research Unit needs to follow Nadler's critical-events model for training and development. The first step is to identify the needs of the organisation, by doing an organisational analysis and performance analysis (Nadler, 1986). Then, the Unit managers can source the proposals and get quotations from the service providers, and submit them to the Training and Development Unit for further processing, as stipulated in the

policy of Parliament. The quotations are done after the employees have identified the type of training they need.

Jehanzeb and Bashir (2012: 60) claim that employees would be more productive, if organisations provided them with training that is relevant to their jobs. In the study, 52.8% of the respondents attended training that was relevant to their work in the last two years. This shows that the relevant training happens less frequently; and in order to improve on this, Nadler (1986: 39) stated that training programmes should be evaluated for fitness – before they are offered to the employees. The Learning and Development Policy of Parliament of South Africa states that employees should receive training to support them in their current roles, and to cater for their personal development (POSA, 2009).

Masadeh (2012: 63) says that if employees are involved in putting together training programmes, it benefits them in numerous ways, namely: improved skills, as well as knowledge, attitudes and behaviour. In the Research Unit, the managers plan training programmes, by using the PDPs of researchers as a database that informs them on the type of training needed by researchers. The PDPs are used to identify the training needs, as suggested by Nadler (1986: 113) and the training needs should consider the needs of both the employee and the organisation (Erasmus et al., 2010: 13). This is consistent with the Skills Development Act (97 of 1998) as it states that any training should be based on concrete data, so as to offer the needed training. Seemingly, frequently, training needs neither take into consideration the needs of the employer nor those of the employee; as only 27.8% of the respondents agreed that training is linked to the business strategy of the organisation; and 13.9% agreed that training is always consistent with the employees' needs.

The Research Unit needs to formulate training objectives, which can be measured against employee performance. Although PDPs are used to plan training programmes, researchers are not part of the team that does the planning. If researchers were part of the planning, they would be helpful in compiling the syllabus, which should be based on the training objectives (Nadler, 1986: 114).

The effectiveness of training largely depends on the instructional strategies used to deliver the training. Only a few respondents (27.8%) were satisfied with the effectiveness of their training. This is indicative that instructional strategies used may

not be that effective. Importantly, organisations should have instructional resources to yield effective training; and according to Nadler (1986: 186), there are physical resources, financial resources and human resources. In the Research Unit, there is a shortage of funds for training, which is a hindrance for effective training. Lastly, the presentation of training should be of a high standard; as it is a prerequisite for successful training. At the end of training, the organisation should conduct an evaluation, which it rarely does.

6.7 SUMMARY

This chapter contains the findings of the study. The demographic characteristics of the sample are presented. Various issues are discussed, namely: the type of training preferred by the respondents juxtaposed to the one to which they are likely to be exposed; the relationship between training provided by the Research Unit and the PDPs of employees; the satisfaction levels of employees on the training provided; the use of PDPs in developing training programmes; and the processes that are followed/not followed, when the Research Unit is putting training and development programmes together.

The Research Unit takes note of employees' PDPs, when planning their training programmes; but the meagre budget does not allow them to consider all the individual researcher's training needs. Researchers are not part of the team that plans their training programmes.

The next chapter will cover the conclusion of the study, as well as those factors that the Research Unit needs to take into consideration on the training of employees. Recommendations for further research will also be presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will summarise all the chapters and its conclusions, provide recommendations, suggest future research and clarify the limitations of this study. It will also identify the factors that the Research Unit needs to take into consideration when organising training for employees.

7.2 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTERS

Chapter One provided the background of the study, the problem statement, the objectives, the ethical considerations, the definition of concepts, the research methodology and an outline of the chapters.

Chapter Two provided the reader with a wide scope of training and development and the literature on performance management. The purpose and benefits of training and development were discussed. The correct way of doing training and development was also discussed. Performance management was defined, and also the purpose of performance management was discussed in some detail. It showed the value of training and development, as well as how performance management determines the training needs of employees, and the importance of alignment to the overall organisational objectives.

Chapter Three discussed in detail the various legislation that underpin training and development, as well as performance management. All these statutes are informed by the Constitution as it is the supreme law of the country.

Chapter Four dealt with the background to the case study for this dissertation, which is the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa and the structure of the Research Unit. The work done by researchers in parliament to make MPs succeed in their work is also discussed. Moreover, the Learning and Development Policy of Parliament was also discussed.

Chapter Five discussed the research design and the methods used to gather the empirical data for this study. The study used mixed methods – where quantitative and qualitative approaches were utilised, sequentially. All researchers in the Research Unit were surveyed (given questionnaires). This was followed by 10 purposely selected researchers, who were interviewed using semi-structured interviews.

Chapter Six presented, interpreted and analysed the results of the study. The demographic characteristics of the sample were presented; and an analysis of the data was carried out. The study found that managers engage researchers on their training needs. However, the lack of funds for training does not allow for all the training needs of researchers to be entertained. Importantly, the researchers were not included in the planning of the training programmes.

7.3 CONCLUSIONS

This study's aim was to investigate the obstacles that hinder alignment between training, development and the Personal Development Plans of employees in the Research Unit. The Research Unit provides training to its employees; however, the training provided does not relate to the needs of most employees; and it also does not link with the PDPs of most employees. Managers in the Research Unit engage researchers on their training needs when they sign their performance contracts and their PDPs; however, the training provided does not address all of the employees' training needs. The main reason for not addressing most of the researchers' PDPs is the lack of funds. However, the Research Unit is failing to communicate the lack of funds challenge to the researchers; hence, they think that their needs are simply being ignored.

The policy of Parliament allows for different kinds of training: It can be provided in-house or outside Parliament. However, internal training is viewed as not being of a high standard by the researchers. Consequently, it does not have any positive impact on the employees, as opposed to external training.

The study found that in answering the research question, the following obstacles hinder the alignment between training and development and the researchers` personal development plans:

- The training policy is not adhered to, because of the inadequate budget for training. This makes it almost impossible to respond to the employees' training needs;
- Where researchers without the necessary skills are appointed, the training given is not aligned to the skills required;
- Even though the required skills are identified in the PDPs, the training provided does not take the researchers' PDPs into consideration;
- The budget is too small to accommodate the skills needed; and this is not always communicated properly to the staff.

7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Research Unit should ensure that ideally, it appoints researchers with the skills that are needed in Parliament. However, where this is not possible, training is required. It is fundamental then that appropriate training should be planned and provided for those researchers requiring certain skills, to ensure that these researchers perform their duties optimally.
- Managers should make certain that they communicate to the researchers on their training budget, so that researchers can know the kind of training they should apply for.
- It is also important that the training sourced for the researchers is appropriate. Furthermore, the Research Unit should increase its training budget to cater for most, if not all the employees.
- Researchers have to be involved in the planning of training programmes; and their training should respond to their PDPs, in order to satisfy their training needs.
- The Learning and Development Unit of Parliament should make certain that all units in Parliament follow the policy, when it comes to training and development.

- The Research Unit should follow Nadler's Critical-Events Model for training and development (cf. Pg. 22 – 26) for improved success.

7.5 FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- A research project that would discover the reasons why the Research Unit does not budget enough money for training.
- The role of the Learning and Development Unit, to ensure that all Business Units in Parliament adhere to the Learning and Development Policy, when it comes to the training and development of employees.

7.6 LIMITATIONS

There are two limitations of this research. Firstly, this research is a case study, involving the Research Unit only in Parliament; therefore, its findings cannot be generalised to the entire Parliament. Secondly, the researcher was unable to interview Members of Parliament, in order to get their input and perspective as well; since they were not available during the time of the data collection.

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APPENDIX A

Request to Conduct Research in Parliament

PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

CORE BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION
PO Box 15 Cape Town 8000 Republic of South Africa
Tel: 27(21) 403 2375 Fax: 27 (21) 403 3623

MEMORANDUM
[For Approval]

TO: Mr G Mgidlana
Secretary to Parliament

FROM: Ms R K Begg
Division Manager: Core Business Support

DATE: 16 March 2016

SUBJECT: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PARLIAMENT – Mr L J KOMLE

Dear Mr Mgidlana,

1. DECISION REQUIRED

The Secretary to Parliament is requested to grant permission for Mr L J Komle to conduct research in Parliament as part of his studies towards a Master degree.

2. BACKGROUND

The attached request to conduct research in Parliament has been received from Mr LJ Komle, a Content Advisor for Select Committee on Education and Recreation. Mr Komle is registered for a Master's degree in Public Administration (MPA) at Stellenbosch University. His research is based on the alignment of Personal Development Plans and Training and Development offered to employees in Parliament, particularly in the Research Unit and Committee Section.

3. MOTIVATION/BENEFIT TO PARLIAMENT

Mr Komle understands that the work done by Researchers and Content Advisors is critical to the work of committees, as committees are the engine of Parliament. He then feels that there should be proper alignment between the Personal Development Plans and Training and Development that is offered to Researchers and Content Advisors. He feels that the findings of the study will enable the sections to customise their training interventions in line with the Personal Development Plans of the employees, which will be informed by performance assessment.

PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Mr Komle will not access personal information of employees. He will utilise questionnaires and interviews as his means of data collection. Mr Komle undertakes to adhere to the confidentiality provisions of the attached agreement.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There will be no financial implications for Parliament for this study. Furthermore, Mr Komle has reassured the Section Manager, Committees that he will not utilise Parliament resources in conducting his research.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Secretary to Parliament is requested to grant permission for Mr Komle to conduct research in Parliament as part of his studies towards a Master's degree and to sign the attached research agreement.

Yours sincerely,

Ms K R Begg
Division Manager: Core Business Support **Date:** 16/03/2016

Recommended ☑ **Not Recommended** ☐

Mr L H Makele
Human Resources Executive **Date:** _____

Adv M E Phindela
Acting Deputy Secretary: Core Business **Date:** 08.04.16

APPROVED ☒ **NOT APPROVED** ☐

MR G M GIDLANA

APPENDIX B

Research Agreement

PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

RESEARCH AGREEMENT

In respect of the research study to be undertaken by Mr Lindumzi Komle

ENTERED INTO BY AND BETWEEN

SECRETARY TO PARLIAMENT

(Hereinafter referred to as the "STP")

AND

MR LINDUMZI KOMLE

(An adult male with identity number 7302046027085 residing at 7 Wicht Street, Goodwood)

(Hereinafter referred to as the "Researcher")

AND

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

(A university incorporated in terms of the Higher Education Act, 1997, and the statute of the Stellenbosch University, promulgated under Government Notice No. 1199 of 20 September 2002, herein represented by **Ms Deyana Isaacs**, in her capacity as Lecturer at Stellenbosch University, and she being duly authorised thereto)

G.M.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Researcher is employed at Parliament in the Committee section. The Researcher is currently pursuing a master's degree in Public Administration at Stellenbosch University.

1.2. The Researcher, as part of his studies, is compiling a research report on area of misalignment between Training and Development and Personal Development Plans of Parliament employees in the Research Unit. The research will be supervised by Ms Deyana Isaacs, a Lecturer at Stellenbosch University.

1.3. The Researcher has requested permission to conduct empirical research at Parliament and the STP has agreed to the request subject to the terms and conditions contained in this agreement.

1.4. The Parties wish to record in writing the terms and conditions upon which the STP will permit the Researcher to conduct the research.

2. PERMISSION TO CONDUCT EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

2.1. The STP hereby grants the Researcher permission to conduct empirical research as follows:-

2.1.1. One-on-one interviews with selected employees; and

2.1.2. Distribution of a written questionnaire to selected employees.

2.2. The permission to conduct research is granted for a period of 12 months from the date of signature of this Agreement.

2.3. The STP may terminate this Agreement if he believes that the terms of this Agreement are not being met.

G.M.

3. CONDITIONS

3.1. The Researcher must submit to participating employees ("Participants") a copy of all interview questions prior to the commencement of interviews as well as a summary of the research topic and purpose thereof.

3.2. The Researcher must provide the Secretary, on request, a list of all Participants.

3.3. The Researcher must further provide all Participants with a copy of this Agreement and inform them of their right to refrain from participating in the research study.

3.4. Participants must further be made aware of the fact that they may be held responsible in the event that their answers give rise to:-

3.4.1. a breach of confidentiality between Parliament and any 3rd party;

3.4.2. the release of any information in contravention of any internal policy or law in terms of which Parliament may not disseminate such information; or

3.4.3. a breach of confidentiality between the employee of Parliament and Parliament in contravention of that employees employment contract.

3.5. The Researcher may only conduct interviews with employees subject to their written consent and provided that their personal information is kept confidential.

3.6. A Participant may withdraw their participation at any time and may request, at any stage before submission of the research paper, that their inputs not be utilised.

3.7. The Researcher must ensure that the identity of participants is protected and that the context in which information is presented does not allow a 3rd party to deduce the identity of the participant.

3.8. The Researcher may not present any views of Participants as being the views of Parliament.

G.M.

3.9. The Researcher must conduct research in such a manner so as not to interfere with the ability of Participants to complete their work and should ideally be conducted after hours or during lunch breaks.

3.10. Stellenbosch University must ensure that the Researcher obtains all necessary consents from participants and does not publish any of their personal details without their expressed consent.

4. **PUBLICATION** — This is the responsibility of the Student, not the university.

4.1. Should Stellenbosch University wish to publish the results of the Research Project carried out pursuant to this Agreement, ~~Stellenbosch University~~ the Student shall provide the STP with a copy of the proposed manuscript intended for publication. The STP shall be provided a period of 45 (forty five) days within which to review the proposed publication and to notify Stellenbosch University in writing should it believe that such publication contains confidential information disclosed by the Participants. Stellenbosch University, in such an event, shall provide the STP with an alternative version of the manuscript which is acceptable to both Parties and which the Parties in writing agree may be published. In the event that the Parties cannot reach an agreement, Stellenbosch University undertakes not to publish that portion of the results of the Research Project which contains confidential information as identified by the Secretary to Parliament.

4.2. For the purposes of clause 4.1 "**confidential information**" shall mean all forms of copyright, design right, whether registered or unregistered, patent, patentable material, trademarks, know-how, trade secrets, rights in databases, personal information of individuals, data, mathematical formulae, specifications, diagrams, expertise, techniques, computer software and programs and any information classified as confidential, secret or restricted in terms of any government policy or law.

4.3. No Party shall be entitled to delay the submission and examination of theses and dissertations or the awarding of degrees, other than for the purpose of obtaining patent protection for patentable subject matter contained in a thesis or dissertation, in which case such delay shall be limited to period not exceeding 60 (sixty) days.

G.M.

4.4. It is recorded that it is a policy of Stellenbosch University that theses and dissertations may not be kept confidential and that they are disclosed publicly when submitted for examination.

THUS agreed to and signed at Cape Town on this 18th day of April 20 16

Mr. G. Mgidlana
Secretary to Parliament
(Duly authorized thereto)

AS WITNESS: -.
1. _____

THUS done and signed at _____ on this ____ day of _____ 20 16

Ms Deyana Isaacs: Stellenbosch University
(Duly authorized thereto)

AS WITNESSES: -
1. AKyer

THUS done and signed at Bellville on this 14 day of March 20 16

Mr Lindumzi Komle

AS WITNESS
1. _____

APPENDIX C

Questionnaire

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE: TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

I am a Master's student at Stellenbosch University; and I am conducting a study on Training and Development in Parliament in the Research Unit.

The intention of the questionnaire is to collect data for my academic research, in order to establish the alignment of Training and Development and Personal Development Plans in the Research Unit. The data are for pure academic use and nothing else.

Could you please kindly assist me in this study by responding to the questionnaire below. Please note that all responses are strictly anonymous and confidential; and no personal information will be divulged.

Please answer all questions truthfully; and could you also please ensure that you do not leave any of these questions unanswered.

I would like to kindly thank you in advance for participating in this research.

A. Section A: Biographical data

Please tick the appropriate answer

1. Gender

M		F	

2. Race

B		C		I		W	

3. Years in the Research Unit

Less than 1 year		1 - 5 years		5 years or more	

4. Highest qualification

Honours		Masters		PhD	

5. Studying towards a qualification

Masters		PhD		Short Course		No	

SECTION B

Please tick the most appropriate answer for you in the table below.

	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Parliament has a training and development policy applicable to all employees					
2	We attend training once a quarter					
3	We attend training once in six months					
4	We attend training once a year					
5	Training is always well-planned					
6	Our training is always helpful for personal growth					
7	Our training is always of a high standard					
9	Training is always given sufficient duration					
10	Training is always linked to the business strategy of the organisation					
11	I like attending training programmes					
12	Training helps to increase my level of motivation					
13	Training makes me perform my work with more enthusiasm					
14	Training increases my productivity and performance					
15	Attitudes of employees have been improved by training					
16	Training has made employees to be self-reliant					
17	I prefer on-the-job training					
18	I prefer off-the-job training					
19	In the last two years I have attended					

	external training programmes					
20	In the last two years I have attended internal training programmes					
21	The training that I have attended in the last two years is relevant to my work					
22	I am satisfied with the effectiveness of the training programmes					
23	Training is always useful to my line of work					
24	Training has made me to be more committed in my job					
25	Training is always consistently in line with the training needs of the employees					
26	Training is done on the basis of developmental needs					
27	Training offered is always linked to my Personal Development Plans					
28	Training always fills the gaps revealed by PDPs					
29	Our performance is taken into consideration when training is put together					

Section C

1. Could you kindly share anything that may not have been covered by the questions about training and development in the Research Unit. You may also share on how you think training and development should be conducted in the future; and state why you think so.

……
……
……
……
……

APPENDIX D

Interview questions and script of a researcher

INTERVIEW SCRIPT OF ONE RESPONDENT (Researcher)

Q1. A majority of respondents in the questionnaire (63.9%) stated that they like attending training. Do you also agree to that? If yes, what kind of skills do you think you really want training on; and what skills do you possess to be able to do your job well?

Response: I believe that training is important for employees, so as to keep up with the new developments, be they technical or otherwise; so I also like attending training. To attend training does not necessarily mean that one does not have skills to execute his work well; but it is for capacity building. I have various research skills, which are both qualitative and quantitative. I also have critical data-analysis skills, and I know how to conduct interviews. I know how to conduct surveys; and I am good in report writing, as well as statistical methods, and also data analysis. But, as a human being, I practise introspection to find out what other skills I still need. I think that I need training on policy-related issues. For instance, here in Parliament, we work in a policy environment, so I need to know how to analyse a Bill, and also to cost a policy, and also how to do legislative analysis. I also need training on advanced project management, monitoring and evaluation, and also in public financial analysis.

Q2: Have you then attended any training that is policy-related?

Response: Yes I have. I attended three trainings; and I am glad to say, that those trainings met my expectations. They dealt with key specific issues that we work with here in Parliament, which are the costing of the Bill, Budget Review and the Recommendations Report (BRRR).

Q3. Is there always a direct link between your training needs and the kind of training that is provided for you by the Research Unit?

Response: I will be frank here; as I have stated earlier, those training programmes that I attended on the Bill and BRRR were an example. However, not all training is always an issue. Sometimes, we attend training without even knowing the content of training; and we end up being confused in the middle of training. I know that even the training that was good for me, for some people it was not good; because they had been trained on that before; and some people who have a legal background, that was just basic stuff for them. Thus, the relevance of training depends on an individual and his knowledge, I suppose.

Q4. What does your PDP reflect in relation to your training needs?

Response: You know PDPs are not taken seriously here. Since 2012, I have written areas I need training on my PDP; however, whatever I write on my PDP does not get done. I have now realised that in the RU and in Parliament as a whole, there is that funding for training and development in line with our PDPs; but it is not take seriously. Every year when I enquire about the training needs, I get told that there is no funding for training. This then renders the whole PDP exercise useless, and a waste of time and energy.

Q 5. If PDPs are not taken seriously as you said, does the training that you attend have any impact on your personal development, as well as in your professional development?

Response: As I said earlier that I attended training about Bill costing and BRRR, which was to the point for me, yes that training had an impact on my development. Other kinds of training were not really helpful.

Q6. From the questionnaire, it is clear that your training is not well co-ordinated. For example, 50% disagree that training is always consistent with the needs of employees; 44.4% disagree that training is done on the basis of developmental needs; 55.6% disagree that training is always linked to PDP; and 52.8% disagree that training is always well-planned. Having cited these figures, what do you think the

Research Unit needs to do to change the situation, in so far as training is concerned?

Response: I think it is very easy to change this situation. As you were saying, those numbers, I am not surprised. If the Research Unit wants to have effective training programmes, it needs to do one basic thing: to consider our PDPs, when deciding our training; or at least the individuals should be consulted, before decisions on what training will be considered is taken. Secondly, a few days of training is just not sufficient to address gaps. Thus, the time taken for training should be considered. Currently, most of the training that is being done; I think it is just a waste of Parliamentary resources.

APPENDIX E

Interview questions and script of a Unit representative

INTERVIEW SCRIPT OF THE UNIT REPRESENTATIVE (SENIOR RESEARCHER IN THE RESEARCH UNIT)

Question: What types of gaps or deficiencies do you get from researchers, when you do performance assessments?

Answer: Look, researchers are required to do a range of different tasks. They are required to be rather multi-skilled; they are required to have knowledge of multiple sectors here in Parliament. Therefore, while they are researchers for an area, that area is broad. For me, that is the first difficulty. In other parliaments, and the private sector, where we require one person to do something, they have broken down those tasks into separate areas. For example, in trade and industry, I have one person (researcher), that person has to cover various areas (industrial development, small business development, competition issues, etc., ..there are about 6 or 7 such areas) and even within those areas, they can be broken down further. You have trade, bilaterals, multilaterals, international institution. So, that person has to be an expert in all those areas, which is rather unfair; because if you go to other parliaments, they would have a staff member dealing with bilaterals America, bilaterals Asia. So, if you go to the US congress and you see those research reports, the job title is different in each report; and they have different people working on them. Thus, we require a lot of our researchers. However, it is better than we were before, when we had one researcher assisting several committees. But, I think we need to go to the next stage now, where there are researchers per sector within an area.

Question: What do you think researchers need to do to cope with the challenges as you have mentioned them?

Answer: What that then requires is for the researcher….. and remember the content areas are forever evolving, it's not stagnant. So it means the researchers have to familiarise themselves with a broad body of knowledge. That is where I think training and information come in. The reason why I say training and information, is that for me, there are different levels; there is academic training; and then there are conferences and workshops; and I think both have a role to play, because academic training I think gives you tools that you can use over a long period of time; whereas

with conferences and workshops, you need to refresh your knowledge all the time. You need to engage not only with academics; you need to engage, I think, in this place (Parliament) with people and stakeholders who are involved in your sector. So, you need applied knowledge. There is a difference between theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge. So theoretically, you can have a lot of understanding of multilateral issues and bilateral issues. If I could give you a practical example. Yesterday, I went to a conference at the Townhouse. It was a conference on South Africa's role in Africa. There were a lot of academics from across the world (Stanford University); but do you know who I found to be interesting? A young man from Standard Bank; he is an analyst. For me, he gave the most concrete information on what Standard Bank is doing on the continent. Those are things that I would like the researcher to have a grasp of. He was willing and able to share information; and I found him very informative.

Question: It is clear that you know where the challenges are. How does this knowledge you have inform the PDPs of researchers and training in the Unit, as a whole?

Answer: We, every year, engage the researchers. But what do they view as their training needs? Where would they like to go to for their training? We always ensure that there is a mixture of both academic training and sector-specific training in the form of conferences and workshops. What we then do is, that gets filtered through to our Chief Researcher; and a plan for the unit is put out. Taking into account the budget, then we look at allocating to the researchers what they have applied for.

Question: The response given is fair enough; however, what I gleaned from the researcher's responses is that some of them would ask for certain training, which is never provided for them; some of them would go to a training session, which they never ask for. However, they attend it, as they are supposed to. Can you verify this?

Answer: I can't speak for other people. I can only speak for my cluster. There are trainings that the unit organises. These, I would see as starter-training packs. Some people may have been to those kinds of training, and they may feel that they are comfortable in those areas. These kinds of training would be things that every

researcher should refresh from time to time. They are your computer skills. They are your research methodology and training methods etc. So, those are things we organise from time to time. But that is not the end or the be-all. You must be proactive as a researcher, in order to identify something in your sector; and over and above that, you must bring forward to say: 'I will go for all this methodology training; but I also found something interesting'. So, it requires proactivity on the side of the researcher. The researchers in the trade cluster are very proactive; for example, in the last two weeks, we have had four authorisations for conferences. There is a researcher, who has applied for a correspondence course with the Thabo Mbeki Leadership School on policy-making issues. These are researchers that are not waiting. Look, when there is no budget, of course, our hands are tied; but when there is a budget, I would say the researchers take full advantage of it; or they are taking a full opportunity. I must say these courses are expensive. The co-oporative governance course, I am being honest, it is about R20 000 for a week. So, those opportunities are there.

Question: How then do you as managers prioritise, which courses or training should be attended, if there are not enough funds?

Answer: Look, clearly the budget-holder is our Manager (Chief Researcher). We have had that discussion with her now; in which she has told us that we did not have funds. Then we simply told the clusters that they cannot apply. Then the budgets came through; and we were told that there is a certain amount; you can put in applications. But remember something; as I said, the one conference cost about R24 000, the person cannot then go for 10 of those conferences. That is R240 000, that is half the budget. So, one has to choose a good one, which is quite comprehensive; and then one has to do the smaller ones, the free ones, you know what I am trying to say; so we do prioritise; and we also ask the colleagues, the researchers to do their prioritisation themselves. So you choose the one you want to go to, which is a bit pricey, or you want to go to the other one, which is a bit cheaper. But unfortunately, you cannot do both. Therefore, you do have the choice. So we, as managers, do not choose for the researchers; they choose the courses for themselves.

Question: What skills do you think researchers need to have in Parliament?

Answer: Skills required of the staff of Parliament…. You see academic skills are your basics; but there are other skills that you need to have, when working in Parliament. Primarily, you must first understand your context, the political environment, you must also understand that you are working sometimes with very divergent views. So, you need to be somebody who can process these divergent views. Remember you are serving all parties; and you have to be objective, as a staff member. You have got to be professional as a staff member; you also have to be able to synthesize large amounts of information, and present that to members, so it requires a knowledge of the sector, and it requires other skill sets from the person; it also requires maturity to work in a sometimes very difficult environment – in a sense where you do not have the answers for everything. Sometimes, you are not the expert. Sometimes, you are there to facilitate information flows; and there might be people that you are providing information to who are more expert than yourself.

So, you have to play different roles at different times. So, it requires staff with multiple skills, some of them, emotional intelligence (EQ), content-knowledge skills, some of them, just personality skills, how to get on with people, because this place (Parliament) is about people and the interaction of people. If you have strengths in some areas and you experience trouble in other areas, your stay here is not going to be very pleasant; you have to develop skills in all your areas. So, how to get on with people? How do you get on in complex or difficult situations? Basically, you have to know your sector; so it is all those things combined.

Question: Can you share any relationship between training and the strategic plan of Parliament and the HR Division?

Answer: Remember our leadership has a certain view about where Parliament should be heading for. Then, we need to fit into that view; as they are in the strategic plan. For instance, just recently, there has been an information alert, which stated that HR will be coming out with a new HR strategy, a comprehensive strategy, and that is going to impact on training. So what picture will the coming HR strategy have for training? Will the training landscape be the same? Or will it be enhanced? We shall have to wait and see.