

**ANALYSING PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT TRAINING INTERVENTIONS IN
THE PUBLIC SERVICE: A CASE OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOL OF
GOVERNMENT**

BY

FEZEKILE IMINQWENO DASTILE

Student Number: 16210787

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**School of Public Management and Administration
University of Pretoria, South Africa**

Supervisor: Dr M.M. Tshiyoyo

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research dissertation, “Analysing performance management training interventions in the public service: a case of the National School of Government”, is my own, unaided work. It is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Public Administration (MAdmin) at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

Fezekile Iminqweno Dastile

March 2018

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to the following special people in my life:

To my Mother, No-Easter Ncwana-Dastile, a former school Principal who retired early in her career due to an illness ... Mama, thank you for instilling in me the quest to always strive for success. I would not be where I am if it was not for you, Ma-Phakathi!

To my Father, Tat' Jongikhaya Albert Dastile, this research is a symbol of my belief that the light of the Dastile clan will always shine even in the midst of trials and tribulations ...

To my late Brother, But' Zuki who passed away on 23 August 2018 ... I am extremely grateful to God for his life. I applaud him for giving me the opportunity to realise my potential and always supporting me. He might be absent physically, but he will live in my thoughts forever. May his soul rest in peace!

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

APP	Annual Performance Plan
BSC	Balanced Score Card
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
EPMDS	Employee Performance Management and Development System
GAFs	Generic Assessment Factors
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRM	Human Resource Management
HR	Human Resource
KRAs	Key Results Areas
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
MPC	Managing Performance Course
NSG	National School of Government
NDP	National Development Plan
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NPM	New Public Management
PM	Performance Management
PMDS	Performance Management and Development System
PMS	Performance Management System
PSC	Public Service Commission
PALAMA	Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy

PSTI	Public Service Training Institute
PDP	Performance Development Plan
RBM	Results-Based Management System
ROI	Return on Investment
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAMDI	South African Management Development Institute
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SMS	Senior Management Service
TNA	Training Needs Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken as an attempt to analyse the efficacy of performance management training interventions in the public service. The National School of Government was used as a case study for its Managing Performance Course which was established in response to challenges related to the implementation of the Performance Management and Development System in the public service. The study comprises six chapters.

In attaining the objectives of the study, the mixed methods research approach was deemed the most suitable. This design was motivated by the fact that the mixed-methodological design is not only the most suitable for this study, but it has also been able to strengthen the findings of the study and to provide adequate validation by means of both deductive and inductive research methods. An online survey questionnaire was used as a primary data collection tool to obtain responses from participants. Secondary data such as (but not limited to) Annual Reports, Annual Performance Plans, Strategic Plans and various reports on performance management were also reviewed. Purposive sampling was used to select employees between salary levels 5–12 who participated in the Managing Performance Course. Quantitative data was analysed using pivot tables to extract graphs and statistics and thus establish meaningful analysis from the data. For qualitative data, a thematic content analysis was applied to establish the patterns and themes emanating from the data. The discovered patterns and themes were therefore analysed in order to establish meaningful findings.

The analysis of the responses indicated that the completion rate for Managing Performance Course should be monitored frequently as not all employees who registered completed the course. Although the implementation of the Performance Management and Development System still remains a challenge due to a number of factors, participants maintained that they gained a richer understanding of the system after the completion of the course. Continuous engagements and increased awareness on Performance Management and Development System policy were

deemed significant in order to address challenges related to its implementation thereof.

The responses further indicated a great dissatisfaction with the current system. Supervisors do not actively engage with the system, while others are fully committed to ensuring that the system is effectively implemented within the department. The study further demonstrated that supervisors use performance management to punish subordinates whom they perceive as troublesome. As a result, employees are no longer motivated to perform and suggested adjustments or changes in the current system by adopting a 360-degree assessment approach in order to close the current gaps and challenges resulting from the bias and a lack of commitment from supervisors.

The study concludes and recommends that there should be an increased awareness on performance management training at the National School of Government. The maintenance of professional ethics should be strictly adhered to in the governance and management of Performance Management and Development System in the department. The management should also ensure that MPC programme is aligned with prescripts related to performance management in the public service. Transfer of learning into the workplace should be encouraged. A feedback mechanism should be established in order to share what scores and activities are required for subordinates to be deemed high performers.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In 2012, the Government of South Africa established a long-term development trajectory in the National Development Plan (NDP): Vision for 2030. The NDP is the government's long-term blueprint for creating a capable developmental state with the requisite capacity to address the challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality in order to improve productivity in the workplace (The National Development Plan (NDP) 2011:3). To achieve this vision, the Government recognises the need to grow an inclusive economy, and to develop the capacity and capabilities of the State to drive the developmental state. To create a capable state that would be at the centre of the developmental vision, the Government of South Africa transformed the Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (PALAMA) into the current National School of Government (NSG) in October 2013.

Whilst employees need to be managed to ensure continuous motivation and work gratification, it is also essential that they are provided with the required skills and competencies to achieve their individual and organisational objectives. Capacity building in organisations is therefore significant. In recognising the significance of training and development in improving employee performance, Segkala and Holtzhausen (2016:45) indicate that the intentions of the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), in consultation with the Department of Higher Education and Training in ensuring that every government institution is a training space, are an attempt to develop public servants.

The National School of Government (2015:4) maintains that the developmental state is premised, among other things, on the professionalisation of the public service for improved service delivery. The NSG is therefore a key role player in the professionalisation of the public service through its learning and development interventions. As a training institute, the role of the School in performance management is to be actively involved in capacity building. This means that the NSG should ensure enhanced employee performance through training and development.

Based on the above statement, having skilled employees who will be able to meet the objectives and future challenges of the School should be deemed important.

Enforcing the effective implementation of the PMDS in the public service is certainly not easy, and requires a lot of attention. Performance management (PM) is generally perceived as a difficult task, especially in terms of conducting performance reviews and appraisals. The Management Training Specialist Institute (2010:8-10) indicates that if PM is properly executed, it could merely be about partnership and motivation between a supervisor and his or her subordinate. It is therefore important to note that in order for the organisation to benefit from PM employees and their managers need to see PM as a partnership for motivation among the involved parties. Moreover, PM can, to a great extent, become a tool which enables organisations to successfully manage their performance and in turn achieve its goals and objectives (The Management Training Specialist Institute 2010:10).

The purpose of this study is to analyse whether there is any visible improvement after training employees on the performance management intervention in order to improve the implementation of the PMDS. The NSG will be used as a case study for its online Managing Performance Course (MPC) programme, which was developed in March 2016 in order to improve performance management in the public service. Managers in both the public and private sectors are under constant pressure to improve performance in their organisations. The NSG therefore plays an important role in trying to improve employees' understanding of performance management through training and development.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Prior to 1994, the legislation governing the public service were highly centralised and regulated, resulting in a bureaucratic, unresponsive, and risk-averse public service. The apartheid administration made the South African public service known for poor performance management practices and an unskilled workforce. Most citizens experienced the public sector as oppressive, unjust, unproductive and inefficient (Sekoto and Van Straaten 1999:4). As a strategy to address these shortcomings, in April 2007, the DPSA introduced the Employee Performance Management and

Development System (EPMDS) framework for salary levels 1–12 appointed in terms of the Public Service Act 1 (Department of Public Service and Administration 2007:2). The NSG was established to address the challenges that the government encounters including the poor implementation of the PMDS in the public service through its learning and development interventions.

Although the use of the EPMDS framework is not mandatory, government departments and provinces have adopted it to manage performance in the public service. While departments were making use of the framework to manage employee performance, it was reported that the system was being implemented differently in each department. Some major challenges were encountered in implementing the EPMDS system, including the fact that employees feel entitled to performance incentives (be it through bonuses or job promotions), irrespective of level of performance, performance moderation, lack of integration with other processes in human resources and the limited trust in the credibility of the system (Seychelles 2009:9).

1.2.1 Performance management in selected Southern African Development Community countries

PM is a global phenomenon and organisations around the whole world and public, private or non-profit organisations are implementing different kinds of performance management systems in order to manage individual and organisational performance (Makamu 2016:25). In this section, the manner in which PM is implemented by various countries in the African content is briefly discussed.

The South African Government, as a member of Southern African Development Community (SADC), understands PM as a tool to improve service delivery and as a means to achieve national development priorities. The PMDS in South Africa was introduced in the public service with the aim to constantly manage performance by setting performance objectives, reviewing past performance, assessing current performance, improving poor performance, determining recognition and rewards for good performance, and assisting with employees' career planning through training and development. For the purposes of the study, the researcher will briefly examine the

implementation of the PMDS in the context of the SADC countries in order to establish whether there are any similarities or differences to that of South Africa.

Cameron (2015:4) mentions that the literature on the applicability of PM in developing countries suggests there are obstacles to its successful implementation. However, in recent years, the countries which form part of the SADC seem to have improved in the implementation of PM. For instance, Zimbabwe has experienced some transformation since its independence in the 1980s, with the aim of enhancing service delivery in the civil service (Zinyama, Nhema and Mutandwa 2015:8). As a developing country, Zimbabwe has encountered serious socio-economic challenges which resulted from the poor performance of its economy. Most complaints by the general public are related to poor service delivery by government employees. Currently, the Zimbabwean civil service uses the Results-Based Management System (RBM) to measure the performance of both human and financial resources. Prior the establishment of the RBM, the Zimbabwean Government used various systems such as the Public Finance Management System, Mission Statements, Client Charters, and the Performance Appraisal System to manage its performance. However, these PMSs failed to produce the desired outcome: improved delivery of services to the general public. This failure led to the establishment of the current PMS, which was introduced in 2006 and was fully acknowledged by all government departments in 2012. However, the implementation of the current PMS in Zimbabwe has not been without controversy in terms of its applicability and benefits. The impression is that the system is not understood and appreciated by most employees (Zvavahera 2013:2).

On the other hand, in Swaziland, the Prime Minister introduced an institutional PMS in 2007. The role of this system is to help ministries focus on the Government's priorities as it aims to align its operations with its National Development Strategy. Whilst in Namibia, the recent implementation of a PMS was introduced in 2004, also as a trajectory according to which to achieve Vision 2030 goals. It was aimed at enhancing public service performance, to attain increased levels of productivity and to provide good customer service to the general public (Seychelles 2009:10).

In the light of the above, Sefali and Bekker (2012:18), found that the concept of PM has recently been introduced to Lesotho's public service. The system used by

Government of Lesotho before the current PMS was known as confidential reporting. Sefali and Bekker (2012:18) highlight the following factors as some of the shortfalls of the old confidential reporting system in Lesotho:

- It was not an objective management and human resource planning tool.
- It failed to effectively address issues such as staff promotion, utilisation, placement, career planning and management, and proper succession.
- It lacked credibility, as one-person opinions could not be validated.
- It was highly dependent on the likes, dislikes, wishes, whims and feelings of individual supervisors and, as a result, the report was based on the personality of the supervisor. This implies that performance results would be influenced either negatively or positively by a supervisor's bias towards his or her subordinate.
- It could neither motivate nor improve the morale of the employees as they never knew what their managers' reporting entailed.

In Tanzania, the process of instituting and executing PM has resulted in some success stories, thought-provoking questions, and challenges. Their first phase was themed "Instituting Performance Management System", which took place between 2000 and 2007. This was established with the aim of creating an integrated system that will assist with the understanding of an agreement to achieve performance results. The current PMS has been in effect since 2012 and it focuses on quality improvement cycles. Bana (2009:3–4) notes that the PMS in Tanzania is strategically geared towards promoting efficiency and effectiveness in the public service delivery while ensuring value-for-money.

In Ethiopia, there have been developments in favour of the PMS, with an increasing number of managers beginning to recognise the significance of constant formal performance review engagements and of providing feedback to involved parties. Performance management results are communicated through modern communication platforms such as the intranet. Moreover, there is a willingness to learn about how the PMS operates (De Waal 2007:6).

Lastly, in Kenya, PM is conventionally referred to as the process of financial control. This involves translating the mission and strategy of an organisation into budgets, and then comparing performance results with those budgets. Nevertheless, most Kenyan organisations have recently begun a shift towards PM, especially the Balanced Score Card (BSC), in trying to qualify for International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) standards. Those organisations that have moved to BSC show better performance as opposed to their competitors who are still utilising the financial controls system.

1.3 MOTIVATION FOR THE RESEARCH

With the introduction of the NDP: Vision 2030, the DPSA is required to implement and coordinate interventions aimed at achieving an efficient, effective and development-oriented public service which is an essential element of a capable and developing state. It is highlighted in the NDP that there continues to be unevenness in capacity that leads to uneven performance in the public service (Department of Public Service and Administration 2007:5). The PMDS challenges can be attributed to various factors such as lack of capacity building initiatives, skills shortage and low staff morale (DPSA-2014/15 Annual Performance Plan). In this regard, Mohlala (2012:25) emphasises that public officials in the public service need to align their potential with departmental objectives in order to make skills training and development a necessity if departments are to keep track and meet the expectations of both the internal and external environments.

When employees are given an opportunity to attend training, employers expect them to apply what they learnt to their jobs. There has been great concern that while departments conduct training on a yearly basis on various programmes, less is being done to trace the contribution made by such programmes towards the improvement of employee behaviour, productivity and organisational performance as a result of training. Research undertaken in recent years reveals that it is difficult to measure and evaluate the effect of training both pre-and post-training interventions. The motivation for this study therefore, derives from the need to know whether the PMDS policy is being effectively implemented at the NSG, especially after it has trained its staff on the MPC programme. The research wishes to establish whether the MPC intervention offered by the NSG is critical and key to improve the manner in which performance

appraisals are conducted within the department; whether or not the employees as well as their managers have gained anything from taking part in MPC programme offered by the NSG.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

In April 2007, the DPSA formulated the EPMDS framework for salary levels 1–12 appointed in terms of the *Public Service Act*, 1994 (Act 103 of 1994) with the aim of improving the implementation of PM in the public service. However, the problem is that the Government still encounters numerous challenges regarding the effective implementation of the PMDS in the public service. For example, the findings of both the 2012/2013 and 2013/14 financial years reveal that “poor management of performance was a cause for an increase in the number of grievance cases lodged in the public service” (Public Service Commission 2014:7).

The roundtable discussions hosted by the Public Service Commission (PSC) in 2014 highlighted some of the challenges associated with the poor management of performance in the public service. It was noted that one of the causes of these challenges is a lack of understanding of the objective of the PMDS in the public service. Secondly, it was reported that there seems to be a disjuncture between theory and practice as focus is placed on compliance, rather than managing performance with the view to improve service delivery. Thirdly, poor performance is only brought to the employee’s attention at the end of the performance cycle. This is a huge problem as employees are not given an opportunity to improve their performance prior to the assessment period. Fourthly, performance goals and standards are not properly defined, agreed on, or measurable. Lastly, there is an over-emphasis by employees on monetary rewards, which leads to the lodging of grievances when employees’ monetary expectations are not met.

Based on the above findings, the NSG saw a need to develop and design an intervention that will address the challenges encountered in implementing PMDS in the public service. The decision to introduce a training programme such as the MPC was influenced by the will to respond to the findings of the PSC, as well as the results of focus group discussions between the NSG and various departments in 2015. The

MPC targets employees on salary levels 9–12 in order to resolve the PMDS implementation challenges experienced in the public service. It is, however, also important to note that although the target group is employees on salary levels 9–12, all public servants are allowed to register and partake in the course (National School of Government 2016:5).

In this context, the question is whether the problem is a lack of understanding of PMS processes or lack of skills and training from managers and their subordinates to successfully implement the PMDS? As highlighted in the introductory section of the research study, the NSG is a key role player in the professionalisation of the public service through its learning and development interventions, including the MPC, which was designed to improve PM. Among others, the NSG's role in PM as a training institute is to be actively involved in capacity building. This involves ensuring improved employee performance through training and development.

Despite the factors mentioned above, the NSG's 2012/2013 Annual Report states that 93 percent of performance agreements were signed by Senior Management Service (SMS) members at level 14, which means that the department was unable to achieve a 100 percent compliance rate in terms of performance management. However, disciplinary steps were taken against SMS member who did not comply with PMDS requirement and final written warnings were issued to one SMS member and the other SMS member could not be disciplined due to a pending labour dispute.

To encourage good performance within the organisation, the department granted performance rewards to 71 out of 195 total employees, and these were presented in terms of race, gender, disability, salary bands, and critical occupations. A total of 11 of grievances were logged as a result, and only four cases were resolved for the period 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014 (The NSG 2014:92-96). In the 2015/2016 financial year the rate of compliance in matters related to performance agreements dropped from 93.5 percent to 92 percent. It was reported that there were four grievance cases lodged by the employees of the NSG and only one case was resolved as reported in the Annual Report (The NSG 2016:69-72).

The above-mentioned findings created the impression that there was a need for training on PM in the public service and at the NSG in particular. In response to these challenges, the NSG as a government training provider decided to design an intervention that would address the above-mentioned challenges.

Lastly, the topic of PMSs has been the subject of study for many researchers. However, the consulted literature reveals that research on training for performance management interventions is limited. This indicates that a gap exists in the current research, prompting investigations that specifically analyse the effect of PM training interventions to improve the effective implementation of PMDS in the public service.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTION

The study seeks to address the following broader question:

To what extent can performance management related training interventions improve the effective implementation of PMDS in the public service?

1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are to:

- Provide introduction and overview of the study,
- Provide a theoretical foundation that guides the study,
- Outline performance management training interventions offered by the NSG
- Assess the effect of performance management training on the implementation of the PMDS in the NSG and
- Provide recommendations that might assist in improving the implementation of the PMDS in the NSG through performance management training.

1.7 STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation is divided into six chapters:

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

This chapter provides an introduction and overview to the entire study. It also covers the background of the study, the motivation for the study, the problem statement, research question and research objectives. Finally, the structure of the dissertation and key concepts used throughout the study are provided.

CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter is concerned with the methodology for the study. It gives particular attention to describing the types of scientific research method in order to determine the most appropriate method for this study. It briefly outlines the research design, the rationale for the design, and the techniques used in Chapter Five of the study. The population for the study and sampling procedure is analysed. The data collection plan is also briefly outlined. Finally, this chapter examines the limitations and delimitation for the study. Further details are provided regarding the validity and reliability of the study as well as the ethical considerations.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter focuses on the literature review, which includes the information collected through reading and analysing related articles, books, journals, reports, and website searches. It provides a conceptual framework for the study by briefly discussing public administration and PM, their historical background and the theories surrounding them. It then discusses human resource management and development in the public service, covering trends and developments in the implementation of PMDS, drivers and key aspects of the PMS and the legislative framework on training and development. Finally, the literature analysis includes the challenges associated with the implementation of PMDS as well as the use of training and development to improve

PMDS in the public service. The importance of training evaluation in the public service is also discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR: TRAINING INTERVENTIONS OFFERED BY THE NATIONAL SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

This chapter provides the profile of the NSG by discussing its establishment and organisational structure, as well as providing a strategic overview of the organisation including its vision, mission and values. It then briefly outlines the operations of the NSG to show contributions made by each business unit to execute the School's mandate. Finally, the chapter also examines training interventions offered by the School, including the MPC online programme.

CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This chapter comprises data presentation and analysis of the research findings. The findings are presented by focusing on key themes derived from the research questions. Some of the findings are presented through various diagrams.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This is the concluding chapter which focuses on summarising the themes of the study, highlighting factors that influence the effective implementation of the PMDS in the public service before it outlines the recommendations for future research on topics related to the subject.

1.8 DEFINITION AND CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

A terminological clarification of some of the concepts which will be used throughout this study is provided below:

❖ **Public Administration**

According to Botes, Brynard, Fourie and Roux (1997:260), Public Administration (with a capital P and capital A) “refers to the study of all scientific disciplines that have a bearing on contemporary administrative and managerial practices in the public sector”. Public Administration provides the theoretical foundation for the practical application of public administration (see definition below). Tshiyoyo (2012:xiv) describes Public Administration as a broad field in which practice and theory are combined with the aim of promoting public policymaking to benefit the needs and interests of the society. Public Administration can also be used to create a relationship between government and governed society and to set up managerial practices which promote efficiency and effectiveness. Tshiyoyo (2012:xiv) further emphasises that it is imperative to understand that Public Administration (refers to the academic discipline that is offered by universities, particularly in the faculties that have existing schools of public administration and management, such the University of Johannesburg, the University of Pretoria and Tshwane University of Technology, among others.

❖ **Public administration**

According to Kent-Brown and Roux (2003:69), public administration (uncapitalised) is an activity inspired by the need to implement policies and deliver the services and outputs of these policies as determined by the executive and approved by the legislature. Public administration is therefore the executive branch of government responsible for the formulation, implementation, evaluation, and modification of government policies. Moreover, public administration is concerned with the application of six administrative functions to ensure the effective management of public institutions: policy-making, financial management, human resources management, work procedures, organisation and control. Public administration is concerned with the state and public service; it entails the activities of public servants. The researcher also

strongly believes that public administration's sole aim is to promote efficiency and effectiveness in order to improve the state of service delivery in various societies.

❖ **Human resource management**

Human resource management can be described as the way organisations manage their staff. This function is concerned with planning, organisation and control in order to be able to execute organisations' missions and goals successfully (McCourt and Eldridge 2003:2).

❖ **Human resource development**

Rowley and Keith (2011:47) describe Human Resource Development (HRD) as a process concerned with equipping employees with adequate knowledge, skills and competencies through training and development. From these definitions, one can conclude that future performance improvement in the public service would be impossible without HRD.

❖ **Training and development**

Kennedy (2009:5) defines training and development as the field concerned with organisational activities aimed at improving the performance of employees in the workplace.

❖ **Training needs analysis**

Training needs analysis (TNA) is a process that involves collection of information to detect what needs exist so that a training programme can be aligned towards addressing those needs before training takes place (Brown 2002:569).

❖ **National School of Government**

The NSG, formerly known as PALAMA was established in October 2013 by the former Minister for Public Service and Administration, Honourable Lindiwe Sisulu. In terms of the Public Service Act of 1999, the NSG is regarded as a schedule one department. The establishment of the School was a bold step in public service learning and development, positioning the NSG as a centre from which public sector training is co-ordinated and curriculum and training standards are directed. The purpose of the School is to build effective and professional public service cadres through the provision of relevant and mandatory learning and development training interventions. This decision to establish the NSG was rooted in several factors: the complex history of fragmented training in the public service; the fact that current efforts are insufficient to meet current and future needs; and the importance of professionalising public servants to create a public service that will realise the objectives of the developmental state and Vision 2030 (The NSG 2015:3).

❖ **Government**

Government can be described as a body that carries the authority to make and administer laws within a civil, corporate, religious, or academic organisation (Makene 2009:1). In the South African context, at the national level, Government is commonly understood to be the administration of a state in general: the executive function or branch of the body that exercises authority.

❖ **Performance incentives**

Performance incentives are described as “financial rewards granted to an employee for achieving exceptional scores after performance has been evaluated”. This includes a pay progression, performance bonus, and other non-financial rewards (DPSA 2007:6).

❖ **Performance agreement**

A performance agreement is a document that is discussed, agreed upon and signed by an employee and her or his supervisor, including a description of the job, selected Key Results Areas (KPAS) and Generic Assessment Factors (GAFs), a work-plan, and the employee's personal development plan (DPSA 2007:6).

❖ **Public service**

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 95 of 1996) stipulates that there is a public service for the Republic which must operate and be structured in terms of national legislation and which must ensure the execution of the lawful policies and legislation of the Government of the day. According to section 7 (2) of the *Public Service Act*, 1994 (Act 103 of 1994) national and provincial departments and organisational components have a mandate to render services to the general public. Crous (2002:16) states that the South African public service constitutes all persons with fixed positions or permanent additional appointments in these institutions.

1.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter has served as the introductory part of the research study. It presented the background to the study to help the reader to gain insights of PMDS in the public service, and into how training programmes related to PM can help improve both the implementation of the PMDS and the skills of employees in the public service. The chapter further outlined the motivation for the study and provided a problem statement, a research question, and the research objectives of the study. Finally, the structure of the dissertation and an outline of applicable key concepts used throughout the study was provided. The next chapter will focus on the research methods adopted in this dissertation.

CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Moeng (2011:38) maintains that research may be described as the investigation of an idea, subject or topic for a study; an area of interest is investigated from a particular context. Contrary, methodology is the justification of specific methods that are used in a given study (Moeng 2011:38). McMillan and Schumacher (2010:5) provide clarity on the term research methodology by stating that it is systematic and purposeful, planned to yield data on a particular research problem. Mohajan (2017:1) is of the view that research methodology provides the researcher with principles for organising, planning, designing, and conducting a study.

According to Tshiyoyo (2006:18) systematic research is deemed vital in order to gather and evaluate knowledge which can be used to determine the general applicability of aims, as well as the efficient way to use resources. O'Sullivan, Rassel and Berner (2003:1) argue that it is crucial to understand the various research techniques one can use for the purposes of collecting, using, and assessing information. Brynard and Hanekom (2006:28) also emphasise that a research methodology as a plan or strategy to conduct a research project requires the researcher to adopt various steps and methods to approach the research problem at hand. This process should not, however, be limited to research steps and approaches, but should also consider the logic behind the selected approaches and the reasons for the selection of a particular research method or technique instead of another.

In order for public administrators to make sound decisions and to be able monitor and examine the effects of those decisions, data form one important point of reference for information. It is therefore, imperative that the researcher understands which research methods are required to gather, collect and evaluate information. Current or future administrators need adequate information in order to make effective decisions to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery (Tshiyoyo 2006:18). The study seeks to analyse the effect of performance management interventions on the implementation of the PMDS policy in the public service. As mentioned in Chapter

One, the NSG is used as a case study for its MPC programme. Thus, the study will provide valid and reliable information to officials responsible for managing and making decisions pertaining to PM, helping them to gain better insights into improving the current PMDS practices that will result in the effective implementation of the PMDS through the MPC programme.

2.2 TYPES OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH METHODS

A research methodology provides a statement of how the research objective will be attained and how the problem statement will be resolved. This shows the critical importance of the research method in attaining the objective of this study as it provides adequate means of gathering data. It is also important to note that there are various methods and techniques that researchers can adopt and apply when conducting a study. The choice of method depends on the purpose, aims and objectives of the study as well as the underlying principles and approach guiding the research. The next section discusses different types of scientific research, with a specific focus on the most appropriate method used in scientific research.

It is therefore important to note that scientific research can be categorised into two main groups, namely: quantitative and qualitative research. The scientific method is currently employed as the major research mechanism in both quantitative and qualitative research methods. There is, however, a third method known as the triangulation (mixed methods) research approach. All three methods are briefly examined in this section.

O'Sullivan et al (2003:1) maintain that it is crucial to understand various research techniques that one can apply and adopt when collecting, using, and assessing information. Tshiyoyo (2012:33) states that the main goal in conducting research is to provide a solution to problems that our society faces: to expand and contribute to our collective knowledge. The purpose of this study is to analyse the extent to which PM training interventions can improve the effective implementation of the PMDS in a public service and at the NSG in particular. In order to accomplish the objective of this study, a research methodology needs to be applied, because it determines how the research

objective will be attained and how the problem being investigated will be resolved. Wagner, Kawulich and Garner (2012:274) also state that research methodology is critical to achieving the objective of the study as it provides adequate means of data collection as well as data analysis techniques. Importantly, before focusing on the research approach that is employed in this study, the different scientific research approaches must be examined.

The next section focuses on these approaches, namely the triangulation (or mixed methods) approach, the quantitative approach, and the qualitative approach.

2.2.1 Mixed methods research approach

As a point of departure, it is important to highlight that this study adopted a mixed methods (triangulation) approach. According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004:1), a mixed methods approach is most suitable where the researcher uses a qualitative approach for one stage of a study and a quantitative approach for another stage of the study. Griensven, Moore and Hall (2014:368) note that in a mixed methods study, the qualitative and quantitative approaches are often applied sequentially or concurrently. The manner in which the different strands or phases of a study are combined is determined by the aims and questions of the research. A study in which a qualitative phase is followed by a quantitative phase has been called exploratory, because it lends itself to the study of issues which are not understood well.

Creswell, Fetters and Ivankova (2004:7) argue that there is more to mixed methods research than gathering qualitative and quantitative data. This implies that in this method, data are combined or mixed according to various themes at different phases of the research process in order to answer the research question. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004:18) are of the view that data collection for mixed methods research is based on the principle that the “methods should be mixed in a way that has complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses.” The choice of data collection method is guided by the initial reasons for mixing approaches, namely: triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation and expansion of research findings. The choice to adopt a mixed methods approach for a study has its own strengths and weaknesses.

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004:21) maintain that the combination of different research methods can provide stronger evidence through the convergence and corroboration of research results. However, one of the weaknesses of this method is that it can be difficult for a single researcher to adopt and apply. The researcher needs extensive knowledge and understanding of both approaches as well as of how to appropriately integrate the two. It is also more costly and time consuming for the researcher to apply such a method. For this reason it is important for the researcher to always be clear about the reasons for adopting the mixed methods approach.

Lastly, there are several reasons as to why qualitative and quantitative research methods can be combined when conducting a study. Sale, Lohfeld and Brazil (2002:46) maintain that qualitative and quantitative research approaches can be combined with the aim of gaining better insights into the world in which we live. These approaches have commonality in terms of logic, and rules of inference are relevant to both. The advantage of combining both approaches is that a certain phenomenon can be studied from different angles, and both approaches have a similar commitment to understanding and enhancing the human condition.

2.2.2 Quantitative research approach

The major focus of quantitative research is on the measurement of quantity, and emphasis is placed on questions such as “How much?” and “How many?” as opposed to qualitative research, which focuses on the quality, nature and essence of phenomena. The philosophical roots of quantitative research can be traced back to positivism, whereas qualitative research is generally associated with phenomenology and ethnomethodology. Quantitative research can be associated with key words such as experimental, empirical and statistical, whereas qualitative research is associated with words such as fieldwork, ethnographic, grounded, constructionist and naturalistic. Quantitative research uses approaches derived from the natural sciences in order to ensure that the study is objective, generalisable and reliable (Webb and Auriacombe 2006:592).

Tshiyoyo (2012:34) further states that in quantitative research, the researcher attempts to portray how phenomena can be influenced by manipulating the variables. These attempts are made to determine principles and laws that can be applied to the larger population in a study. Quantitative research employs a deductive mode of analysis, while qualitative research employs an inductive mode of analysis. Babbie and Mouton (2007:49) state that this approach uses variables to describe and analyse human behaviour in an attempt to determine cause and effect. Brynard and Hanekom (2006:37) highlight that data collection techniques applied in quantitative research include questionnaires, observations and surveys to describe and explain phenomena.

There are some benefits and limitations associated with adopting and applying a quantitative research approach. These will be briefly discussed below:

One of the strengths of the quantitative research is that it provides data that are quantifiable and reliable to the population of the study (Webb and Auriacombe 2006:592). Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004:19) add that the benefits of quantitative research include the fact that a researcher can generalize findings based on random sampling techniques. This research method has the ability to make predictions, and research findings are often associated with higher level of credibility as the method is useful for studying large numbers of respondents. However, one of the weaknesses of quantitative research is its focus on theory testing rather than theory development. The knowledge developed as a result of such research may be too abstract for application outside of the scientific world.

2.2.3 Qualitative research approach

The greatest strength of the qualitative research approach is its ability to present numerical and theoretical representations of analysed data (Babbie and Mouton 2007:271). Wagner et al (2012:273) argue that in qualitative research the researcher becomes a tool through which the information is gathered, analysed and interpreted. Wagner et al (2012:273) further state that a qualitative research method allows researchers to find answers by explaining or seeking to understand the behaviour and perceptions of individuals and by describing the lived experiences of participants in

certain situations. Tshiyoyo (2012:34) attests to this by stating that qualitative researchers emphasise the value-laden nature of inquiry. They strive to dig deeper in trying to find answers to questions that put pressure on conventional ways of doing things and interrogate how experiences are created in our societies. The aim of qualitative research is to understand social processes and the meaning given to them.

A qualitative research approach is understood to be richly descriptive. It provides more detailed descriptions than quantitative research by exposing the truest nature of particular situations, processes, relationships and systems. Qualitative research can also be interpretative as it allows researchers to gain new insights into a phenomenon: developing new concepts, determining problems that exist within the phenomenon and establishing a deeper understanding of the subject (Babbie 2007: 50; Leedy and Ormrod 2001:134).

There are some benefits and limitations associated with adopting and applying a qualitative research approach. These will be briefly discussed below:

One of the benefits of qualitative research is its ability to adopt both a social constructionist position and inductive reasoning in order to understand the phenomenon being studied (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004:20). This implies that social reality and meaning are developed from participants' experiences, perceptions, and interpretations during discussions with the researcher. The researcher presents a blank slate to participants, who have to derive meaning based on their interactions with the issue being studied. This allows researchers to provide detailed descriptions of the social setting being investigated and to be responsive to the context. Through inductive reasoning, specific cases are studied to reach conclusions based on the general population (Kruger et al 2005:47). In addition, the researcher is able to link his or her own observations and interpretations with theoretical ideas developed for the purposes of establishing the internal validity of data (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004:20). One of the limitations of qualitative research is that researchers are unable to generalise findings to apply to the larger population, as the qualitative method relies heavily on non-probability sampling procedures. It therefore becomes a challenge to develop, test hypothesis and make predictions. Data collection and analysis are time

consuming and, as a result, findings can be easily influenced by the researcher's personal bias (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004:20).

2.2.4 Case study

As set out in the introductory chapter, this study is drawn upon a case study method as a fundamental design frame. According to Babbie and Mouton (2009: 281), the distinctive characteristic of a case study is its focus, and the emphasis is on a "single unit." The unit of analysis of the research study was the NSG's performance management training intervention known as MPC programme which was established in response to challenges related to the implementation of the PMDS in the public service. The locus of this study is therefore, selected on the basis that the NSG is a training institute that is actively involved in capacity building and MPC is one of the training interventions offered by the School. Thus, findings can be generally applied to the department as a whole. The use of a case study in this research was motivated by the fact that it would enable a richer understanding and knowledge attained on the effect of MPC programme on the implementation of the PMDS within the NSG. This also helped the researcher to obtain the inside perspectives of the NSG employees who participated on the MPC programme on their experiences as well as the meaning of these experiences.

2.3 RESEARCH DESIGN RATIONALE

According to Wagner et al (2012:274) research design refers to "a form of blueprint that is followed to conduct a study". Webb and Auriacombe (2006:589) are of the opinion that research design merely refers to the way in which the researcher plans to answer the research question. This means that a research design involves planning by the researcher with regard to how the research will be conducted. The research design also informs the research methods and techniques applied in the study. Webb and Auriacombe (2006:589) further maintain that a research design comprises the guidelines and instructions on how the researcher intends to provide a solution to the research problem. Durrheim (2004:29) asserts that a research design is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the

execution or implementation of the research strategy. The ultimate goal of a sound research design is to provide results that are judged to be credible. For Singleton and Straits (2004:32), a research design vividly states the research problem and how the researcher plans to gather, analyse and interpret data to help answer the research question.

In attaining the objectives of the study, the mixed methods research approach was deemed the most suitable. This is to say that the research design of this study uses, interchangeably, quantitative research methods and qualitative research methods. This design was motivated by the fact that the mixed-methodological design is not only the most suitable for this study, but it was also able to strengthen the findings of the study and provided adequate validation by means of both deductive and inductive research methods. Corbin and Strauss (2008:27-28) confirm that the use of a mixed methods approach assist researchers obtain different types of data on the same problem in order to validate the findings of the study.

This study was a descriptive and an explanatory in nature as it intended to analyse the effect of performance management training interventions on the implementation of PMDS in the public service. Quantitative data was analysed using pivot tables to extract graphs and statistics and thus establish meaningful analysis from the data. On the other hand, for qualitative data, a thematic content analysis was applied to establish the patterns and themes emanating from the data. The discovered patterns and themes were therefore analysed in order to establish meaningful findings.

Qualitative research covers numerous procedures that help the researcher interpret, translate, and make meaning of their world (Welman, Kruger and Mitchell 2005:188-193). While, quantitative research method is a process which is concerned with collecting numerical data and analysing it utilising statistical methods. McMillan and Schumacher (2010:25) state that it is common to use several research methods chronologically. For instance, in an explanatory design, quantitative data are usually the first to be collected. Qualitative data are then gathered afterwards to explain or elaborate on the quantitative findings. Typically, the nature of the study is quantitative and the qualitative results are secondary. Qualitative findings are, therefore, often used to augment statistical (quantitative) data.

2.4 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

Several sources have been consulted in order to collect data and information pertaining to the research topic. The following section will explain the manner in which data collection techniques have been used for the purposes of the study.

2.4.1 Survey questionnaire

The purpose of the survey questionnaire was to obtain information on the effect of MPC programme on the implementation of the PMDS at the NSG and to inform the research question as stipulated in 1.5. There are various types of questionnaires which are mostly used for data collection purposes in a study; these include, firstly, open ended questionnaires which are questions for which the respondent is asked to provide own answers. Open-ended questions leave the participants completely free to express their views as they wish in as detailed or complex a manner, as long or as short a form as they feel appropriate. No restrictions, guidelines or suggestions for solutions are given (Bless, Higson-Smith and Sithole 2013:209). Secondly, close-ended questionnaires are survey questions in which the respondent is asked to select an answer from a list provided by the researcher. These are popular in survey research because they provide a greater uniformity of responses and are more easily processed than open-ended questions, (Babbie 2011:244). In close-ended questions the possible answers are set out in the questionnaire or schedule and the respondent ticks the category that best describe the respondent's answer. Close-ended questionnaires facilitate answering and make it easier for the researcher to code and classify responses (Kumar 2005:132).

A semi-structured survey questionnaires which contain both open and close-ended questions, will be circulated to employees between salary levels 5-12 who participated on the MPC programme asked to respond to a series of questions and may also be requested to motivate the answer provided. The use of a survey questionnaire was motivated by the fact that MPC programme was offered online. The questionnaire is separated into five parts. The first part incorporates the biographical details and variables that may differ between persons such as organisational race, gender, age, tenure, years in current position and qualifications. The second part of the

questionnaire incorporates an assessment of the PMDS and is designed to test the degree to which this is implemented within the NSG. The third part of the questionnaire focuses on assessing the online MPC, while the fourth part focuses on assessing improved areas post training through the MPC. This intended to establish the effect of the MPC training intervention theories in improving the implementation of the PMDS. Lastly, the fifth part of the questionnaire provides participants with the opportunity to make general comments regarding the MPC as well as the PMDS within the NSG. Due to the fact that the study was not purely quantitative, the research did not require assistance from the Statistics Department at the University of Pretoria with regard to the validity of items for statistical purposes.

2.4.2 Document analysis

A review of existing literature is essential for the research project as it establishes the scientific context and the purpose of the study. It provides the background for the development of the research question (Haverkamp and Young 2007:285). The literature review also guides the researcher in choosing the best methods for data collection, and in deciding how results should be interpreted (Brynard and Hanekom 2006:38).

In Chapter Three of the study, which contains the literature survey, data and information were collected from the following primary and secondary sources:

- Official reports such as Annual Reports and annual performance plans regarding the implementation of the PMDS in the public service,
- Applicable legislation and regulations as well as governmental notices and reports on training and development in the public service,
- Published books and journal articles and
- Official documents including, but not limited to, the project concept document, log frame for the MPC, minutes of meetings, and consultation notes.

2.5 POPULATION FOR THE STUDY

According to Kum, Cowden and Karodia (2014:82) a “population” refers to the entire set of data that is of interest to the researcher, and the “target population” refers to the group of people or objects from which the sample should be taken. Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009:26) describe population as the universe of people to which the study could be generalised. This study was conducted at the NSG, which was established in October 2013. The mandate of the NSG includes the professionalisation of the public service through various learning and development interventions. As mentioned in Chapter One of the study, the role of the NSG is to be actively involved in capacity building initiatives while ensuring improved employee performance through training and development. The NSG has approximately 251 employees and it is situated in the national sphere of Government in Pretoria, South Africa. In March 2016, the MPC – a training intervention related to performance management – was introduced. This intervention was developed and designed to improve performance management in the public service and assist with addressing challenges in effectively implementing the PMS. A total number of 32 000 public servants (including NSG employees) from various departments across the country took part in the MPC.

2.6 SAMPLING FOR THE STUDY

A sample refers to a small, manageable number of respondents selected by the researcher to participate in the study. A sample is both derived from a population and acts as a means to understanding that population (Kum 2014:82). Not all employees were included in the study as a sample which reflected and represented the population of the subjects selected. The number of participants selected as a sample for this study was limited to 197 permanent employees between salary levels 5-12 who participated in the MPC programme.

The sample for this study will be broken down into the following categories:

Group 1: Interns

Group 2: Administrators with a salary scale of level 5–8

Group 3: Assistant Directors with a salary scale of level 9–11

Group 4: Deputy Directors with a salary scale of level 11–12

Group 5: Managing Performance Course (MPC) developers

The sample outlined above is selected to be a symbolic representation of the population of the research study being conducted.

2.6.1 Selection of the sample

A non-probability sampling method, purposive sampling, was adopted for this study. This sampling method gives the researcher an opportunity to select a sample based on particular criteria (such as age or experience) that are in line with the objectives of the research. Individuals who can provide the most relevant information are strategically selected (Wagner et al 2012:9). Kothari (2004:14) states that, despite the fact that this type of sampling does not result in representative samples, it can be best used in small inquiries due to its relative advantages in terms of money and time.

In this case, because the researcher was analysing the effect of performance management training interventions in the public service, the sample for the study consisted of employees between salary levels 5-12 who took part in the MPC offered by the NSG and affected by PMDS issues and individuals who were directly involved in the development of the programme. This included individuals from the human resource unit such practitioners and managers as well as employees from other units within the implementation and management of the NSG.

Research participants were selected based on the following criteria: they are employees of the NSG, they are affected by PM issues (as they sign performance agreements annually with their respective supervisors), they have participated in the MPC training intervention, they work in different business areas within the organisation and they have varying years of experience in their positions. The number of the sample for this study (197) is aligned with the view that qualitative researchers should use a small, carefully selected sample due to the in-depth nature of the study and the detailed analysis of data required (Govender 2014:34).

2.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Kruger, De Vos, Fouché and Venter (2005:218) assert that data analysis is a process which is concerned with classifying, collating, manipulating and summarising data in attempting to respond to the research question. Wagner et al (2012:269) assert that during the process of data analysis the researcher examines and collates data in order to infer meaning. Mouton (2001:108-109) agrees with this, stating that data analysis means that the researcher provides an analysis of data or explains the stage at which gathered data are transformed into information. As highlighted in Section 2.2 (types of scientific research methods), data analysis in qualitative research is mostly dependent on the researcher's ability to understand the social context from which data are collected, making use of analytical and integrative skills. This is as opposed to quantitative analysis, which only focuses on statistics.

For this study data was automatically captured on the Microsoft Excel Programme by the system directly from the online environment. Since the survey questionnaire had open-ended questions, thematic content analysis was applied to establish the patterns and themes arising from the collected data. The discovered patterns and themes were therefore analysed in order to establish meaningful results by identifying the most common trends in responses from the participants. Thematic analysis refers to searching across a range of data to find meaningful patterns that have been repeated (Braun and Clark 2006:32). The frequencies of responses to the closed-ended questions are presented by salary level.

2.8 DATA COLLECTION PLAN

According to Nsingo (2004:88), a data collection plan indicates the manner in which the researcher organizes the process of collecting information to be used for the research being conducted.

In this study, the researcher conducted the data collection process through:

- Questionnaire distribution (carried out between 8 September and 31 September 2017), and

- Documentary search (carried out between 30 April 2016 and August 2017).

2.9 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

2.9.1 Limitations of the study

The following limitations for this research study should put into consideration:

- **Time constraints**

Time is a serious constraint for this study. The researcher, as a full-time employee at the NSG, is required to work eight-hour days for five days a week, and has conducted this study concurrently with her work duties. Considering the time frame to compile this study, it was not possible to collect all the supplementary information in relation to the research.

- **Confidentiality**

The researcher, as an employee at the NSG, will have encountered difficulties in obtaining certain reports pertaining to the past and current status of the challenges experienced in relation to the PMDS within the NSG.

- **Information**

Numerous challenges were experienced in searching for information regarding training through performance management interventions in the public service. The available literature is mostly concerned with training and development in the public service in general and its importance in improving employee performance. Preferred information would have been on the outcomes of training in interventions to improve performance management in the public service.

- **Reliability of data collection methods**

The use of questionnaires as a method of data collection was a limitation to the study in that some participants may not have responded to the questionnaires correctly despite the instructions or may not have fully answered the interview questions provided by the researcher.

- **Bias**

There is a possibility that participants may be biased, providing socially desirable answers to try and protect the image of the organisation. This might have implications for the findings of the research study.

- **Sampling method**

The study adopts a convenient sampling technique. This sampling method is used to obtain information from the people who are most available. In an attempt to collect data as quickly as possible, the researcher will have involved any available and willing full-time employees from the NSG, and this has compromised the timeline and the sample size of the study.

Despite the above-mentioned limitations, it is important to note that the relevant data were accessed and used to meet the objective of the study. These data were useful in drawing conclusions and making recommendations. The next section briefly discusses the delimitation for the study.

2.9.2 Delimitation of the study

Considering the limitations mentioned above, it was impossible for the research to cover all the issues pertaining to PM training interventions in the South African public service. The focus of the research is therefore on the analysis of training interventions related to performance management in order to improve the implementation of the PMDS within the NSG. The NSG is used as a case study for its MPC training intervention. The study will therefore not consider training interventions offered by

other Government departments. Moreover, this research will also focus on certain employees from the NSG (non-senior managers) who took part in the MPC, and thus cannot be generalised to employees from other government departments which fall under the public service.

2.10 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY FOR THE STUDY

Bhattacharjee (2012:9) maintains that in qualitative research, validity and reliability depend on criteria that are used to judge the integrity, values and trustworthiness of the individual researcher.

2.10.1 Validity for the study

Validity is deemed as one significant aspect to be considered in a research study. Denscombe (2010:298), asserts that data validity relates to the extent to which research data and the tools for data collection are deemed accurate, honest and relevant. In this study, content validity in terms of the survey questionnaire was ensured through consultation with the study leader, as well as a senior manager from human resource responsible for overseeing performance management related issues in various business units at the NSG to verify that the questions actually address the objectives of the study. Data validity was also influenced by the fact that respondents may have wanted to provide bias answers in the questionnaire in order to protect the reputation of the NSG and to please the researcher. To counter this limitation, respondents were given an information letter attached in the questionnaire confirming that the purpose of the research. The letter included assurance of anonymity.

2.10.2 Reliability for the study

Salkind (2009:110) maintains that reliability of a data collection tool for research is ensured when it measures the same variable more than once and results in the same outcomes. The semi-structured survey questionnaire used in this study complies with the requirement of reliability as it was made easy to understand and not cumbersome so that respondents could fill it in without the help of the researcher. To ensure reliability of data, all participants were given the same survey questionnaire was

circulated to all the employees between salary levels 5-12 who participated in the MPC programme. Additionally, to improve the reliability and validity of this study, the responses by the participants (mentioned in chapter 5) are also included in this report as an annexure. The reason for this is to create maximum transparency in terms of what is analysed in the data analysis and research findings section.

2.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher anticipated that this study will not have any negative effect on any of the participants. The principles of informed consent, voluntary participation and anonymity as stated in (Babbie and Mouton 2009: 521–525) were adhered to. The study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Department of Economic Management Sciences of the University of Pretoria. In terms of the study area, permission for data collection was obtained from the Principal of the National School of Government as well as the Head of Corporate Management division. Additionally, in order to ensure that ethics are upheld, the following factors were put into consideration:

- Ensured that a cover letter and consent form accompanied the self-administered questionnaire to reassure participants of their right not to participate as well as the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses;
- Obtained consent from participants and explained to them that participation is voluntary, and that withdrawal will not lead to any penalties;
- Ensured that participants will not be harmed as a result of their participation or non-participation;
- Fully disclosed the purpose of the research to the participants;
- Refrained from interfering with the working environment of the staff of the NSG when collecting data;
- Ensured that the view of the participants for the research have been kept anonymous; and
- Undertaken not use the research to abuse her position as an employee at the NSG.

2.12 CONCLUSION

The mixed methods approach was adopted in this study in order to get the benefits of using more than one data collection tool, which also helps to verify the validity and the reliability of each method. The use of survey questionnaires and triangulation of data was explained in detail in order to explicate the advantages of using the two methods in a research study. In addition, the chapter briefly outlined the limitations of and delimitation for the study, the data collection plan, and the reliability and validity for this study. The sampled participants comprised employees on salary levels 5-12 from the NSG who participated in the MPC programme. The next chapter (Chapter 3) focuses on the literature review pertaining to training and development, as well as PMDS in the public service.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 INTRODUCTION

PM as well as training and development have been subjects of public administration over the years. The significance of these concepts in the public service cannot be over-emphasised. As a point of departure, the current PMDS was established by the DPSA with the intent of ensuring that departments have proper guidelines on how to manage individual and the organisational performance as a whole but having been triggered by the need to develop the skills of the workforce. Failure to properly manage the PMDS would mean that the department is most likely to fall short of its performance targets, and this could also lead to an increase in grievances lodged by certain employees.

The PMDS consists of a process with sequential logic that ensures that their objectives are achieved. These steps consist of performance planning, performance contracting, performance appraisal, performance rewards and development, performance monitoring and evaluation. Currently, many organisations have given full attention to the management of performance of their employees, knowing that without employees performing effectively according to the set standards the organisation cannot achieve its objectives (DPSA 2007:2).

This study aims to analyse the efficacy of the MPC programme on the implementation of the PMDS in the NSG on employees between salary levels 5 – 12 after the completion of MPC programme. The purpose of this literature survey is therefore, to present a synopsis of academic writing which has been consulted in the subject area that is being investigated.

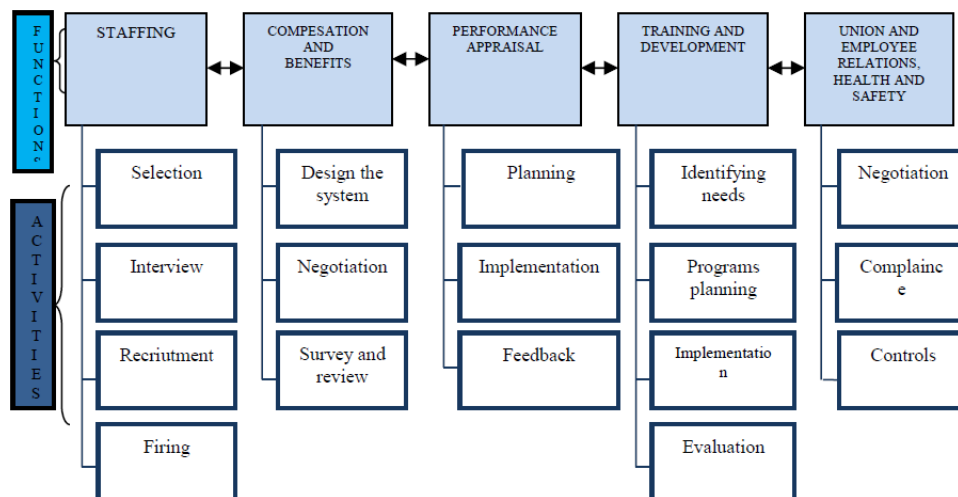
The previous chapter outlined the research methods adopted in this study. This chapter presents a review of the literature pertaining to PMDS as well as, training and development. This will assist in giving a broader understanding on the importance of training and development and its effect on the implementation of PMDS in the public service.

3.2 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Since South Africa became democratic, public administration has been required to be based on sound human resources management and career-development practices to maximise human potential. In the context of this study, Human Resource Management (HRM) encompasses the management of the human resources that the organisation requires in order to achieve its vision, strategy and objectives. In other words, HRM is concerned with securing, maintaining, and utilising an effective work force to cope with the market-related challenges which they may encounter (Mohlala 2012:1).

According to Republic of South Africa (1996:107), HRM functions are classified differently although they all serve the same purpose of ensuring effective human resources. The basic HRM functions include human resource planning, organising, staffing, leading, and controlling. The core HRM functions namely staffing, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation and benefits, and finally union and employee relations and health and safety are illustrated below.

Figure 1: Human Resource Management functions



Source: (Mohlala 2012:6)

3.2.1 Staffing defined

Maih (2015:9) asserts that the function of staffing involves recruiting the right people for the job advertised and some instances retrenching or firing of a person. When the most suitable people considered for the job are identified, HRM is required to make arrangements for when and where the interviews will be conducted. The process of selecting and interviewing the candidates are performed in order to recruit the required personnel. Toljamo (2011:23) mentions that one of the staffing objectives has always been and has been advocated for ensuring that people are recruited, they should be retained. It is also imperative that once the person has been hired, the process of induction commences. The effective implementation of performance appraisals requires the staffing function to be aligned to the overall organisational strategies. This is to ensure that the HRM is well informed in terms of what is expected of the hired employee and can assess their performance at any point in time. Even still, the employee can evaluate themselves depending on what they are expected to deliver and easily identify their potentials and which area they will require development on.

3.2.2 Compensation and benefits

Compensation is a process whereby employees are being remunerated for the job done as instructed by their supervisors in the workplace (Khan et al 2011:71). It is through compensation that employees recognise the value of the work they do which contributes to the organisational performance. An increase in confidence, staff morale, job satisfaction and motivation will result from compensation (Lemao 2015:31). Idemobi, Onyeizugbe and Akpunonu (2011:6) view compensation as one of the fundamental tools to enhancing and achieving organisational goals and objectives. Khan et al (2011:72) maintain that there is a strong relationship between compensation and organisational performance.

There are various types of compensation namely; financial and non-financial compensation. Financial compensation is a compensation that is made up of monetary terms which encompasses financial rewards and financial incentives such as performance bonuses or salary increase (Armstrong 2003:687). On the other hand, non-financial compensation is concerned with rewards that are not monetary based in

order to enhance the morale and confidence of employees in the workplace (Danish and Usman 2010:158). Kuvaas and Dysvik (2009:219) argue that many organisations are shifting the focus towards greater recognition to individual pay and performance. This is not only to persuade their workers to increase productivity and efficiency but also to motivate them with the aim of retaining the highly valued personnel which is more committed through a more favourably attitude disposed towards the achievement of organisational goals and objectives.

3.2.3 Performance management defined

Aslam and Sarwar (2013:3) describes PM as a set of processes, a concept, or a holistic philosophy that involves employee development; and monitoring and measuring performance in order to identify areas which require improvement. Contrary, Jackson, Schuler and Werner (2009:314) state that PM comprises a formatted, structured process used to measure, assess, and influence employees' job related attitude, behaviour, and performance outcomes. In other words, PM assists to direct and motivate employees to carry out their duties in an efficient and effective manner. Radebe, Vyas-Doorgapersad, and Grobler (2015:93), mention that performance management processes are expected to be embedded in the human resource management function. PM is a process ascertaining that employees are aware of the organisation's vision.

Lutwama, Roos and Dolamo (2013:1), assert that PM forms a significant part of human resource management that ensures the effective utilisation of limited resources. PM is a continuous process of identifying, measuring and developing individual performance or teams and aligning that performance to the overall strategic objectives of the organisation. Van der Waldt (2004:39) supports the above by stating that PM is an approach to management that integrates the contribution of managers and employees towards attaining an organisation's strategic objectives. It involves various processes and systems that are established to manage performance in the organisation as a whole, in sections, in teams, and individually.

Lutwama et al (2013:1) further emphasise that PM comprises of three main functions which are categorised as strategic, administrative and developmental. The strategic function is linked with individual performance of an employee to the overall organisational strategy. While the administrative function, helps provide supervisors with valuable information to be able to make sound decisions pertaining to salary increments, promotions, recognition and rewards. Lastly, the developmental function of PM is realised through the provision of information on the strengths and weaknesses of employees.

Pather (2014:15) highlights that PM is regarded as one of the disliked organisational processes by managers and employees. Rhys (2014:3) argues that PM in the public sector distorts the priorities of service delivery organizations and inhibits genuine innovation, often to the detriment of service users. PM restricts employees' innate sense of mission and may cause attention to be excessively focused upon the target that is being measured.

In contrast to the above, the small but growing number of empirical studies of the impact of PM largely points out that PM is beneficial for public service performance, especially at the policy field level. This is supported by Rhys (2014:3) who maintains that PM can be described as the policies, strategies and techniques intended to direct the attention of supervisors and employees towards improved organisational performance. Within the public sector, PM may also be useful to politicians and a focus on "managing for results" has become an important complement to the traditional emphasis on managing inputs (budgets and staff) and managing processes (rules and structures).

Heathfield (2013:43) indicates that PM is concerned with ensuring that the environment in which employees work allows them to perform optimally, effectively, and efficiently. PM should therefore be a comprehensive work system that begins with a job description and ends when an employee exits the organisation. A PMS per this definition, should develop clear and concise job descriptions; ensure the appropriate recruitment of the right people for the right job; determine tools of the trade; agree on performance standards, outcomes, and measures; provide orientation, induction and training and development; and facilitate on-going coaching and mentoring.

Gruman and Saks (2011:34) argue that PM is a critical aspect of organisational effectiveness because it is the key process through which work is achieved. It is considered a crucial tool in managing human capital, and should therefore be a top priority of managers. Van Dijk and Thornhill (2003:464-465) in an article titled “The use of a performance management system to ensure an integrated approach to human resource development”, highlight the importance of human resource training and development in terms of individual development as well as the performance of the organisation. Emphasis is placed on developing the individual and organisation simultaneously.

From above definitions, it is clear that in order for an organisation to attain its strategic goals and objectives, its PM processes should involve both the manager and the subordinate (Van der Waldt 2004:39). Therefore, for the purposes of this dissertation, PM should be understood as a system through which organisations set work goals, determine performance standards, assign and evaluate work, provide performance feedback, determine training and development needs, and distribute rewards (Varma, Pawan, Budhwar and De Nisi 2008:15).

3.2.4 Objectives of performance management

According to Armstrong (2006:143), PM is concerned with three key objectives. The first objective focuses on performance improvement in order to accomplish organisational, team and individual goals and objectives. This implies that individuals’ performance should be aligned with departmental strategic goals and objectives. The second objective focuses on development, as on-going professional growth of employees is a prerequisite for improved performance. The third objective is concerned with meeting the needs and demands of all stakeholders from numerous organisations, management units, employees, customers, and community members. Public Service Regulations (2001:2) stipulate that one of the key factors in achieving these objectives is communication: creating a climate in which managers and members of their teams engage in a conversation to define expectations and exchange information on the organisation’s mission values and objectives. If these objectives are properly implemented, government departments should ensure that the

fundamental goal of PM is centred on development and allows for effective responses when recognising exceptional performance.

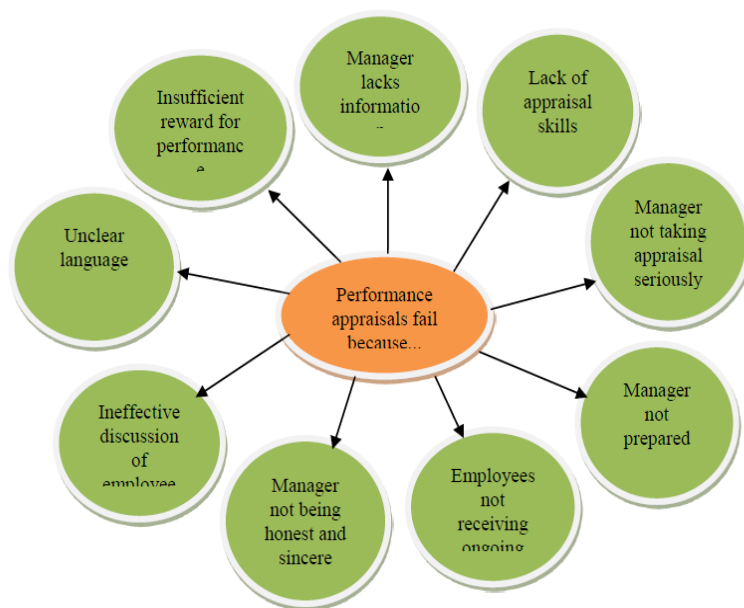
3.2.5 Purpose of performance appraisal

As outlined in the introduction section of this chapter, departments develop PM systems for various reasons, but specifically for evaluation and development purposes. Makamu (2016:15) is of the view that the developmental purposes of PA include providing and communicating performance feedback, identifying individual strengths/weaknesses, recognizing individual performance, assisting in goal identification, evaluating goal achievement identifying individual training needs, determining organizational training needs, improving communication and allowing employees to discuss concerns. On the other hand, administrative purposes of PA include but not limited to documenting personal decisions, determining promotion candidates, determining transfers and assignments, identifying poor performance.

Although the purposes of PM interventions differ, they are likely to impact upon the satisfaction of employees within the system (Briscoe, Schuler and Tarique 2012:344). PA is the continuous process of evaluating and managing both the behaviour and outcomes in the workplace (Analoui 2007:202). Sarwar (2013:84) maintains that PA system is one of the important reason of the organisation to shift from PA to PM even though the purpose of both are same that is to develop employee's performance by classification of their strengths and weaknesses to lead for formulation of appropriate training and development program. Paile (2012:10), further states that PA has given ground to performance management. She states that performance management is a broader process in which organisational aims and objectives are used as a starting point for the setting of objectives, for divisions, departments, teams and individuals. Aguinis and Pierce (2008:8) indicate that PA which is normally done once or twice a year is often confused with the daily task of performance management. Perhaps it is for this reason that employees in the public sector are more concerned with the scoring and performance bonuses rather than the bigger picture.

McCourt and Eldridge (2003:211–212) emphasise that if there are no proper systems and plans to deal with the findings of the PA, the expected benefits of this process for the organization may not be realized. Further still, although good PA may be of benefit to an organisation, it may be bad if not effectively implemented. Depending on the appraisal feedback; negative or positive, its implication to the employee may tarnish the organisation if not received well by the employee. Significantly, the HRM unit has a responsibility to pay attention to the reasons why PA fails. Some of these reasons are illustrated in the figure below:

Figure 3.1: Reasons why performance appraisals fail



Source: (Bohlander and Snell 2004:9)

3.3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

Poor implementation of the PMDS can have negative consequences for service delivery in the public service. In most cases, poor implementation of the PMDS results from a lack of skills and knowledge in line managers and employees about the system itself. Some managers and employees do not understand the importance and benefits of successfully implementing performance management. One of the major challenges encountered in the implementation of the PMDS is the fact that there is a disjuncture between theory and practice. The issue of lack of time, resources and skills from

managers to provide comprehensive reviews on performance by the staff they are responsible for remains a challenge.

Pearse and Williams (2009:45) state that in order for effective implementation of a PMDS to be achievable, it should be aligned with the cultural values of the organisation. Not only does organisational culture have an impact on the overall effectiveness of the organisation, but it also influences employee behaviour and the willingness to accept change. Organisational culture results in strong norms and values, better management and control, as well as consistency. Sorensen (2002:64) agrees and points out that it has been proven by research that an organisation's performance can be improved by corporate culture as it leads to internal behaviour consistency among employees. Based on this discussion, an organisational culture which promotes learning and development, especially in the area of PM, would improve the manner in which the PMDS is applied.

The PSC, as a key role of PM, stipulates that HRM directorates in all government departments should ensure that annual performance reviews and quarterly performance reviews are conducted and completed. This is the platform in government for employees to receive formal feedback on their performance and later be rewarded accordingly with different incentives such as performance bonuses. It should be noted that heads of department are not exempted from this process. In fact, they are expected to lead by example in the implementation of the PMDS (PSC 1997:7). Armstrong (2006:85) maintains that performance reviews should take place on a continuous basis in order to ensure the accomplishment of strategic goals and for PM to be effective, senior management buy-in is fundamental. HRM processes through the PMDS should be set in a way that supports and holds employees accountable for their actions in carrying out their daily duties (PSC 2009:2).

One of the objectives with which PM is concerned is development of employees. In this regard, McNamara (2006:10) holds that the HRM unit has the responsibility to ensure that training is provided to help enhance the knowledge and skills of employees so that they can perform their duties in a fulfilling manner. So in this case, training and development can be means to develop employees in areas requiring improvement as shown in their performance agreements. A lack of training can subsequently lead to

HRM being inefficient, in turn affecting the implementation of the PMDS in an organisation. McNamara (2006:11) further suggests that it is crucial for any organisation to have highly trained employees with a clear understanding of performance issues as well as adherence to various regulations of government performance management in the public service. To achieve this, employees should be sent for training to improve their knowledge and understanding.

Tilley (2010:16) suggests that it is important that every organisation designs a PMS that will outline its priorities: that is, its strategic goals and objectives. PMSs designed and implemented using the bottom-up approach can improve the performance of the organisation. A feedback loop in the bottom-up approach makes it possible to compare goals with actual outcomes. Top-down rigid control systems, on the other hand, are inclined to fail.

The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997), which is one of the legislative frameworks that guides the implementation and management of the performance management system, maintains that officials, especially those who serve citizens directly, will in the future be assessed on how their performance contributes to improving the delivery of services. This notion is supported by Van Dijk and Thornhill (2003:464-465), who argue that “successful performance management increases the total performance of organisations by optimising the output of the employees in terms of quality and quantity”.

Singh and Twalo (2015:9) suggest that an ideal PMDS in the public service must help individuals to acknowledge their weaknesses, realise their strengths, and improve their skills, knowledge and attitudes. Moreover, it should motivate individuals’ career growth through training and development. It should also assist managers in identifying shortfalls and gaps in employment regulations, procedures and practices.

3.4 ROLE PLAYERS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

The previous section focused on the objectives of PM. This section addresses external and internal role players in PMDS in the public service. These are briefly outlined below:

3.4.1 External role players

There are various entities that are responsible for the development and implementation of the PMDS in the public service, such as the DPSA, the PSC, the NSG and trade unions. The following section will briefly discuss these entities.

❖ Department of Public Service and Administration

Erasmus, Swanepoel, Schenk, Van der Westhuizen and Wessels (2005:13) indicate that the Department of Public Service and Administration introduced its first PM framework in 1999. This framework is used as a guideline in developing departmental policies in both the national and provincial spheres. All government departments are expected to align their performance management policies with this framework as well as with their strategic goals and objectives.

❖ Public Service Commission

The role of the PSC in PM is twofold. Firstly, it acts as a watchdog in examining, monitoring and evaluating human resource practices of government departments, publishing their findings as public reports. Secondly, it is responsible for proposing measures which will lead to efficiency and effectiveness in the performance of the public sector. In ensuring efficiency and effectiveness, one of the activities carried out by the PSC is the co-ordination of performance agreements for heads of department. In essence, it is the responsibility of the PSC to assist in ensuring that the performance management system is effectively implemented (Erasmus et al 2005:13).

❖ **National School of Government**

The NSG, formerly known as the Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (PALAMA), was established in 2008. In terms of the *Public Service Act, 1999* (Act 103 of 1999), the NSG is regarded as a schedule one department. As a training institute, the NSG's role in PM is to be actively involved in capacity building. This includes ensuring improved employee performance through training and development. The offered programmes include leadership skills, financial skills and technical skills. Furthermore, the lack of understanding of the PMS is addressed through training programmes offered by the School (Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy 2010:9).

❖ **Trade unions**

According to the *Labour Relations Act, 1995* (Act 66 of 1995), trade unions are the representative and legitimate bodies entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that the PMS is designed and executed in accordance with fair labour practices. Trade unions are classified as external role players in PM. One of the responsibilities of the trade unions is to represent workers who are acting collectively and seeking to protect and promote their mutual interests through collective bargaining. When employees want to lodge grievances either for salary increases, performance bonuses or unfavourable working conditions, they go through their union representatives. Furthermore, trade unions also negotiate with management in an attempt to resolve disputes between employees and employers, or try to fight for the best interests of its members (employees).

3.4.2 Internal role players

❖ **Supervisors**

Supervisors play a crucial role in PM. They achieve results through employees and must therefore, manage their performance. Their role of supervisors during the planning and performance agreement stage is to help subordinates decide on their roles, goals, personal development plans and performance improvement plans.

Performance achievements should then be monitored against the plan throughout the year, providing regular feedbacks and coaching when required (Armstrong 2009:9). According to the Public Service Commission (2009:7), the role of the line manager in performance management involves:

- Ensuring that employees understand what is expected from them by setting clear performance expectations, standards, targets and goals for subordinates;
- Providing regular feedback on the subordinates' performance;
- Mentoring, coaching and counselling subordinates when needed;
- Keeping accurate records of the subordinates' performance; and
- Capacitating employees by facilitating and providing the required training and development.

❖ **Employees**

The role employees in the PM involves understanding and supporting the system, firstly by being willing to participate in the setting of performance expectations and standards, and secondly by being realistic in assessing themselves and being reasonable in accepting performance feedback from their supervisor, whether negative or positive. Thirdly, they need to call attention to inaccuracies, biases and job changes that might affect the PMS. Lastly, but most importantly, they need to take responsibility for performance improvement and development (Lemao 2015:25).

❖ **Human Resource Management and Development Directorates**

The Human Resource Management and Development (HRM&D) directorate at the NSG has a responsibility to facilitate the PM related activities and ensure that proper processes are adhered to. The directorate coordinates the PM functions on behalf of the organisation. According to Lemao (2015:39), HRM&D directorate should:

- Establish the organisation's performance management needs;
- Design performance management systems, forms and a policy in consultation with managers, employees and labour union representatives; and

- Organise training for both the supervisors and employees to improve on the implementation of PM.

3.5 BARRIERS IN IMPLEMENTING PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

According to Cascio and Aguinis (2005:85-100), barriers to effective implementation of the PMDS can be classified into three main categories: organisational, political and interpersonal.

3.5.1 Organisational barriers

Organisational barriers to the effective implementation of the PMDS occur when employees are held accountable for mistakes that may be the result of built-in organisational structures. Cascio and Aguinis (2005:85-100) state that variations in performance within a system may be due to common causes such as flaws in how the system was constructed, or other shortcomings that managers encounter. Organisations often perceive the implementation of the PMDS as a forced bureaucratic activity which has very little to do with real work duties. It is implemented merely to satisfy statutory mandates for compliance purposes.

Additionally, The Management Training Specialist Institute (2010:8) states that, in order to address the above-mentioned barrier to implementing the PMDS, it is crucial that employees have a clear understanding of their roles and duties in the workplace as stipulated in their performance agreements. This could boost their motivation in performing their duties successfully. Based on this discussion, the researcher believes that when employees are clear on what is expected from them, uncertainty could be reduced. Employees will be motivated to do more in trying to achieve the goals and objectives of the organisation. If employee roles and responsibilities are clearly stated, employees will develop through realising their value within the organisation.

3.5.2 Political barriers

Political barriers arise from deliberate attempts by managers or supervisors who rate performance to improve or to protect their self-interest when there is a possibility of conflicting results. Cascio and Aguinis (2005:85-100) state that appraisal takes place in an organisational environment that is not completely rational, straightforward, or dispassionate. Moreover, they emphasise that accomplishing accuracy in performance appraisals is not a priority to supervisors, who are merely concerned about motivating and rewarding their subordinates.

3.5.3 Interpersonal barriers

Interpersonal barriers to implementing the PMDS can be attributed to the fact that supervisors are often hesitant to take part in the PM process because it is confrontational in nature (Pearse and Williams 2009:12). Generally speaking, face-to-face encounters between subordinates and supervisors may hinder the implementation of the PMDS. Due to a lack of communication, subordinates may think they are being judged based on one set of standards, while their supervisors are actually using a different set of standards. Armstrong (2009:9) further adds that the implementation of the PMDS is problematic because of the complexity and difficulties involved in one manager attempting to assess the performance of his or her subordinate. Sandberg (2014:78) observes that there is a notion that an employee's performance is assessed based on his or her manager's perception.

As a tactical goal in addressing these barriers, training and development can assist in equipping managers and employees with the skills, knowledge and ability to perceive and conduct appraisals in an efficient and effective manner that benefits the organisation, managers and employees. A Performance Development Plan (PDP) can also help employees to indicate the areas in which they need training and development. It is the responsibility of an employee to take an initiative to attend training in order to improve in those areas that require development as identified by the supervisor.

3.6 TRENDS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

In determining the trends and development in the implementation of the PMDS in the public service, the APP and Annual Report are the most relevant documents. The APP is a strategic document which is crafted based on what is in the strategic plan of a department. These documents are approved by the Minister of Public Service and Administration, and consist of performance targets which should be achieved in each financial year. Individual employees craft their performance agreement based on the APP. Once targets have been set and performance implemented, the Annual Report is drafted. The Annual Report details how the performance of the NSG measures against the set targets for that specific financial year.

As a point of departure, Dewettinck and Blondia (no date:4) report that in many organisations, PM is only conducted on an annual basis. A recent study conducted on the effectiveness of PM revealed that for the majority of employees setting of performance indicators, discussion about performance progress and evaluating performance together with their line manager takes place only once a year or less. Moreover, a majority of the employees revealed that they only receive informal feedback monthly or less often. Strikingly, some of these respondents even report receiving informal feedback from their manager only once a year.

Dewettinck and Blondia (no date:8) see an advantage to discussing an employee's professional development and career expectations in that this significantly increases the motivating impact of performance management conversations. Unfortunately, of all topics addressed during these conversations, professional development and career expectations are the ones that are discussed the least. The topics which managers especially take up with their employees are performance feedback, the way the job is done (employee behaviour) and individual targets.

Dewettinck and Blondia ([no date:8) further state that this shows the importance of shifting the emphasis from assessing past performance to fuelling performance in the future. The ultimate goal of every PM process is to continuously stimulate employee performance. This can only be realized if employees are provided with developmental

feedback and opportunities for growth. There is no point in letting employees know they did not meet expectations if there is not also a future-oriented discussion on how exactly performance can be improved. In this view, it is important that attention is paid to possible actions that employees can take, as well as to the resources and support that are needed to achieve goals.

3.7 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Training and development is deemed to be a fundamental aspect of HRD which also serves an important function of the HRM. Levy (2014:137–138) draws on the 1994 World Development Report (World Bank 1994) which argues that only a small part of the performance gap can be attributed to lack of capacity. In this regard, training and development can be means to addressing challenges between current performance and expected future performance of an individual (Weil and Woodall 2005:9).

According to Ndulue (2012:7) training and development plays an important role in enhancing the skills and knowledge of employees in any organisation to execute their duties effectively and take on new responsibilities that will assist them to adapt to changing conditions. In this regard, training and development could therefore, result into many possible benefits for both the individual employee and the organisation. In this regard, for the organisation to achieve its objectives, it often depends on the employee's performance since human capital plays a significant role in the growth and performance of the organisation. Khan, Khan and Khan (2011:63) maintain that the employee performance depends solely on numerous factors but one key factor of employee performance is training.

According to Eleve (2013:4) training and development of employees helps the organisation to meet competitive challenges and environment changes. Sultana, Irum, Ahmed and Mohamood (2012:646) state that training is necessary for employees to ensure that they are competent in all aspects including progressing in their careers, and moving into specialised departments and management positions. Therefore, staff development is a key element that should be emphasised as an on-going process, and training fulfils an important part of this process.

Raina (2013:18) highlights that through training and development, a significant portion of employees can improve their performance in rendering public services. If there are adequately skilled personnel, the performance of the public service organisations will improve to meet the needs and demands of the community in terms of service delivery. Contrary, Segkala and Holtzhausen (2016:46) argue that training and development cannot be a solution to all performance challenges that organisations face. Spending money on training does not automatically guarantee the success of that training, and so evaluating the effectiveness of training is becoming increasingly important in order to determine the results of a training intervention. In most cases, non-training interventions are necessary, such as wellness programmes, advocacy sessions and workshops.

According to Gomez-Mejia, Balkin and Cardy (2001:288) before departments could decide on sending employees for training, managers must ask themselves several important questions, for example: “Will training provide a solution to the problems faced?”, “Are the goals of training clear and achievable?”, “Is training a good investment?” and “Will the training work to address challenges that the organisation faces?” After all these questions have been answered, managers will know whether training will yield benefits after it has been conducted. The benefits of training and development will be discussed in a different section of the study. The next section focuses on distinguishing training

3.7.1 Training defined

Training is a short-term process that entails the transfer of specific skills on an employee so that he or she can perform a very specific job or task, and is mostly imparted to non-managerial personnel (Chatterjee 2009:102). The focus is on improvement in performance after training with a perceptible behavioural change and improvement of strategic knowledge. Training usually takes place when a particular training need has been identified, such as a gap in performance or the introduction of new technology which requires new skills (Cascio 2010:291).

It is worth noting that, as researchers continue with their quest into the training research area, they also continue their arguments into its importance. Some of these researchers argue that the recognition of the importance of training in recent years has been heavily influenced by the intensification of competition and the relative success of organizations where investment in employee development is considerably emphasized (Beardwell, Holden and Claydon 2004:32).

Related to the above, Rothwell and Kazanas (2006:234) add that training does not only influence the bottom line but is also critical in saving costs for an organisation. Through employee training, the level of turnover is decreased. An adequately trained staff results in an improvement in quality goods and services as potentially fewer mistakes are made and fewer complaints from the general public are received. Therefore, based on this information, the concept training is crucial for the extent of this research. Below, the concept of development is briefly defined.

3.7.2 Development defined

Bernardin (2010:247) refers to development as learning opportunities designed to assist employees grow. The author further clarifies that learning opportunities should not focus on improving employee's performance on their current job. On the other hand, development is a broad on-going multi-faceted set of activities (training activities among them) aimed at bringing someone or an organization up to another threshold of performance, often to perform some job or a new role in the future (McNamara 2008:4). Development occurs when on-going learning opportunities are created so that employees grow through learning and therefore maintaining high levels of performance. Examples of development interventions are mentorship programmes, career development and continuous seminars in which employees are given opportunities to keep abreast of changes and trends in the organisational environment or in a particular field (Swanepoel, Erasmus and Schenk 2008:446). Changes in PMDS in terms of how Pas are conducted etc.

3.8 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT ON PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Training and development is a fundamental part of PM. Significantly, the process of conducting PAs enables supervisors to identify the strengths and weakness of employees in order to come up with interventions which are needed to address performance challenges. This process encompasses employee's future training and needs, and other developmental interventions such as career counselling, coaching and mentoring (Makamu 2016:30).

It is through training and development that employees can develop in the areas identified as requiring improvement. The South African public service has recognised the significance of training and development as a strategy to enhance employee and organisational performance (Lemao 2015:25). According to Hellriegel, Jackson, Sloouw and Oosthuizen (2006:245), training and development is one of the greatest tools which can be used to assist employees in improving their performance and addressing any challenges that prevents them from performing their day-to-day activities as expected by their managers.

As set out in 3.2.6, HRM units are responsible for noting the reasons why PAs fail. Bhattacharjee (2012:286) reports that PAs of individual employees are not conducted in isolation from organisational performance anymore. The process of PM gives employees an opportunity to engage in discussions with their managers about development goals and jointly come up with a plan to accomplish those goals. It is crucial that these developmental goals contribute to departmental goals and help the employee with their professional growth. Fletcher (2008:98) maintains that the effectiveness of performance assessments is dependent on the training effort by the department concerned. In this case, it can be said that training helps managers and other employees to understand the thinking behind PM, what it intends to achieve and how it is structured and implemented. Van der Waldt (2004:225) adds to this by stating that training and development helps to motivate employees, which could result in a number of possible benefits for both the individual and the organisation. It further assists to introduce and explain the forms and paperwork such as that involved in processing performance agreements and appraisals.

The role that HRD plays in training and development is of utmost importance. Van Dijk (2005:162) defines HRD as an integrated use of training and development, organisational development and career development to enhance individual, team and organisational effectiveness. Rowley and Keith (2011:47) concur and describe HRD as a process concerned with equipping employees with adequate knowledge, skills and competencies through training and development. From these definitions, one can conclude that future performance improvement in the public service would be impossible without HRD.

In promoting learning and development, especially in PM, the DPSA developed a policy on PM which is linked to the training and development of the employees. In this regard, Jorm and Agere (2000:79) emphasise that training for the PMDS should incorporate information such as the principles of PM; processes of the system; skills development in formulating objectives and performance measures; understanding and alleviating bias when rating performance scores; the role of supervisors in handling performance management matters; procedural issues relating to the confidentiality, handling and storage of system documents and dealing with grievances; and common questions and answers relating to the new system.

Swart, Mann, Brown and Price (2005:157) are of the opinion that learning is an ongoing, never-ending process which happens in all areas of our lives. For effective implementation of the PMDS in an organisation to occur, the departmental, team and individual HRD objectives must be linked with the organisation's strategic goals. The alignment of individual goals with the strategic organisational objectives, and aligning longer-term development goals with the PMDS, are imperative to an organisation's ongoing success and proper implementation of the system. Viedge (2003:88) highlights that learning may be the only factor that ensures continuous, sustainable future performance, subsequently allowing organisations a competitive edge. Viedge (2003:76) further mentions that the PMDS should, therefore, emphasise learning as an additional organisational goal.

One of the major challenges which most organisations encounter is implementing a strategy. The performance appraisal should be informed by the objectives of PM. In this context, a good performance appraisal should aim to develop an individual

employee to improve his or her performance in the future. The ideal performance appraisal includes having a mutual agreement between an employee and his or her supervisor about goals and objectives that need to be achieved in every performance cycle. This requires a supervisor to put plans in place to ensure that the subordinate can achieve those goals and objectives (Schultz, Bargrain, Potgieter, Viedge and Werner 2003:75-77). A lack of managing performance culture in organisations could be one of the contributing factors to the PM challenges encountered by government departments.

Importantly, before organisations resort to training and development as a way to address PMDS-related challenges, an analysis to determine if the shortfall in performance is due to a lack of training, for there are many factors which could lead to a system like the PMDS not being effectively implemented. One of these reasons could be the lack of motivation or interest in a job by employees or supervisors. Barbazette (2008:17) asserts that it is crucial to ensure that the managers first diagnose the cause of the poor performance before turning to training and development. Performance analysis involves identifying the cause of deficient performance so that appropriate action can be taken.

The relationship between performance management and training and development is crucial to the implementation of the PMDS policy. It can therefore be said that PM should identify competence gaps and influence the management of skills. It is important that organisations determine training priorities based on the needs of the individual. An absence of the strategic link between performance management training will result in the goals and objectives of both the individual and the organisation not being achieved (Van Dijk and Thornhill 2003:9). In a case where PM is understood by neither the supervisors nor the subordinates, more challenges could be encountered. Training interventions related to PM are therefore essential. From these discussions, it is clear that training can play an important role in every organisation in improving the skills and knowledge of employees. Training can therefore assist supervisors and their employees in improving the implementation of the PMDS in their respective departments.

3.9 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT MODELS

To promote efficient learning, it is important to carefully choose the learning techniques or methods which will make the learning process effective. In relation to training techniques, organisations use different methods to train their employees on various training programmes. According to Dessler (2008:12), the following are some of the methods used for training and development of employees:

- On-the-job: this training technique can be applied while employees are performing their daily duties at work. It is important that online learning, which is popular because of evolving technologies, also forms part of the on-the-job training technique. Examples of the on-the-job training include but are not limited to job rotations and transfers, coaching and/or mentoring. In the case of the NSG, employees are provided with an opportunity to participate in different training interventions as part of development of employee skills and knowledge on various areas.
- Off-the-job: this training technique involves sending employees for training outside of their work environments so they cannot be distracted by being called to attend to work-related matters. Example of this model of training is when NSG employees are sent out to attend training taking place in an external venue.
- Apprenticeship: this training technique includes a combination of on-the-job training as well as classroom or face-to-face training.
- Job rotation: this training technique is concerned with placing employees in job rotations so they can learn various tasks which are not necessarily related to their jobs. Job rotation helps employees gain an appreciation for the company's goals, increase their understanding of different company functions, develop contact networks, and improve problem solving and decision-making skills
- Job instruction training and orientation: this training technique also forms part of the on-the-job training whereby managers teaches employees on various tasks related to their job.

Lastly, Ivancevich (2010:32) points out that in order for a training model to be beneficial, it should allow for effective learning to take place. Training techniques can therefore be deemed worthy for application for the following reasons:

- To motivate employees to improve their performance after training,
- To outline the skill that needs to be acquired once training is done,
- To allow trainees (employees) to actively participate during training,
- To provide employees feedback on how they performed, and
- To promote transfer of learning whether from in-house or out-house into the workplace.

3.10 BENEFITS FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Botha et al (2007:67) list seven benefits for implementing training and development in an organisation:

- Improving employee performance. Employees who perform poorly due to a shortage of skills are eligible for training and development, which will help address those areas which require improvements.
- Improving employee skills. With the continuous technological change and other changes, employee's skills need to be updated continuously in order to avoid poor service delivery which will result in delay to respond to the needs of the general public.
- Orientating new employees. It happens that newly promoted employees do not have the required skills or abilities to meet the needs of the new position in their organisation. In this case, the NSG ensures that newly appointed employees enrol for an online MPC programme to familiarise them with the PMDS policy and its requirements.
- Addressing organisational challenges. Organisational challenges are addressed in many ways. Training and development is one important way to solve many of these challenges.

- Satisfying personal growth. Training and development will help to ensure professional development, organisational effectiveness and increased personal growth for all employees.
- Creating a pool of readily available and adequate human resources for replacement of personnel who may leave or move up in the department.
- Building a more efficient, effective and highly motivated team. This enhances the department's competitive position and improves employees' morale and performance levels.

In light of the above, mentoring and coaching is a prerequisite. The process of mentoring and coaching is briefly discussed below:

3.11 MENTORING AND COACHING

According to the PSC (2007:7), one of the responsibilities of the supervisor in PM involves mentoring, coaching and counselling subordinates when it is required.

In terms of mentorship, a supervisor or a manager can be best suitable to play the role of a mentor by exchanging experience and knowledge with the mentee (employee). Effective mentoring relation may be determined by development-linked leadership traits of the mentor for example, goal setting, planning, explaining the importance of the tasks, building protégé self-efficacy and providing the attention to the mentees. Thus, creating and developing mentoring relationship with employees is one of the most important parts of coaching (Tanoli 2016:10).

Ference (2011:9) defines coaching as training or development process via which an individual is supported in the process of achieving a specific personal or professional competence result or goal. The person who is being coached is normally referred to as a coachee. Tanoli (2016:13) indicates that there is a strong relationship between performance and coaching provided to the employees. The strength of coaching arranged and provided to the employees through regular intervals results in the improvement of their performance. Muriithi (2016:1) maintains that an effective

coaching programme plays a crucial role to assist enhance employee productivity and engagement in an organisation.

During the process of coaching, it is crucial for managers learn that feedback can be used as a powerful tool to communicate and give feedback regarding performance to staff. Paile (2012:21) agrees with this view and indicates that continuous and regular feedback to employees on issues pertaining to performance is the integral aspect of an effective PM. Tshukudu and Nel (2015:195) assert that coaching is based on performance expectations from the manager; therefore, managers and employees must be precise and clear in comprehending performance standards and objectives from the start. Supervisors should provide positive feedback when the employee performed well, in addition to indicating areas that require improvement. Human beings are most likely to advance and develop their performance and skills if they feel empowered by their manager or supervisor.

Jackson et al (2009:339) argues that the feedback should make employees aware of any challenges and, when applicable, address the significance of change. Makamu (2016:50) argues that no employee can survive to continue working in an organisation without uplifting his/her skills. The society is constantly transforming and it requires personnel to acquire new skills in order to cope with the ever changing needs of the world. This in most cases can be achieved through training and development, coaching and mentoring. In addition, Lemao (2015:20) adds that it is through performance feedback that employees can be informed about the areas which require improvement. Performance reviews should therefore focus on the future and potential development instead of the past and criticism. In developing an employee, the objectives of both the organisation and supervisor will thus be attained.

3.12 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK ON TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

This section focuses on various legislation that govern training and development in the South African public service. These will be briefly discussed in the next section.

3.12.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996)

The *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996* (Act 95 of 1996) stipulates that public administration must be governed by democratic principles and values, such as good HRM and career development. Section 195 (h) promotes the importance of maximising human potential (Republic of South Africa 1996:111). This could be attained through the training and continuous development of the employees in the public service. In terms of the Bill of rights, employees have the right to participate in the activities and programmes of an employers' organisation). Section 195 of the Constitution stipulates the basic values. Additionally, good human resource management and career development practices in order to maximise human potential, must be cultivated.

Consequently, the White Paper on Human Resource Management stipulates that in order for public service to offer quality service delivery, employees should be efficient and effective in the manner in which they carry out their duties. In this context, PM is an integral part of an effective human resource management and development strategy. It is an on-going process in which subordinates and supervisors together strive to improve the institutions wider objectives. As outlined in the 2.2.2, the following principles exist within PM namely, results orientation, training and development, rewarding good performance, managing poor performance and openness, fairness and objectivity (Republic of South Africa 1997:42-43).

3.12.2 Skills Development Act (1998)

The *Skills Development Act*, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998) forms an essential part of the legislative framework of training and development in the public service. The aim of the Act, among other things, is to develop the skills of the South African workforce in order to improve the quality of life of workers and their prospects of work and skills development. The Act, and specifically the Workplace Skills Plan (WSP), provides a valuable vehicle for the training of employees. It is also stated in the Act that departments are obliged to budget at least 1 percent of their payroll for the training and development of its employees, and that the money for this must be paid to South African Revenue Services as a Skills Development Levy.

Mohlala (2012:38) states that the development of skills through training and development has been the most important tool for improving both individual and institutional competitiveness. Skills development and training in the South African context should be addressed against the social, political, and economic background where reconstruction and development still occupy the highest status on the national agenda. Mohlala (2012:38) further indicates that the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act of 97 1998) was introduced because of the realisation that the economy was being constrained by the lack of a skilled personnel and because of the political imperative to redress the unfair discrimination in training and development in employment opportunities.

3.12.3 The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery

The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997:6) forms part of the legislative framework that governs how the implementation and management of the PMDS is administered. It stipulates that officials, especially those who serve citizens directly, should be assessed on how their performance contributes to improving service delivery. The government has adopted the view that all public servants, from the most senior to the most junior, require on-going training as an integral part of their professional life. The training of senior and middle management must be linked to the processes and policy-making challenges defined by the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) and the current White Paper. The training of workers

must be linked to the new emphasis on customer care and service delivery, the development of career paths and the reorganisation of grading systems within the public service. Among lower-level workers, this would necessitate the rewriting of job descriptions to meet the new skills and knowledge requirements of the RDP. To this end, particular attention would be paid to competency-based training as a means of improving the relevance of training to specific work situations.

This training and development links to the requirement of PM for individual development plans. Fourie (2004:12) argues that there is a growing concern that government is not receiving “value-for-money” for the significant funds that are spent on training officials. Furthermore, the training programmes offered by providers vary in quality on matters they perceive to be topical, but which do not meet the real, prioritised needs that have been identified. Training remains vital to the growth and economic well-being of a nation, and should therefore be seen as an investment (rather than a price tag) which will offer returns in the form of improved organisational performance. It is therefore crucial that departments invest in effective training and development initiatives.

3.12.4 Sector Education and Training Authorities

The Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETA) is a body that comprises labour representatives, employees, key government department members, any bargaining forum from the business industry sectors and any professional body with a reason to be there (Masilela 2012:41). The main role of SETA is to contribute to the development of skills. This is done by ensuring that employees learn skills that the Government requires in order to meet the needs and demands of the communities need (Botha, Kiley and Truman, 2007:33). Other functions of SETA include:

- Developing a sector skills plan within the framework of the national skills development strategy, and
- Promoting learning programmes, identifying workplaces for practical work experience, supporting the development of learning materials, improving the facilitation of learning and assisting in the conclusion agreements of learning programmes.

3.12.5 The South African Qualifications Authority

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) was established to ensure the development and implementation of the NQF, which contributes to the full development of each learner and to the social and economic development at large (Meyer 2007:28). SAQA has the responsibility of monitoring SETA's accreditation processes for learning programmes. SAQA is also responsible for the establishment of the NQF and national standards bodies to set training standards that ensure progression and portability (which means that a qualification earned in a workplace training environment has value in the formal system and vice-versa).

3.12.6 National Qualifications Framework

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is a framework that provides a vision and structure for the construction of a national qualification system. It is a national effort of integrating education and training into a unified structure of recognised qualifications. All qualifications and competencies are registered with the NQF according to their field of learning and level of progression (Botha et al 2007:15).

Jewison (2008:15) maintains that the South African Qualifications Authority Act (58 of 1995) states that the purpose of the NQF is to:

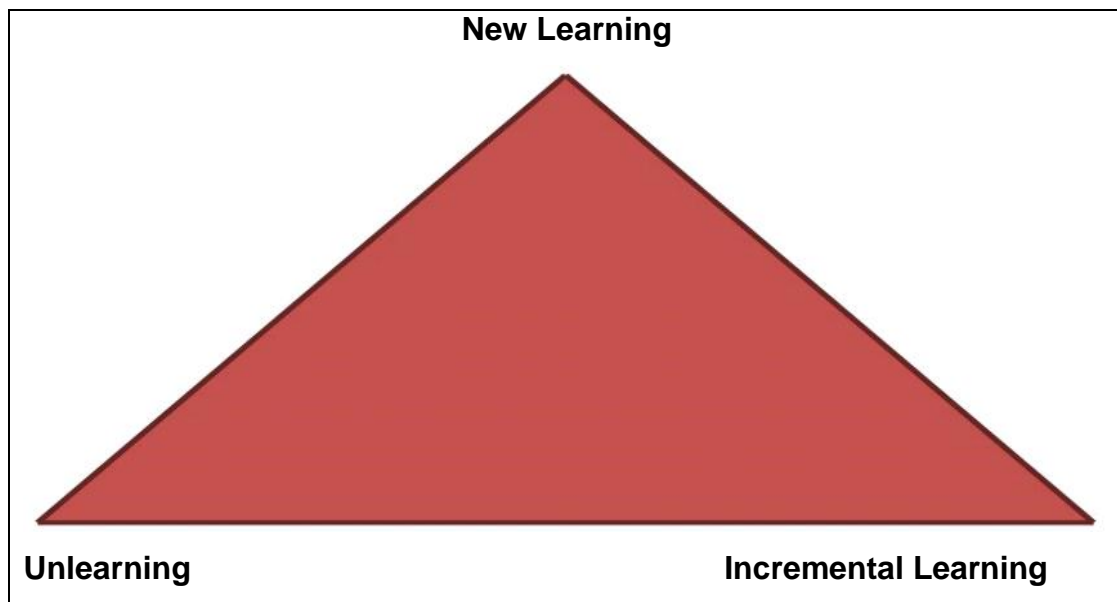
- Create an integrated national framework for learning achievements;
- Facilitate access to, and mobility and progression within, education, training and career paths; and
- Enhance the quality of education and training.

The next section focuses on performance management training as an important aspect that should be considered in order for the implementation of the PMDS to be successful.

3.13 TYPES OF LEARNING

According to Meyer (2007:110), organisations or individual employees should explore different types of training in order to enhance learning opportunities. However, this depends upon and varies based on organisational needs. Figure 3.3 below illustrates different types of learning and their meaning.

Figure 3.2: Types of learning



Source: Meyer (2007:110)

❖ **New learning**

In this context, new learning is understood as a form of learning whereby an employee (or his or her manager/s) learns new skills that he or she has not acquired before. Individuals often have limited prospects and pre-conceived ideas when they embark on a new learning experience. In order to ensure that all employees contribute towards improved implementation of the PMDS in an organisation, they should be given an opportunity to attend training. Ravhura (2006:11) states that there is a high demand for both supervisors and subordinates to be trained on issues pertaining to PM. However, some authors argue that not everyone needs to attend any formal training to learn about PM. The Management Training Specialist Institute (2010:32) further argues that supervisors can teach their subordinates habits that could help them

understand PM procedures and how these can be implemented. However, the researcher's view is that due to the complexity and increasing challenges that the government faces regarding PM issues, formal training is needed to resolve these shortcomings. There is a need for supervisors and employees to be equipped and have sufficient knowledge and understanding of how the PMDS processes are applied when the performance reviews are being conducted.

❖ **Incremental learning**

Incremental learning takes place when individuals want to enhance existing knowledge and skills and develop or refine a specific skill (Meyer 2007:110). In this case, due to the challenges that Government departments are faced with in terms of the implementation of the PMDS, it has become evident that employees require incremental learning in this area. As a way to respond to these challenges, the NSG has designed and developed the MPC training intervention to enhance the knowledge of public servants on performance management issues. The ultimate goal for the MPC intervention is to improve performance management in the public service and its implementation thereof.

As a strategy that organisations can use to improve the implementation of the PMDS, they should train its supervisors and employees on PM. This ensures that all employees contribute towards the improved PM of an organisation. One of the significant roles played by a supervisor in the workplace is to manage the performance of employees. Given the nature of their job, training can be useful in order to boost supervisors' confidence, objectivity and truthfulness (Fletcher 2008:101). Issues of subjectivity, unfairness and inconsistency can affect the implementation of the PMDS, so supervisors as performance evaluators require formal training in this area.

It is crucial that a supervisor's attitude always mirrors the focus placed on the benefits of effective implementation of the PMDS. Subsequently, employees should reflect the same attitude with an understating that the goal of PM is not about criticism but growth, productivity and success as a collective group (Management Training Specialist Institute 2010:10). Finally, De Cenzo and Robbins (2007:15) are of the view that training for supervisors helps minimize common mistakes that are mostly likely to be

committed such as leniency, inaccuracy and inconsistencies. Such mistakes can tarnish the implementation of the PMDS in an organisation and result into too many grievances.

Incremental learning is also essential for employee training in order to improve the implementation of the PMDS in an organisation. In this regard, Fletcher (2008:101) argues that all supervisors should provide training and development opportunities for the staff they are supervising. Training develops, cultivates and progresses individuals, improving performance and raising morale. Training is ineffective and futile if the motivation to apply it is effectively non-existent or lacklustre. A strong capacity to plan and manage skills training, the acquisition of knowledge, and the development of motivation and correct attitudes are all factors which largely determine the level or degree of efficiency and effectiveness of individuals when performing their job tasks.

❖ **Transformational learning**

Transformational learning is the most powerful type of learning in that the new paradigm transforms the learners in significant ways. This means that the culture of the organisation will transform. A quality management system requires employees to recognise the importance and the needs of the customers they service more than the needs of the organisation (Meyer 2007:110). Lastly, PM interventions should help supervisors and subordinates to acknowledge their weaknesses, realising their strengths and improving their skills, attitudes and knowledge through training. Interventions should also motivate transferrals of theory into practice through day-to-day transfer of what was learnt in class (Singh and Twalo 2015:9). It is therefore crucial that careful consideration be given to creating a culture that is supportive of training and development and the attainment of enhanced PM in an organisation (Tshukudu 2009:144).

3.14 BARRIERS TO ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING

Most employees are keen to learn; however, in some organisations there are factors which demotivate them. In order for employees to learn, the working environment must be conducive to learning freely and willingly, without fear of victimisation should they make any mistakes.

Kreitner and Kinicki (2007:69) list the following barriers as hindrances to organisational learning:

- If learners see no value in applying new skills, believe no rewards will result from doing so, or do not value the rewards, then a transfer of learning from classroom to workplace will not occur.
- If individuals have little or no latitude to change what they do because job tasks are too tightly controlled, then training can never be applied unless task controls are relaxed.
- If a learner's supervisor is not in favour of training, then there is little or no likelihood that a learner will be applying newly acquired skills. Supervisors exert a powerful influence over the behaviour of subordinates because they control rewards and punishment.
- If a trainee returns to the project field only to find that fellow workers greet new ideas with scepticism, then training will not be imparted successfully.

3.15 THEORIES OF LEARNING

Coetzee, Botha, Kiley, Truman and Tshilongamulanze (2013:213-217) provide the four learning theories which they claim that they are fundamental for employees' development. These theories are briefly described below:

❖ Behaviourist theory

Coetzee et al (2013:213) maintain that the behaviourist theory has been influential in outlining specific elements in the learning process that need to be considered when

designing or forecasting learning events. It demonstrates how behaviour can be shaped through appropriate reinforcement techniques. It explains learning in terms of what happens in the world around us.

❖ **Cognitive theory**

This theory focuses on how individuals process and analyse information, while acknowledging that humans do not always learn by performing a task and receiving direct reinforcement. Instead, they can use memory, judgement, problem-solving, reasoning and understanding to make connections between what they observe and how they should behave or perform in situation.

❖ **Social learning theories**

Coetzee et al (2013:213) mention that individuals learn from observing from others. By observing, individuals grasp knowledge and behaviour, and they learn rules, skills and beliefs. The concept of the role model is central to this theory. It suggests that individuals often seek to model themselves on others whom they recognise to be successful.

❖ **Humanist perspective on learning**

The humanist perspective views knowledge as a personal, subjective issue, not an external commodity waiting to be internalised through the absorption of content (Coetzee et al 2013:217).

3.16 LEARNING ORGANISATION

Majila (2012:9) mentions that a number of researchers perceive the concept of learning organisation a vital aspect of competitiveness and link it with knowledge acquisition and performance improvement in an organisation. In recent years, considerable attention has been put on the importance of organisational learning. The concept of organisational learning has been applauded as a tool to acquire

competitiveness in an ever-changing business environment for which new management techniques and developmental strategies are needed in order to remain effective and relevant. As outlined in the introductory section of the study, the establishment of MPC programme was a response to challenges related to the effective implementation of PMDS in the public service.

Meyer (2007:126), states that the concept of learning organisation constitutes a new approach to learning and workplace performance that requires a new way of managing organisations. Price (2011:465) shares the same sentiments by stating that a learning organisation is an “organisation where individuals continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and open minded ways of thinking are fostered and where people are given the freedom to develop their collective aspirations and continually learning how to learn together”. This requires transformation in terms of how training was previously conducted. It challenges most principles, structures and methods involved in training process. In the next section, adult learning and adult learner is discussed in order to give readers a better understanding of

3.17 ADULT LEARNING AND ADULT LEARNERS

It is imperative that in a learning organisation like the NSG which is mandated to train and develop public officials, the concept of adult learning is put into consideration. Below, the discussion will focus on the concept of adult learning and five andragogical assumptions pertaining to adult learning.

3.17.1 Andragogics

Erasmus et al (2006:114) points out that the term andragogics refers to the science of adult learning. Adult learning can be described as a process which involves learning by adults in order to help them to carry out their roles as workers. In this regard, it is critical for any organisation to have platforms that allow for adult learning to take place. Significantly, in this section, a distinction is made between the concept “pedagogy” and “andragogy” in order to discuss the andragogical assumptions about adult learning.

According to Delahaye (2011:33), the concept pedagogy means the knowledge transfer through lectures on facts during which a complete memorisation of solutions is expected. In other words, pedagogy followed traditionalists, that there was a fixed body of knowledge and this knowledge should be delivered to the learner in a controlled manner. Contrary, andragogy is the method used to involve instructors and adult learners in the learning process. This type of learning, it is fundamental and emphasises that learning should address the needs of the learner and allow the learner to be responsible for learning. The table below presents the difference between pedagogy and andragogy.

Table 3.1: Difference between pedagogy and andragogy

Pedagogy	Andragogy
Learners need to know what they will be taught in order to be deemed competent at the end of training	Adults need to understand why they need to learn something
Learners are dependent to teachers	Adults are independent and can be self-paced
Learners have little or no experience as a resource for learning. They rely on methods such as lectures and reading	Adults have a rich background of experience that can be tapped by training methods
Learners are eager to learn when they are told to learn when they want to pass and get promoted	Adults are ready to learn when they see the connection between the subject and duties they perform at work
Pedagogy is subject-centred learning or subject matter content-directed	Adults are task or problem oriented. It will help them to solve problems they face in their lives

Source: (Delahaye 2011:33)

3.17.2 Andragogical assumption about adult learners

Erasmus et al (2006:115) found that there are five key assumptions that enable adult learners to learn. These assumptions are said to have implications in designing the

adult learning programmes. Given this, it is critical that training programmes are designed in a manner that will positively benefit the learners and the organisation as a whole. The five andragogical assumptions about adult learning are self-concept, experience, readiness to learn, orientation towards learning and motivation to learn. These assumptions are briefly discussed in detail below, to get a clear understanding of their meaning.

❖ **Self-concept**

In terms of this assumption, it is believed that adult learners are self-motivated and accept responsibility about their lives. They become conscious about what they want to learn, their interest, and measure what they have learned through performance. In order to make the learning process effective for learners, the following factors should be considered in the process of designing training programmes for adults (Erasmus et al 2006:114).

- Create a climate that is conducive for learning
- Adult learners should be involved in diagnosing training needs
- Learning objectives should be clearly formulated
- The trainers should ensure that the correct training and learning strategies are followed.

❖ **Experience**

When an adult learner attends the training, they have experiences and knowledge about different situations, which might be related to the content of the programme they are attending. Hence, it is imperative that the new content is aligned to the existing knowledge and experience base. The trainer can utilise the learners' life experiences and knowledge relevant to the topic under study to enhance the learning experience of the group as a whole. It is important that theories and concepts should be related to the learners' life experiences including their world (Erasmus et al 2006:114).

❖ **Readiness to learn**

Adult learners are always ready to learn something when they are interested in the learning programme. The interest even increases if the learning programme will assist them to lead a meaningful and successful life and is directed at realising their full potential. When developing a training programme social roles of adults should be taken into consideration.

❖ **Orientation towards learning**

Adult learning environment activities are life, task and problem oriented. The combination of these activities depends on what is learnt and the learning objectives that have been set. The sense of purpose to learners in the learning environment is more important and they are more interested in what they will benefit from the experience.

❖ **Motivation**

Finally, the last assumption about adult learning is motivation. One of the factors that create a source of motivation for adult learning are social relationship, social welfare, personal advancement, stimulation and cognitive interest. The motivation to adult learners must be intrinsic by nature since this promotes success. Learning is more likely to be successful if the direction of the course is directed at recognition and self-actualisation. Adults are motivated to learn, therefore, instructors should enhance adult learning by utilising positive reinforcement, which will assist the adult learners to retain new knowledge or skills and assisting them to transfer such knowledge in a new setting (Erasmus et al 2006:118).

It is known that before learning can be effected needs should be assessed. The concepts related to need assessment will be discussed below:

3.18 NEED FOR TRAINING NEEDS ANALYSIS

Werner, Randall, Schuler and Susan (2012:252-253) argue that training in an organisation should equip employees with job-related knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviour, with the hope that the knowledge and skill acquired from training will be applied in the job to achieve the goals and objectives of the organisation and thus increase productivity.

A formal training programme includes a face-to-face interaction and one-on-one mentoring, which in this case could be between a supervisor and an employee after training had been conducted, and it may take place on the job or at a remote location. Importantly, before any employer decides to embark on training, he or she should first conduct a training needs analysis (TNA) to determine what kind of training is needed to avoid wasting government money on irrelevant areas. Noël et al (2011:200) describe a TNA as a process of evaluating the organisation, individual employees and employer's task in order to determine what kind of training is required. De Cenzo and Robbins (2007:191) emphasise that determining training needs should be based on the objectives of the organisation, tasks to be completed and the skills necessary to complete the particular tasks.

In most departments, a TNA is mostly conducted by the research unit in collaboration with the HRM&D unit. Training needs should be identified at both an individual and organisational level (Tshukudu and Nel 2015:200). The National School of Government (2015:1) reported that the roundtable discussions which were held by the PSC in 2014 revealed that improper implementation of performance management in the public service is a leading factor that contributes to lodging of grievances by most employees. Therefore a decision was made for an intervention such as the MPC to be developed and rolled out to public servants from salary levels 9–12 with the aim of improving the implementation of the PMDS in the public service. The important question to ask is whether this challenge was due to the fact that public servants needed training in performance management.

Raymond, Hollenbeck, Barry and Patrick (2015:259) emphasise that the TNA which takes place prior to training is conducted should cover the following areas:

❖ **Organisational analysis**

This process includes establishing the appropriateness of a training intervention by analysing the mandate of the organisation. The person who is doing an organisational analysis would have to look at training needs in line with the organisation's strategy, funds available for training and management support for training activities.

❖ **Personal analysis**

This is a process which is concerned with determining the needs and readiness of individual employees for training, which also involves answering questions such as:

- Are the employees keen and ready for training?
- Which employees need training?
- Is poor performance caused by the lack of knowledge, skills or capability?

❖ **Task analysis**

Task analysis focuses on identifying the tasks, skills, knowledge and behaviour that training should address. This process is normally conducted along with personal analysis. In the case of the NSG, the emphasis was that training on performance management should focus on the requirements which are needed in order for effective implementation of the PMDS to take place.

Training and development, especially the one related to PM, would therefore, be pointless if supervisors and their employees do not see the value in it and are unwilling to apply learning to day-to-day tasks in the workplace.

3.19 IMPORTANCE OF TRAINING EVALUATION

Meyer (2007:120) asserts that the process of evaluation should not be done in isolation from the strategy of the learning organisation, so that, if needs be, amendments and improvements can be made. Tshukudu (2009:144) concurs and states that the evaluation of training and development cannot be isolated from the organisational culture, as this culture directs the behaviour of the workforce. This implies that careful consideration must be given to establishing a culture that is supportive of training and development and the enhancement of performance.

Evaluating a training intervention is crucial in order to determine whether the programme has achieved what it was intended to achieve. Griffin (2011:2) maintains that the process of training evaluation includes considering the perceptions of learners in relation to the training they received and the effect that the training will have on improvement of their performance. Swanepoel and Erasmus (2005:7) emphasise that it is important prepare for evaluation before the training takes place. In this case, the evaluation process provides the information necessary to design the entire training and development programme.

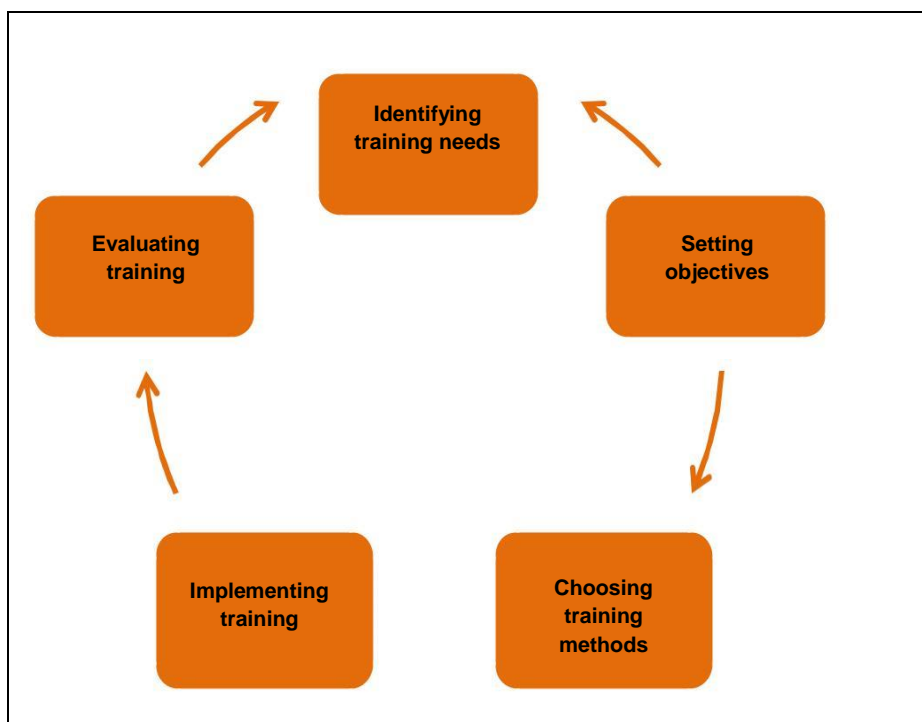
When properly done, training evaluation gives an organisation the opportunity to determine whether they benefited anything from a particular training programme. This is done by making a comparison between the outcomes of the training versus the objectives of the training programme. The criteria used to evaluate a training programme are linked to the objectives of the training programme. However, Ivancevich (2010:11) recommends adopting different criteria to evaluate training as opposed to focus on a single criterion such as evaluating the transfer of learning from the classroom into the workplace.

In addition, Erasmus, Swanepoel, Schenk, Van der Westhuizen and Wessels (2005:31) add that the evaluation of training programmes is of the utmost importance because of the following reasons:

- It gives information which can be utilised to improve planned learning, making it more effective in meeting needs, solving past performance problems and anticipating future opportunities for performance improvement.
- It gives an indication of different kinds of problems, including a lack of individual knowledge or skill.
- It also indicates the results of training activities and demonstrates efficacy.
- Lastly, evaluation provides clarity about what needs to be improved and also gives feedback, which will assist in future additional plans and actions (Sharma and Kurukshetra 2013:22).

Below is the training evaluation cycle, which demonstrates the importance of training and development as crucial investments to both the organisation and its employees.

Figure 3.3: Training evaluation cycle



Source: Sharma and Kurukshetra (2013:24)

The figure above clearly depicts that training is an investment. Training programmes can only be justified if their objectives are set, effective methods are chosen, their implementation is necessary and, lastly, if they are evaluated critically in terms of the advantages gained versus money invested.

Desler (2012:184) states that there are four traditional categories of training programme outcomes:

- Reaction of trainees: this outcome category focuses on establishing whether trainees liked the programme based on their reactions in terms of participation, time and efforts.
- Learning: this category focuses on testing whether the participants have grasped the relevant knowledge and acquired any skills from training.
- Trainee behaviour: this category analyses whether the behaviour of trainees in the workplace has changed after attending training.
- Objectives of the training: this outcome category determines whether the training objectives have been met. This is the most important phase of a training evaluation as it indicates whether training employees was valuable and beneficial to the organisation, or a fruitless exercise.

Lastly, if training on PM is a solution to improving the implementation of the PMDS in the public service, there is a need for an evaluation in order to determine whether such an intervention achieves the desired results. As highlighted in the problem statement section of this study, due to several challenges that Government departments face in relation to poor implementation of the PMDS, the NSG saw a need to design and roll out a training intervention that addresses the aforementioned challenges. It is however important to note that without a proper evaluation process, the effect of the intervention to improve performance management will not be known.

3.20 CONCLUSION

There is significant literature on the subject of training and development, as well as MDS in the public service. It is clear from the discussions in this chapter that the implementation of the PMDS is still a challenge for a majority of organisations. The factors which affect the implementation of the PMDS are both internal and external, and most employers do not have control over them. Nevertheless, some of the contributing factors to the PMDS's challenges can be addressed through proper

training and attention given by the supervisors to their employees. It can therefore, be said that for the implementation of the PMDS to stand a fair chance at succeeding, training of both supervisors and their employees is an essential tool which organisations should consider in eliminating some of the challenges in the system. In theory, training on performance management can also play a significant role in improving PM in the public service. This could help supervisors and subordinates understand the processes and procedures of performance management which could result in the better implementation of the PMDS.

This chapter has focused on reviewing literature pertaining to training and development, as well as PMDS in public service in order to determine factors that can be attributed to the PMDS challenges and possible solutions which could be utilised to ensure that the system yields desired results. The next chapter focuses on training interventions offered by the NSG. A detailed description of the MPC programme will be outlined. The profile of the NSG, its organisational structure and operations are also outlined to give the reader a richer understanding in terms of how the NSG operates.

CHAPTER FOUR: TRAINING INTERVENTIONS OFFERED BY THE NATIONAL SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

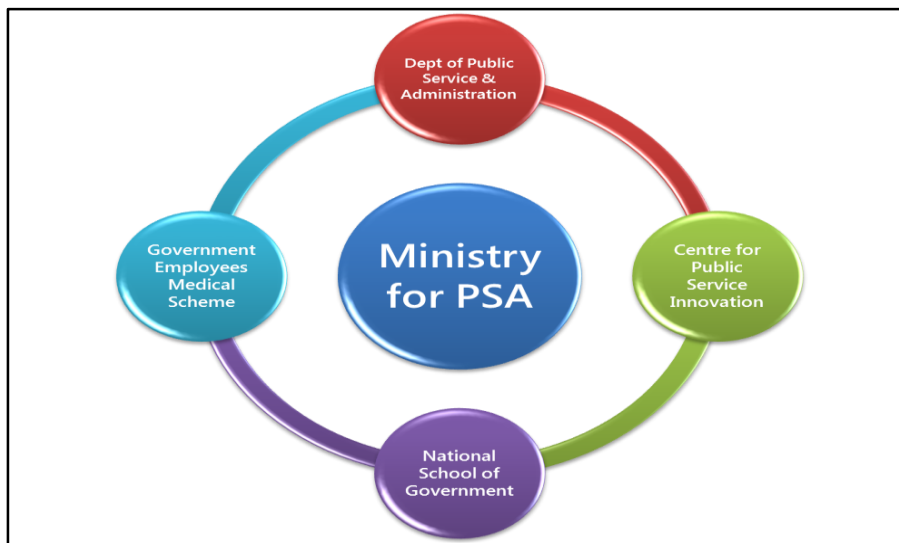
The NSG was not only established to professionalise the public service through its learning and development interventions, but also to contribute towards enhancing service delivery while ensuring sustainable growth and other developmental goals in the South African public service. The NSG plays a significant role in fulfilling the idea of a capable and developmental state as stipulated in the NDP which responds to the challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview on the functioning of the NSG in order to analyse its organisational structure and legislative mandate. A brief overview of the Ministry of Public Service and Administration is provided, followed by an overview of the evolution of the NSG. The operations of the NSG are also examined. This provides the reader with a vivid understanding of the establishment of the NSG as a government department which is mandated to provide learning and development interventions in order to equip public servants with the values, skills and knowledge necessary for entry into and career progression within the public service. An outline of the organisational structure of the NSG will help in understanding the structures and management systems that are in place within the NSG and different roles they play, especially in relation to the implementation of the PMDS within the organisation. The various training interventions offered by the NSG will also be listed. In addition, a description of the MPC programme will also be given, examining its content, learning outcomes and how it is facilitated to improve the PMDS within the NSG and in the public service at large. Lastly, the process of monitoring and evaluation for the MPC programme will determine whether the course achieved what it was intended to achieve, and what challenges were experienced in transferring what was learnt in class into the workplace.

4.2 MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION

Honourable Faith Muthambi is the political head of the Ministry of Public Service and Administration, and a Member of Parliament (MP) for the Republic of South Africa. As illustrated in figure 4.1 below, Honourable Muthambi is the Minister for the DPSA and is also responsible for the portfolio institutions such as the NSG, Centre for Public Service Innovation and Government Employees Medical Scheme. All the above-mentioned institutions are stand-alone departments classified under the Ministry of Public Service and Administration. In order for the minister to carry out her duties efficiently and effectively, the help of the Principal of the NSG, Professor Richard M Levin, is needed. Professor Levin is responsible for the implementation of the mandate of the NSG, which is to provide training or facilitate the provision of training in the public service (NSG's Annual Report 2016/2017:11).

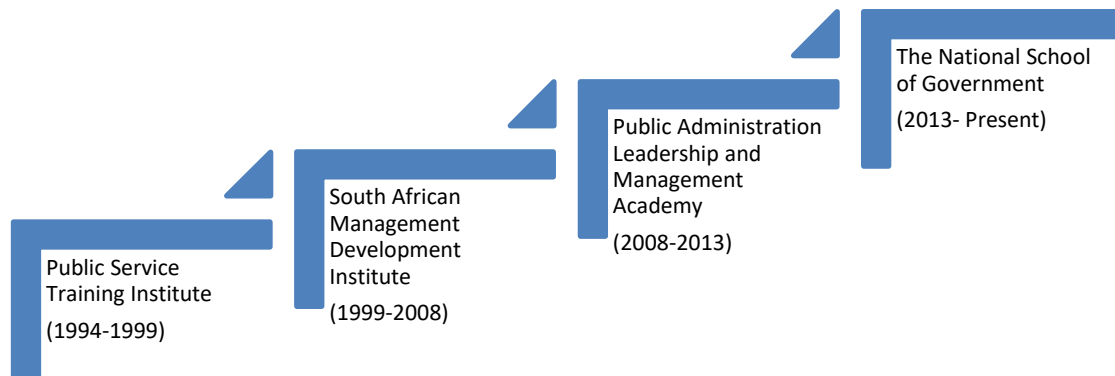
Figure 4.1: Portfolio for the Ministry of Public Service and Administration



Source: (NSG 2017:5)

4.3 EVOLUTION OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

Figure 4.2: The evolution of the National School of Government



Source: (NSG 2017:7)

4.3.1 Public Service Training Institute (1994-1999)

During the period of 1994 -1999, training and development in the South African public service was provided by the Public Service Training Institute (PSTI) (South African Management Development Institute 1999:6). The PSTI was transformed into the South African Management Development Institute (SAMDI) in 1999. A detailed discussion on the establishment of SAMDI is provided in the next section.

4.3.2 South African Management Development Institute (1999-2008)

SAMDI was reconstituted in 2007 in response to a Cabinet decision. As part of this transformation process, then PALAMA was officially established in August 2008. The former SAMDI began to be reconstituted as PALAMA from November 2006. A new strategy was developed and consulted with unions and a corresponding organisational structure put in place (National Treasury 2012:149). The aim of the SAMDI was to provide practical and customer-driven training and organization development interventions that lead to improved performance and service delivery in the public sector (SAMDI 1999:5). Fourie (2004:495) further mentions that SAMDI was

established to provide training and development that will ensure increased capacity of service delivery and implementation of the initiatives of government as determined by national priorities.

4.3.3 Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (2008-2013)

PALAMA was officially launched in August 2008 to train public officials in order to improve service delivery by enhancing the knowledge, skills and attitudes of Government officials. PALAMA's training interventions were aligned with the DPSA Strategic Framework on the Development of Human Resources in the Public Service. PALAMA provided training interventions addressing the management of people, finances, projects, service orientation, information, research and writing skills, among others, to public servants in co-operation with provincial academies (DPSA's Annual Report, 2009/10:62). The training and capacity-building programmes were focused on practical management skills for a developmental state and were underpinned by a common ethos and the values required for a professional public service (Budget vote speech by the then Public Service and Administration Minister, Hon. M.R Baloyi in the National Assembly 20/04/2010). Mopeli (2014:58) adds that training interventions offered by PALAMA aimed at enhancing the skills and knowledge of public servants, particularly managers, in order to build a capable public service.

Boshomane (2011:5) outlines the three principles which the PALAMA adheres to: firstly, it acts as a facilitator of training; secondly, it collaborates and does not compete with other service providers; and thirdly, it provides the large-scale delivery of training interventions. All of this was geared towards creating a public service directed towards learning and service delivery. SAMDI played this role prior to the establishment of PALAMA.

4.3.4 The National School of Government (2013–present)

The then Minister for Public Service and Administration, Honourable Richard Baloyi, stated in 2009 that in spite of the improvements made by PALAMA, challenges remained in carrying out the Cabinet mandate (to ensure a high performing public

service through training and development). The minister therefore tasked PALAMA to revise and change its strategy (Budget vote speech by the then Public Service and Administration Minister, Hon. M.R Baloyi in the National Assembly 20/04/2010).

In October 2013, the NSG was officially launched by the then Minister for Public Service and Administration, Honourable Lindiwe Sisulu, locating public service learning and development within the state. The NSG is constituted as a schedule one department as stipulated in the *Public Service Act, 1994* (Act 103 of 1994), as amended by the *Public Service Act, 1999* (Act 5 of 1995). The role of the NSG in the PMDS as a training institute is to be actively involved in capacity building.

The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (2013:23) highlights that since the late 1990s, the institutions mandated with the task of HRD, SAMDI and PSTI, required coherent strategies for providing quality, sustained training programmes oriented to the public service. PSTI and SAMDI were therefore not in a position to address the challenge of a skills shortage in government departments. Thus the recent launch of the NSG is an attempt to reposition government's approach to public service education and training.

The transformation of PALAMA into the NSG represents a shift towards value-orientated and needs-driven development and learning across the three spheres of Government. The NDP emphasises that the public service should focus on attracting adequately skilled personnel who share the same professional focus and commitment towards attaining developmental goals. Training and development can be a means to achieving this goal. The launch of the NSG was a bold step towards shifting public service learning and development onto a trajectory that seeks effective and professional public service cadres through the provision of relevant, mandatory learning and development interventions. This decision emanates from the complex history of fragmented training in the public service, the fact that current efforts are insufficient to meet current and future needs, and the importance of professionalising public servants to create a public service that will realise the objectives of the developmental state and Vision 2030. The NSG was also established to address the challenge of lack of adequately skilled personnel in the public sector as a major concern for government to achieve its goals and objectives (The NSG 2014:15). The

NSG plays a crucial role as a capacity-building initiative that helps to address the skills challenge faced by most organisations.

4.4 LEGISLATIVE MANDATE OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

The legislative mandate of the NSG, according to the *Public Service Act, 1996* (Act 103 of 1996), is to provide such training or cause such training to be provided or conduct such examinations or tests or cause such examinations or tests to be conducted. In this regard, the Accounting Officer (the Principal, in the context of the NSG) may, with the approval of the Minister for the DPSA, decide on courses which may be prescribed as qualifications for the appointment or transfer of persons in or to the public service, and may issue diplomas or certificates or cause diplomas or certificates to be issued to persons who have passed such examinations (NSG's Strategic Plan 2014/15 to 2018/19:8). This legislative mandate provides a guideline for what the NSG is supposed to be doing.

The increased demand for services and the limited resources to meet that demand, is a huge challenge for Government. Given this, there is a need to use government resources effectively and efficiently. To this end, the transformation of the public service to enable it to meet the needs of the people and the policy objectives of the Government of South Africa remains a top priority (Mafunisa 2014:1101). The South African public service needs to be quick to respond to the needs of the citizens of the country, but without skilled, knowledgeable and capable workforce this cannot be achieved (Van Dijk and Thornhill 2003:461). In this regard, it is essential that employees undergo training in order to meet the required competency level in the public service (Kroon 1995:6). For this reason, the aim of the NSG as a hub for learning and development is to professionalise all organs of state and develop required competencies to enhance employee performance in the public sector.

According to the World Bank (1996:2), capacity building in the public sector is complex and involves more than just the economic capabilities of a government sector. In this context it includes political and social factors and applies to a multitude of interlinked sectors and areas. Auditor General (2014:5) also records that former President of the

Republic of South Africa, Mr Thabo Mbeki, said during his State of the Nation address on 3 February 2006 that a shortage of skills in public sector is one of the major challenges that the Government faces and requires urgent attention. It can therefore be said that the function of the NSG is to address the shortage of adequately skilled personnel in the public service through its learning and development interventions. This is also an indication that there is a need for strategic solutions to capacity-building challenges that can help address the skills challenge in the public sector.

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4.5 STRATEGIC OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

As mentioned earlier, the existence of the NSG arises from the recognition of the need for a strategic shift, enabling government to use training and development to improve the functioning of government departments and their consequent achievement of policy goals (NSG's Strategic Plan 2015-2020:2). Just like any other government departments within the public service, the NSG has a vision, mission and value statement which provides direction to the organisation as well as its employees. The employees are expected to perform their duties according to certain directives and the vision, mission and values of the NSG assist in highlighting the responsibilities of the employees to achieve the mandate of the organisation.

4.5.1 Vision and mission

The vision of the NSG is to be responsible for training and development programmes in a uniform public sector with the objective of developing professional, responsive and capable public servants driven by the imperative of a developmental state (The NSG's Strategic Plan 2015-2020:2). The mission statement is to contribute to establishing a capable, professional and responsive public service that is committed to, and has institutionalised, the values and policies of a developmental state (The NSG's Annual Report 2016:17). It is impossible for the organisation to achieve its objectives, in terms of its vision and mission statements, if its employees do not have sufficient skills and are not competent to execute their duties. Thus, the implementation of PMDS through training and development interventions is to be deemed significant in the workplace in order to improve employee performance (Sultana et al 2012:648).

4.5.2 Values

There are three core values that define the NSG. These are Learning, Growing, and Serving, and are briefly outlined below.

Capacity for **Learning** is an essential foundation for South Africa's future development, and this value must find expression in the NSG. The NSG must assist public organisations to continuously improve outcomes and impact by institutionalising effective and reliable learning. As improved performance is the ultimate purpose of all the NSG's training and development programmes, there should be an organisational development focus in every aspect of the NSG's design, development and delivery, ensuring that capacity issues are approached holistically, developmentally and systematically (The NSG 2014:23).

The NSG (2014:23) further maintains that learning is accompanied by **Growth**. The content of training and development should be socially and politically progressive, national in character but supported by and reflective of the needs and challenges of local contexts. Learning programmes should be designed to be dynamic and developmental: they must ensure that public servants are able to access relevant

knowledge and develop critical, reflective, analytical and problem-solving skills that will enable them to be responsive to the needs and demands that confront the public sector.

Finally, **Serving** and professional, responsive, service-oriented public servants are central to a developmental state. The NSG should emphasise partnerships, consultation and engagement with the objective of developing collective leadership for a uniform, professional and capable public service, imbued with a culture and ethos of service (NSG 2014:23). The next section analyses the organisational structure of the NSG.

4.6 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

Organisational structure can be defined as the configuration of an organisation so that it can achieve its goals and objectives. Organisational structures outline how work or duties are organised and allocated within an organisation. In simple terms, such structures are often used to standardise work or to create specialised functions. Moreover, an organisational structure helps define positions in the organisation and the relationship between these positions. In doing so, organisational structure defines particular positions for decision making and authority in organisations (DPSA 2007:2).

The organisational structure of the NSG is based on the management transitional structure approved by the Minister for the DPSA in October 2013. It is against this background that all active posts in the structure are funded while the training policy and planning branch has posts that still have to be finally created. The only active chief directorates within this branch are research and innovation as well as monitoring and evaluation. Additional line functions, as planned earlier, are still inactive subject to final profiling of the curriculum policy and planning, quality assurance policy and planning, norms and standards functions within the NSG and approval of funding to resource the NSG strategy inclusive of these line functions (NSG 2016:20).

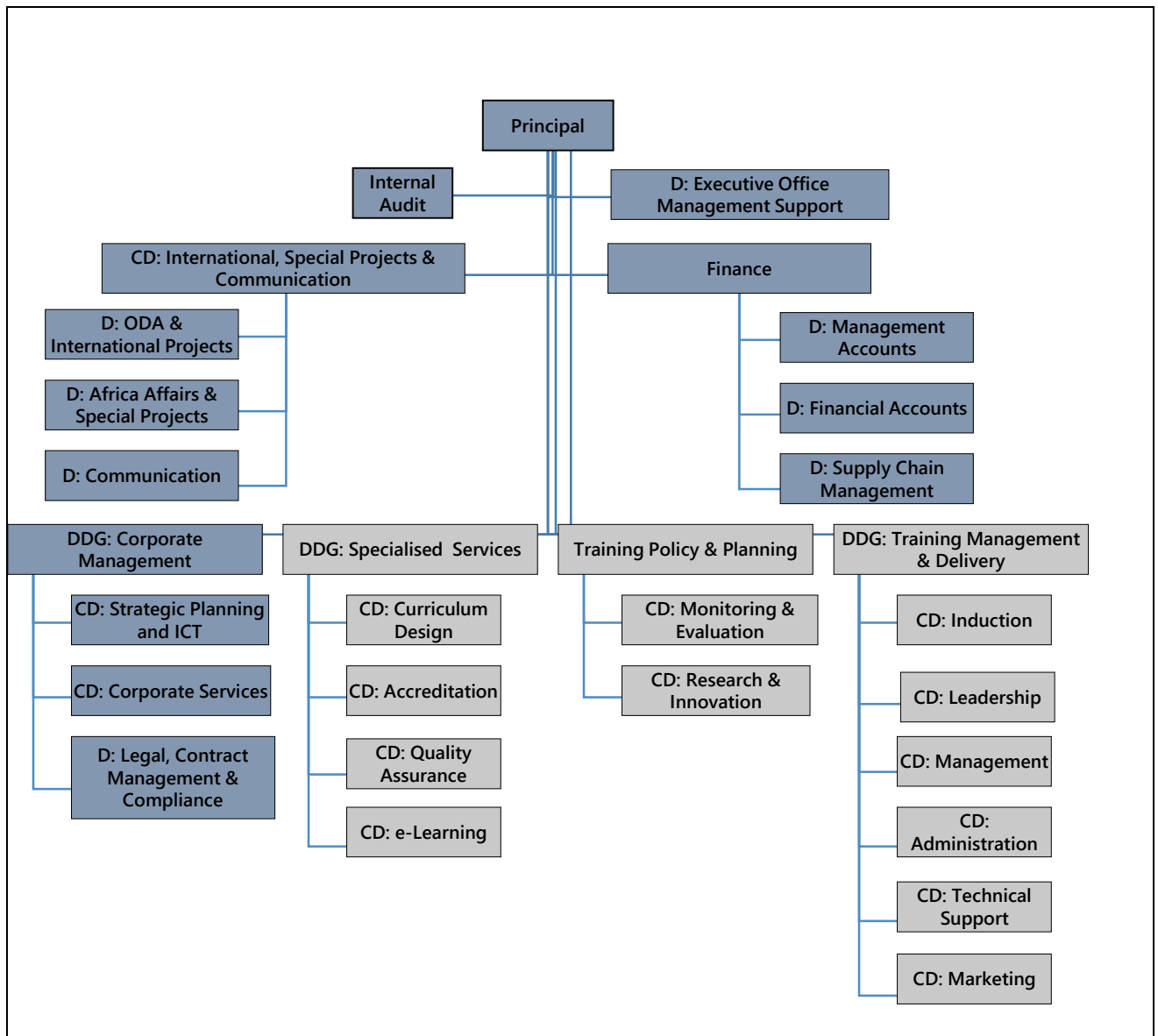
The Head of the NSG was re-designed from being called “Director-General” to “Principal” by Presidential Proclamation no 46 of 2013. The Principal of the NSG is Professor Richard M Levin, who reports to the Minister for Public Service and Administration (NSG’s Strategic Plan 2015-2020:12).

According to the organisational structure of the NSG, the department has a total of 227 posts on the approved establishment for programmes one and two, with 208 posts filled, representing a vacancy rate of 8.4 percent since 30 June 2017. The vacant posts are 19, and of these only 4 posts are on SMS level. In terms of the employment equity status, the racial breakdown is as follows: African 151; White 27; Coloured 13; and Indian 12. Significantly, female employees are well presented in the NSG. Out of 203 total employees, 61 percent (123) were females as at the end of 2015/16 FY. The department continues to meet the cabinet target for employment of people with disabilities, who represent 2.4 percent of employees. During the period under review, the Department made a total of 25 appointments out of this 1 appointment was for top management and 7 for senior managers. In the same period, 14 internal staff were promoted to higher positions, while 5 employee positions were upgraded due to posts being evaluated. Additionally, the School trained 170 officials in line with the Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) against a target of 154. This over-achievement was mainly due to the training requirement exceeding the training that was planned. The focus on training for the officials was on critical skills required to deliver on the mandate of the School (NSG 2016:87).

Figure 4.3 below illustrates that there are 12 Chief Directorates which assist the Principal in carrying out the functions of the Department. Two Chief Directorates (International, Special Projects & Communication and Chief Financial Officer) report directly to the Principal. The other two Chief Directorates, namely Strategic Planning and ICT and Corporate Service, report to the Deputy Director-General: Corporate Management. While the other Chief Directorates namely; Management Training, Induction Training, Administration Training, Leadership Training, Technical Support and Marketing report to Deputy Director-General: Training Management and Delivery. The Chief Directorates Curriculum Design, Accreditation, Quality Assurance and eLearning report to the Deputy Director-General: Special Services. Finally, the Chief

Directorates Monitoring and Evaluation and Research and Innovation report to the Branch Head: Training Policy and Planning.

Figure 4.3 The National School of Government organisational structure



Source: (NSG 2016:24)

4.7 OPERATIONS OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

This section briefly examines the operations carried out by the NSG to ensure that the department carries out its mandate in order to achieve its goals and objectives. The operations of the NSG have been categorised into various branches or streams.

4.7.1 Office of the Principal

This branch facilitates the overall management of the School and provides for the responsibilities of the Principal, Branch Heads and other members of management. These responsibilities include providing centralised administrative, legal and office support services, human resources and financial management, communication, special projects, international relations, and internal controls and oversight.

Activities of the Office of the Principal are organised as follows:

- ❖ **Office of the Principal:** This is the highest executive office in the NSG. The Principal, as the Accounting Officer of the School, is responsible for leading and providing strategic vision and direction, creating harmony within the department, and allocating resources. The Principal also undertakes strategic communication with key stakeholders, including (but not limited to) Parliament and the media. There is one Director, one Executive PA and one Office Administrator in the Office of the Principal (NSG 2016:31).
- ❖ **International Relations, Special Projects and Communications:** The Office of International Relations, Special Projects and Communications is mandated to manage strategic international partnerships, obtain resources from the donor community, and facilitate the School's engagement in the global knowledge exchange network through mutually beneficial partnerships African and international institutions (NSG 2016:32).
- ❖ **Office of the Chief Financial Officer:** According to the National Treasury ([sa]:14), the key function of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) is to ensure the sound financial management of the department so that public money is

safeguarded at all times and is used appropriately, economically, efficiently and effectively. The CFO is one of the crucial parties in the executive team of any department because he or she participates in the development and implementation of the departmental strategy and the resourcing of the strategic objectives in a sustainable manner. It is for this reason that the CFO must be actively involved in all material business decisions to ensure that immediate and longer-term implications, opportunities and risks are fully considered.

- ❖ **Internal Audit:** According to National Treasury (2014:1), the Institute of Internal Auditors defines the function of internal auditing as “an independent and objective assurance and consulting activity designed to contribute to the value and enhance the operations of an organisation. It assists an organisation to achieve its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluating and improving the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes”. The NSG (2016:32) adds that this directorate is concerned with providing independent, objective assurance and consulting services aimed at adding value and enhancing the operations of the NSG. It also helps the NSG to achieve its objectives by enforcing a systematic, disciplined way of evaluating and improving the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance procedures.

4.7.2 Corporate management branch

The responsibility of the Corporate Management Branch is to provide strategy and planning services; human resource management services; information and communication technology; legal advisory services; security services; and office support and auxiliary services. The branch ensures that there is administrative efficiency within the NSG (NSG intranet).

4.7.3 Training policy and planning branch

This branch is responsible for supporting capacity development and training through research, establishing training needs, knowledge management, and monitoring and evaluation processes. The Training Policy and Planning Branch consists of Research

and Innovation as well as Monitoring and Evaluation business units. These are briefly outlined below:

❖ **Research and innovation**

The Research and Innovation Unit is responsible for conducting training needs analyses that inform the capacity development requirements of various government departments. This directorate also conducts broad research studies that focus on the nature of the South African State, informing capacity development for enhanced service delivery (Public Service Research Forum 2014:3).

❖ **Monitoring and evaluation**

Generally speaking, monitoring and evaluation plays a fundamental role in the public sector. It strives to improve government performance outcomes in order to achieve its objectives and meet the demands of the citizens of the country. The core function of the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit is to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and quality of the training programmes offered by the NSG. The aim is to determine whether a particular training programme has made any difference to the performance of the participants. This helps to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the tools used for training and whether or not departmental needs were addressed (Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation 2013:8).

4.7.4 Training management and delivery branch

The branch is responsible for the roll-out of training and post-training delivery support. The applied training delivery model focuses on professionalising the public service, and has been undertaken by offering a suite of courses and programmes offered in four streams: Leadership, Management, Administration and Induction. A detailed description of the functions carried out by various business units within the Training Management and Delivery Branch (TMD) are provided in the “training interventions offered by the NSG” section (NSG 2015:54). A detailed overview of what the above-mentioned units do will be provided in the section that deals with the training interventions offered by the NSG.

4.7.5 Specialised services branch

The Specialised Services Branch is made up of the business units listed below:

❖ Curriculum design

The core function of the Curriculum Design Unit is the design, development and management of the entire curriculum development cycle of programmes and courses covering the spectrum of induction, leadership, management and administration competencies (NSG 2016:54).

❖ Quality assurance

The core function of the Quality Assurance Unit is to enhance the credibility of both credit-bearing and non-credit-bearing courses offered by the NSG (NSG 2016:55).

❖ Accreditation

The core function of the Accreditation Unit is to increase available accredited programmes and courses (though not at the expense of non-credit-bearing professional development programmes) that are linked to targeted qualifications on the National Qualification Framework (NSG 2016:55).

❖ eLearning

The NSG, as a training provider for government departments, is responsible for learning and development programs that will improve the performance of the public sector. One of the ways that the NSG can improve performance through learning is by introducing eLearning (Msomi, Munapo and Choga 2016:42). The core function of the eLearning Unit is to explore and implement modes of training delivery that take advantage of new and existing technologies to widen access to education, training and development (NSG 2016:55).

4.8 TRAINING INTERVENTIONS OFFERED BY THE NATIONAL SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

This section provides an overview of the training interventions offered by the NSG and will make provision for the courses offered by various business units in the TMD.

As mentioned in the introductory chapter of this study, the NSG is legislatively mandated to professionalise the public service through various learning and development interventions. The School employs more than 227 employees who are directly and indirectly responsible for providing compulsory and demand-driven training programmes to more than 35 000 public servants annually in all the three spheres of government. The School also designs, develops and assures the quality of its own curriculum for programmes and courses which are aligned to Government priorities and public service policy frameworks. Training is provided through a blended approach of face-to-face classroom learning and online learning. Training events take place throughout the entire year and occur across the country (NSG 2015:9).

The NSG is expected to provide training to employees who are undertrained, to orientate employees on all the policies that need to be implemented within the organisation and to provide courses that can employees help enhance their skills in the workplace. The NSG has to consider the broader changes which occur in the public service that require the organisation to pay attention to issues of Batho-Pele principles, employment equity and skills development (Reynecke and Fourie 2001:85). In fact, there is also a need for an intervention that addresses PM related challenges that government departments face on a daily basis.

Van der Westhuizen and Wessels (2011:316) are of the view that training interventions are usually identified and scheduled in a co-ordinated way. Emphasis is also placed on the constant revision of the contents of these training interventions to make provision for the changing needs of a particular institution. Training and development interventions are therefore part of the process of transforming an individual employee into a professional. As mentioned previously, to professionalise the public service training, interventions at the NSG are offered in four streams (Management, Induction, Administration and Leadership). The training delivery takes place through a hybrid of

outsourced training facilitators: the Independent Individual Contractors (IICs), Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), private training providers, current public servants, and the NSG trainers themselves. The four business units which offer various training interventions within the NSG are briefly outlined in the next section.

- **Induction**

The core function of the Induction Unit is the implementation of programmes that induct and orientate all public servants in line with public service determinations, directives and regulations, Constitutional requirements, the principles of *Batho Pele*, and the values and ethos of the public service. In addition, the unit also looks into the preparation of unemployed youth graduates for entry into the public service. The induction courses are targeted for all the new entrants into the public service. These programmes include the Compulsory Induction Programme, which is meant for employees from salary level 1–12. Moreover, these programmes were designed and developed in response to government's quest to address the daily skills challenges faced by government departments in improving service delivery. These programmes are also aimed at capacitating and improving the skills of public servants so they can achieve the developmental goals of the government. The Induction Unit also looks into the preparation of unemployed youth graduates for entry into the public service.

- **Leadership**

The core function of the Leadership Unit is to develop public servants into leaders who care, serve and deliver. This unit focuses on building leadership capacity across all departments in the public service. Its approach is grounded in distributed leadership at all performance levels. Leadership development and support will include training programmes on effective leadership in the public service, mentoring and coaching, workshops and seminars. The leadership programmes, which are targeted for the executives and rollout by various universities across the country in collaboration with the NSG, aim to capacitate public servants, particularly managers, in leadership-related matters (Mopeli 2014:92)

- **Administration**

Programmes that are offered by the Administration chief directorate emphasise that the core function of the Administration unit is to provide training that focuses on improving the administrative capacity of the State, for which there have been repeated calls for improvement. The NSG focuses on the following core administrative areas: Communications, Citizen-Centred and Effective Service Delivery, Writing Skills, Ethical Behaviour and Office Administration. Administration programmes focus on enhancing customer service skills for frontline staff, ethics and diversity management programmes.

- **Management**

The core function of the Management chief directorate is to provide training that focuses on technical skills for generic management competencies. These cover the following core areas: Financial Management, Human Resource Management, Project Management, Supply Chain Management, Monitoring and Evaluation, Planning and Organisation Design. Human resource and management courses are targeted at human resource practitioners in various Government departments. Secondly, its financial management and supply chain management courses are targeted at financial managers as well as supply chain management practitioners and/or specialists.

Additionally, the online MPC is one of the training interventions offered by the Management training stream. As highlighted throughout the study, the main goal of the MPC is to improve performance management in the public service. It further seeks to address the challenges associated with the effective implementation of the PMDS in government departments. Finally, the NSG offers continuous training interventions to enhance the effective management and implementation of government services, including caring for the citizens of the country (Levin 2017:33). A description of the MPC is provided in the next section.

- **Technical support**

The Technical Support Unit is responsible for supporting the above four units with logistics management for training delivery, including the following: management of training schedules, learner registrations, learner records, recruitment of trainers and managing strategic relations. In most cases, the duration of the training programmes may vary depending on the nature of the training and its outcomes. The assessments of learners undergoing training or learning programmes are facilitated by the Technical Support Unit (NSG 2016:55).

4.9 DESCRIPTION OF THE MANAGING PERFORMANCE COURSE

The NSG offers the online MPC programme as its strategy to improve PM in the public service. The programme was rolled out in March 2015 in response to the findings of the PSC as outlined in the background to the study as well as the problem statement section. As highlighted earlier, this course is aimed at improving the overall capacity for managing performance in the public service. Moreover, as a strategic way to address the PMDS challenges encountered by government departments, the NSG designed and developed this course, which was opened to public officials to improve the implementation of the PMDS in the public service. It is also important to note that although the target group for the MPC programme is employees on salary level 9–12, all public servants were allowed to register and participate in the course. The NSG also conducted an assessment of its current human resources (HR) course and identified a need for capacity development in managing performance. This need was also confirmed by the Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT) reports (NSG 2016:8).

According to The NSG (2016:6), the MPC programme contains four different learning units linked to the performance cycle:

- Performance management and planning,
- Performance monitoring and support,
- Performance review and appraisal/assessment, and

- Performance recognition.

The duration of the course was recommended to be a period of one month. However, the time taken to complete the course is also dependent upon the pace determined by the participants themselves. All instructions in terms of registering and participating in the course are clearly outlined and details of specific people to be contacted for queries are also listed (NSG 2016:6). The next section discusses the aims of the MPC programme.

4.10 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE MANAGING PERFORMANCE COURSE

“The ultimate goal for MPC is to improve performance management in the public service for occupational levels 9–12”. Based on this, four main objectives were developed (NSG 2016:6).

- To develop a project plan aligned to the integrated teaching and learning delivery model, to test an integrated design and delivery model, to use eLearning to roll out mandatory training to scale and to combine the use of public service-trainers and contracted trainers and a hybrid funding model.
- To design and develop the course curriculum and delivery in line with the integrated teaching and learning delivery model.
- To verify the design and delivery of the MPC for occupational levels 9–12 through its use.
- To monitor and evaluate the design and delivery of the MPC for occupational levels 9–12.

4.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter has covered the profile, organisational structure and operations of the NSG, briefly outlining what each unit is responsible for. An analysis of the establishment of the NSG was of utmost importance to help the reader to understand how the organisation functions. This also helps to break ground in the examination of the organisational structure of the NSG. The chapter has also outlined the operations

of the NSG and examines the role of each business unit within the NSG, providing a clear picture of the functions that need to be carried out in order to achieve the organisation's mandate. To cope with the challenge of a shortage of skilled personnel in the public sector, a strategic overview of the NSG (including the mission, vision and values of the department) is provided to portray what the NSG does to assist with these challenges. Emphasis is placed on the role played by the NSG in professionalising public servants through its learning and development interventions. The MPC programme and its learning outcomes have been described, and the programme realisation, assessment method and evaluation have also been covered. The next chapter focuses on presentation and discussion of research findings.

CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on data analysis and presentation of research findings. The data analysed emerged from a questionnaire answered by the employees of the NSG, which was developed and distributed to sampled officials as an online survey. Document analysis also forms part of the information that will be presented and analysed. The focus of the study was to analyse the efficacy of MPC as a performance management training intervention which was aimed at improving the implementation of PMDS in the public service and in the NSG in particular.

There is an assumption that PM leads to many grievances being lodged in the public service. Part of this challenge emanates from a lack of requisite skills and knowledge on performance within departments. The NSG, as a government department, developed the MPC programme.

In the process of analysing the survey questionnaire, each question or statement was linked to a research objective. Thus, a group of questions or statements were analysed in order to determine whether or not the research objective has been achieved.

5.2 QUESTIONNAIRE DISTRIBUTION AND RESPONSE RATE

A total number of 197 questionnaires were sent to respondents using an online survey. In total, 74 participants completed the survey questionnaires, 20 of which were not completed in full. Therefore, the views represented here are for only 74 participants who fully completed the survey. Importantly, only 61 completed the online MPC programme and 13 participants registered for the course but did not enrol for it. Of 74 respondents, a total number of 24 indicated that they are responsible for assessing performance of staff, while the other 50 of the respondents are not. Therefore it should be noted that the analysis and findings are based on a total number of 74 survey questionnaires which were correctly completed.

The data for this study is analysed and interpreted according to the following categories as outlined below:

PART A: Demographic Profile

PART B: Assessment of the Performance Management and Development System

PART C: Assessment of the online Managing Performance Course

PART D: Assessment on improved areas post training

PART E: Recommendations/comments section

The findings of the survey questionnaire will cover both the quantitative and the qualitative aspects of the survey. Readers should note that the findings of the survey do not necessarily represent the views of all employees who completed the course, but only the views of those who completed the survey questionnaire. The findings from the qualitative data are given in the next section.

5.3 QUANTITATIVE DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This section gives a presentation of the findings on various themes from the survey questionnaire. Additional themes that emanated from the open-ended questions will also be presented in the qualitative findings section. The section will commence with findings from the closed-ended question (quantitative data) and later on followed by qualitative findings (open-ended questions). The questions will be presented in a sequential order as reflected in the questionnaire and be linked to the objectives of this study.

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

This section presents the demographic information of the 74 respondents in terms of gender, age, highest educational qualification, category of positions held according to salary, and whether or not they have a disability.

Table 5.1: Gender of respondents

Answer	Count	Percentage
Female (F)	51	67%
Male (M)	23	31%

Table 5.1 shows that the majority of the respondents (69 percent) were females, while males constituted 31 percent. As mentioned in Chapter Four of the study, the NSG has more female employees than male employees. It was therefore crucial to identify the gender of the respondents in order to establish different perceptions (if any) held by the two groups.

Table 5.2: Age of respondents

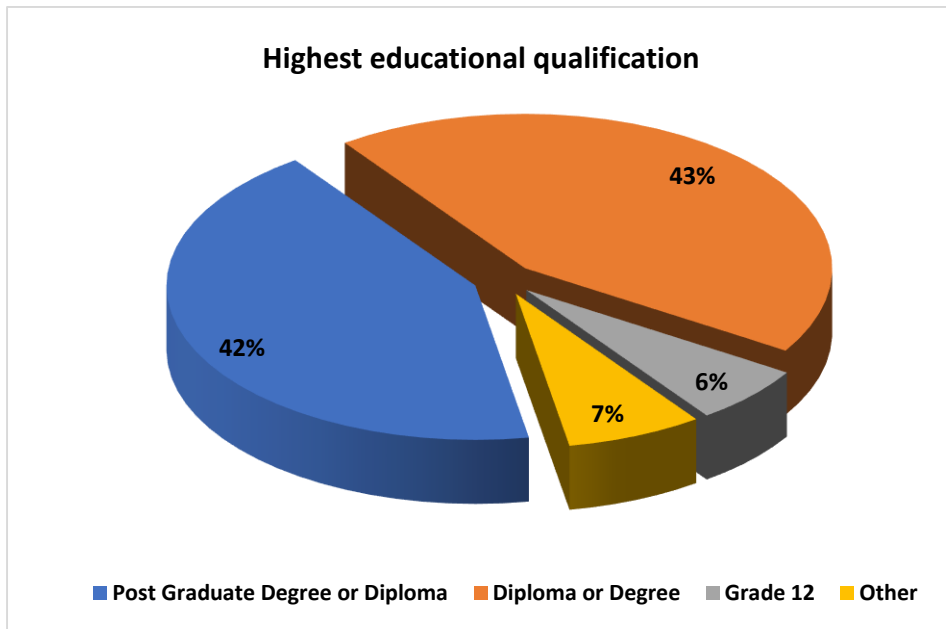
Answer	Count	Percentage
18–25 years old	1	1%
26–35 years old	24	33%
36–45 years old	28	39%
46–55 years old	18	25%
56–65 years old	1	1%
66 years and older	0	0%

As depicted in table 5.2, the respondents were placed into six age categories. The information in the above table reflects that 1 percent of the respondents were between the ages of 18–25, 33 percent between the ages of 26–35 years, 39 percent in the 36–45 category, 25 percent between the ages of 46–55, only 1 percent between the ages of 56–65 years and 0 percent between the ages of 66 years and older.

The data above indicate the diversity of the age groups at the NSG. This requires that the human resource management and development unit (HRM&D), working together with course content developers and trainers, should ensure that the training techniques in employee development should accommodate ages of all categories to enhance the learning process within the department. Importantly, the age of the respondents can also determine their knowledge or experience in a particular field of work. For instance, when asking a 25-year-old employee about the PMDS policy and

asking a 45-year-old employee about the PMDS, the responses or perceptions are likely to differ.

Figure 5.1: Educational qualifications of respondents



The purpose for this section was to establish the educational background of the respondents. As reflected in figure 5.1, the majority of the respondents (43 percent) have obtained diplomas or degree qualifications, 41 percent have obtained post graduate degrees, 8 percent have obtained grade 12 matric certificates, and the 6 percent who fell in the “other” category have obtained qualifications such as PhDs, Master’s degrees in Business Leadership, B-Tech degrees, BA psychology degrees and Master’s qualifications. This reflects that the department has employees who are highly qualified and could contribute to attaining its goals and objectives.

Table 5.3: Post/Salary levels of respondents

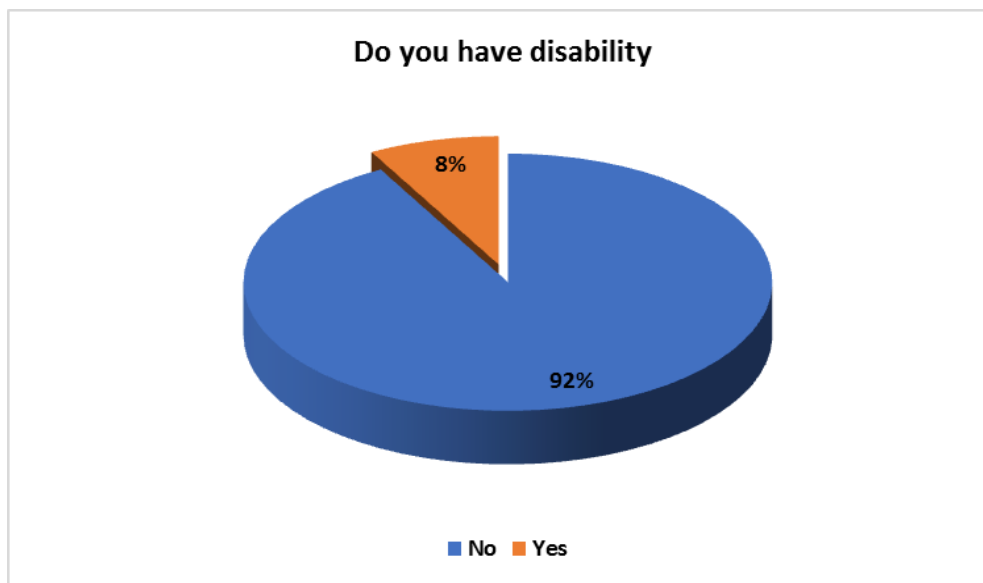
Answer	Count	Percentage
18–25 years old	1	1%
26–35 years old	24	33%
36–45 years old	28	39%

As shown in table 5.3 above, a large number of survey respondents (91 percent) fall between levels 6–12, which include Administrators, Assistant Directors and Deputy

Directors. As already indicated, this figure does provide an accurate picture with regard to whether the target group comprises a large number since various salary levels are included in this category.

As highlighted earlier in the study, the target group for the MPC programme consists of public service employees on salary levels 9–12. It was also underlined that other employees who are not on the stated salary level were also allowed to participate in the MPC programme. However, it is not clear whether the target group was the largest number enrolled, since the enrolment data were divided into three categories: Interns, levels 1–5, and levels 6–12. This categorisation therefore makes it difficult to determine participation per level, especially for the target group. The table above indicates that employees on levels 6–12 are in the majority.

Figure 5.2: Employees with disability



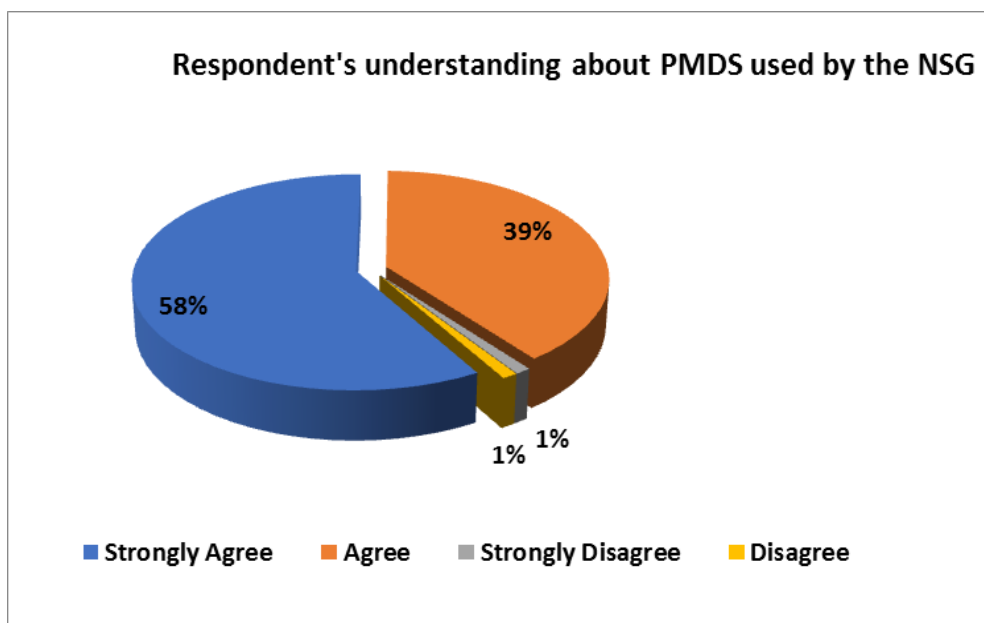
According to the pie chart above, 8 percent of the respondents reported they have some form of a disability, while 92 percent of the respondents indicated that they do not have any disability. The issue of disability is one of the important aspects that should be given full attention to ensure that people with different disabilities, including visual and audio impairments, are given an opportunity to benefit from training and development initiatives in the workplace. The *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996* (section 9(3) of 1996) states that “The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender,

sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth”. It can therefore be concluded that the NSG provides opportunities for training and development to all its employees, including those who have disabilities.

PART B: ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

This section considers the understanding of the PMDS policy used by the NSG, the NSG’s understanding of contents covered by this policy, the policy’s to the NSG’s day-to-day work and methods for assessing performance, as well as consistency in conducting performance appraisals.

Figure 5.3: Respondents’ understanding of the PMDS used by the NSG



As depicted in the pie chart above, the majority of respondents (41 percent) strongly agreed and 49 percent agreed that they have a full understanding of the PMDS policy used by the NSG. Only 9 percent disagreed and 1 percent strongly disagreed with this statement. Based on these findings, it can be assumed that the respondents know what needs to be done to implement the PMDS within their department, as they have adequate knowledge about the requirements of the system.

Figure 5.4: Respondents' understanding of the contents of the PMDS policy

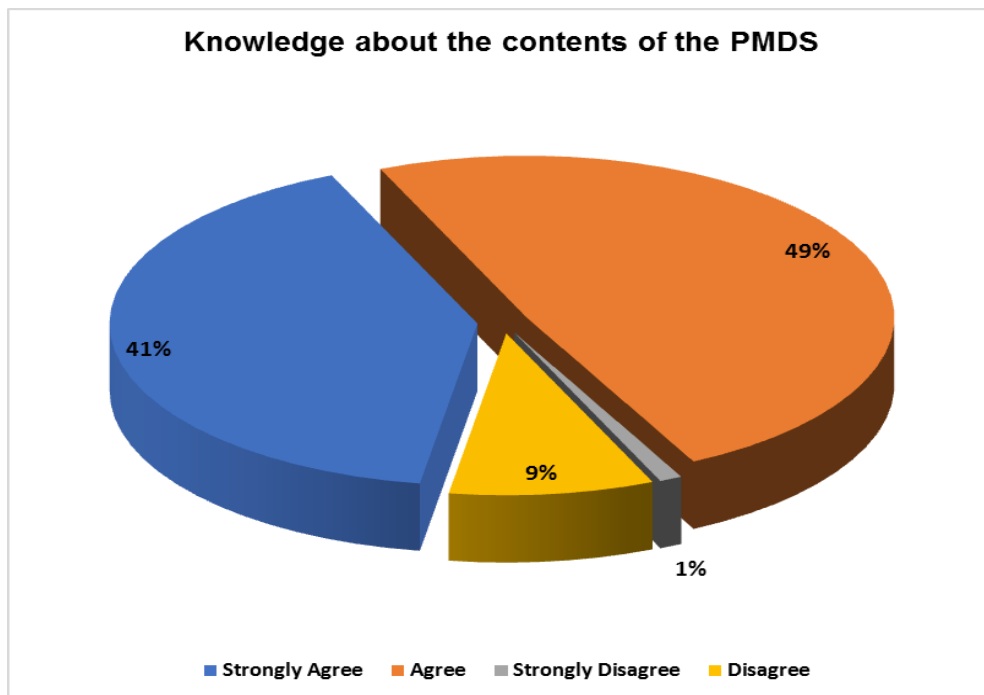
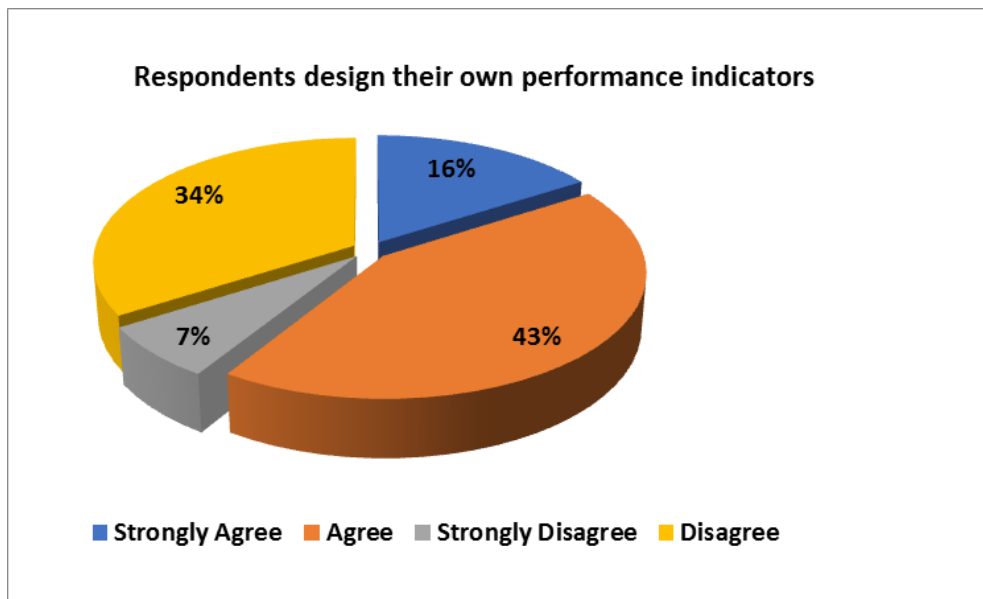


Figure 5.4 depicts that the majority of the respondents (90 percent) agreed that they have knowledge about the contents covered in the PMDS policy used by the NSG. Only 9 percent disagreed and 1 percent strongly disagreed with this statement. However, the fact that 90 percent of the participants provided a positive response makes it clear that the participants have a clear understanding of the contents of the PMDS. Additionally, the employees' knowledge of PM is in line with the goal outlined by Wright (2004:124), who states that PM is a process through which an organisation is able to set goals and objectives for various directorates, teams and individuals. This theory challenges individual employees to use their skills and knowledge to enhance their chances of success, and to promote innovation in the organisations in which they employed.

The researcher wanted to establish if the respondents were able to come up with their own performance indicators when drafting their performance agreements at the beginning of each performance cycle.

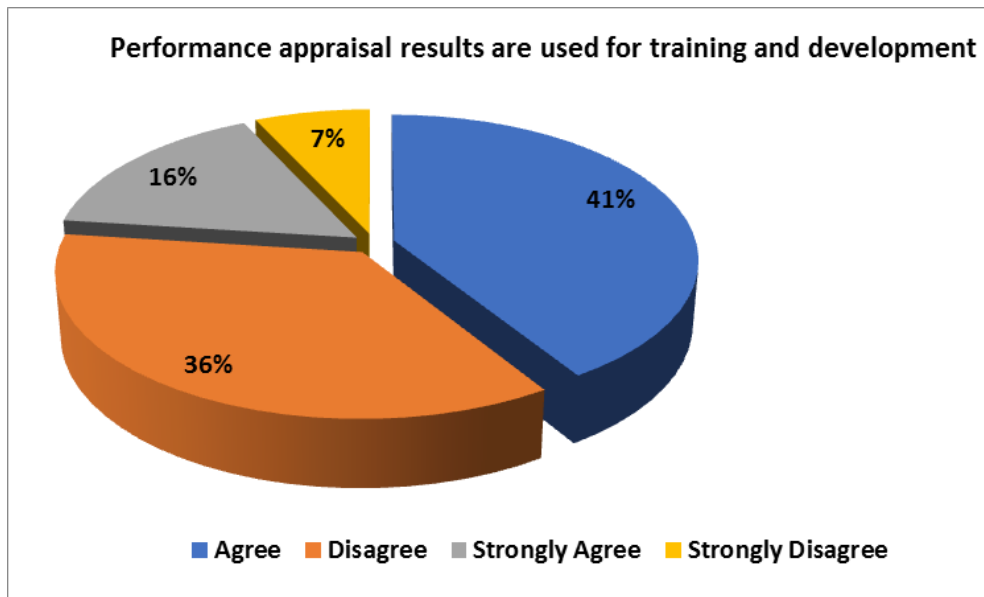
Figure 5.5: Respondents design their own performance indicators



In the pie chart above, the findings show that 43 percent of the respondents agreed and 16 percent strongly agreed that they develop their own performance indicators when drafting their performance agreements at the beginning of each performance cycle. On the other hand, 34 percent disagreed and 7 percent strongly disagreed with this statement. Based on the above findings, it can be said that respondents are given an opportunity by their supervisors to craft their performance indicators, which in turn inform their daily duties that contribute towards attaining organisational goals and objectives. Contrary to this, the 34 percent who disagreed with this statement could indicate that their managers do not provide them with the opportunity or guide them to develop their own performance indicators. They rather craft performance indicators on behalf of their employees, imposing what they need to do onto them. Given these findings, it can be concluded that, in order for employees to be motivated to achieve their targets as stipulated in their performance agreements, they should be given an opportunity to contribute to the development of their performance indicators.

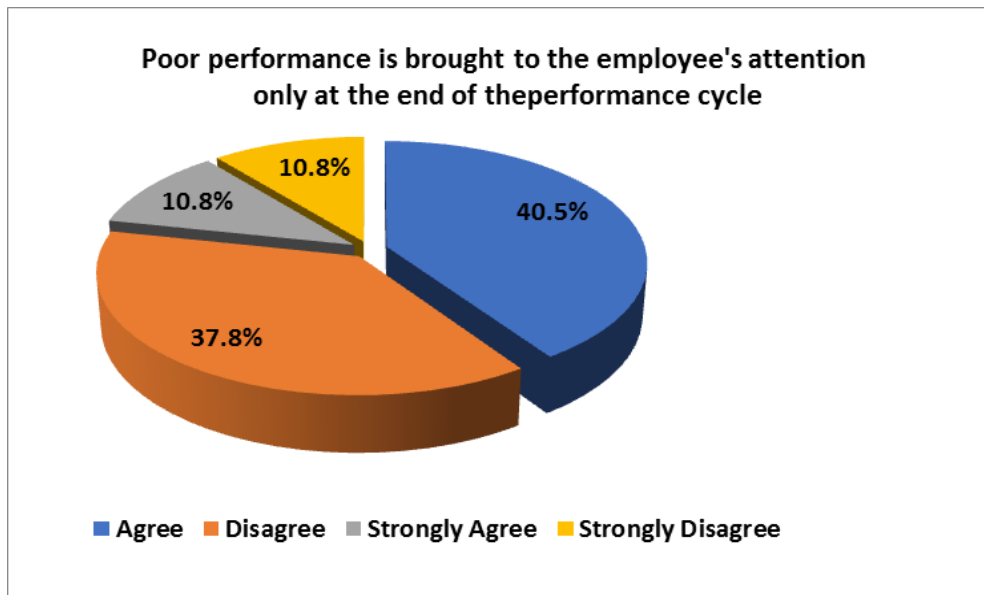
The purpose of the statement below was to determine whether the results which emerge from performance appraisals are used for the training and development of staff at the NSG.

Figure 5.6: Performance appraisal results are used for training and development of staff



As depicted in the above graph, 41 percent of the respondents agreed and 16 percent strongly agreed that the results which come from performance appraisal (whether good or bad) are used for the training and development of staff. However, 36 percent disagreed and 7 percent strongly disagreed with this statement. Based on the above responses, it could be assumed that the majority of the respondents (57 percent) feel that performance appraisal results are used as a training and development tool for employees of the NSG, even though almost half of the respondents (43 percent) disagreed with the statement. In this regard, Fletcher (2008:98) supports PM training, stating that the effectiveness of performance assessment can be attributed to PM training as well as knowledge and understanding of the system.

Figure 5.7: Feedback on poor performance by individual employee's performance cycle



As illustrated in figure 5.7, 41 percent of the respondents agreed and 11 percent strongly agreed that poor performance is only brought to the employee's attention at the end of the performance cycle. Only a small number of respondents (38 percent) disagreed with this statement, suggesting that they are alerted about their poor performance prior the end of a performance cycle.

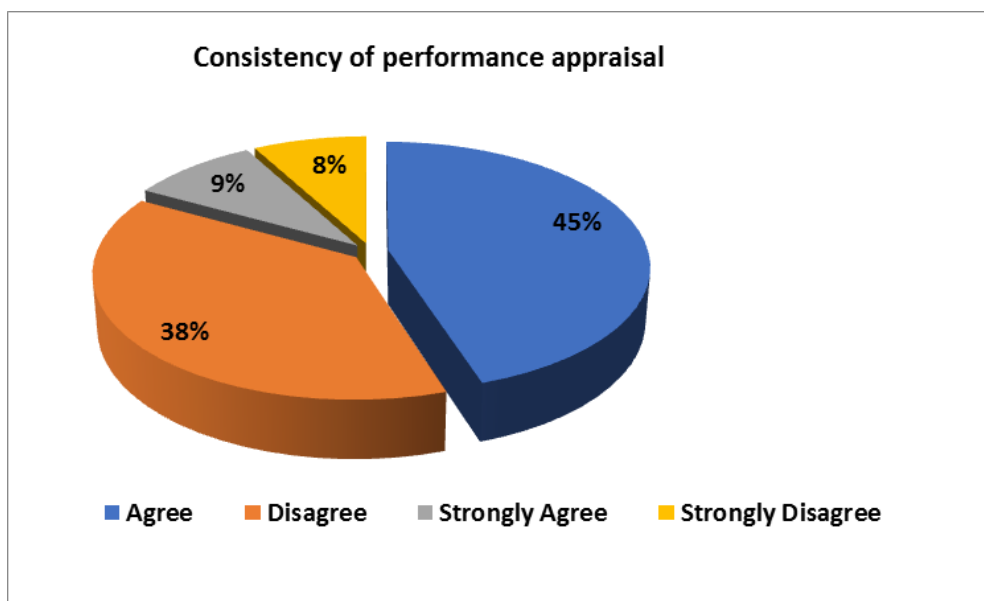
More than half of the respondents (52 percent) reported that poor performance is only brought to the employee's attention at the end of the performance cycle, creating a negative impression regarding communication between managers and employees at the NSG. This finding also shows that employees in this department are the PMDS. This also points out that irrespective of the results displayed in figure 5.6, employees are not happy with how the system is being managed in this department.

According to Erasmus et al (2005:290), in cases where an employee performs poorly, the manager should first take corrective measures such as systematic remedial or development support to provide assistance to the relevant employee. Corrective measures involve various options such as training or re-training, counselling or coaching, setting clear work performance standards, providing enabling working facilities, and designing a personal development plan. If the employee continues to

under-perform, the supervisors can discharge the relevant employee for unfitness or incapacity to carry out his or her duties. This process also gives employees a fair opportunity to rectify mistakes, which will in turn, enhance their performance of their daily duties.

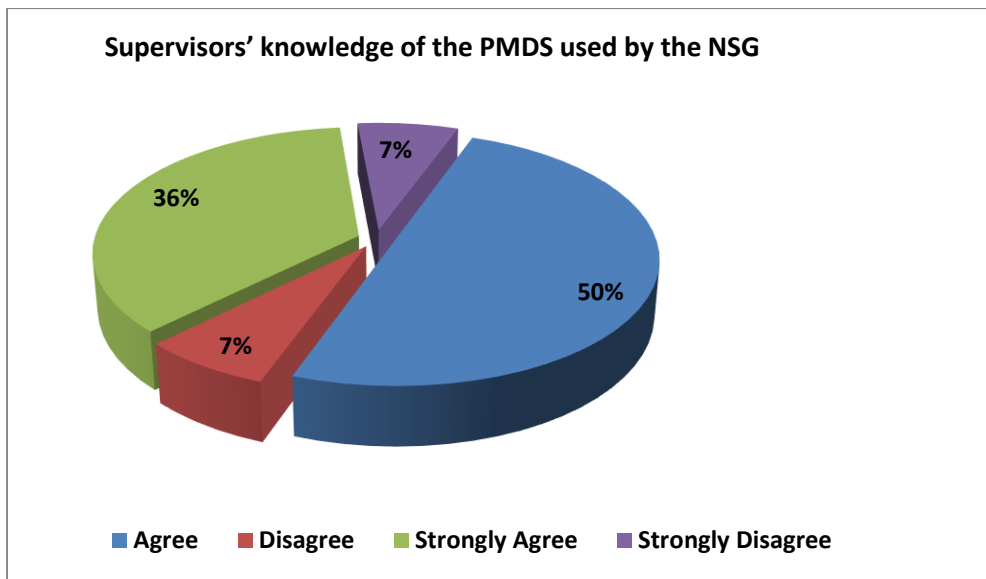
Respondents were asked to give their opinions with regard to how consistent the process of performance appraisal is at the NSG. The findings are illustrated in the graph below:

Figure 5.8: Consistency of performance appraisal



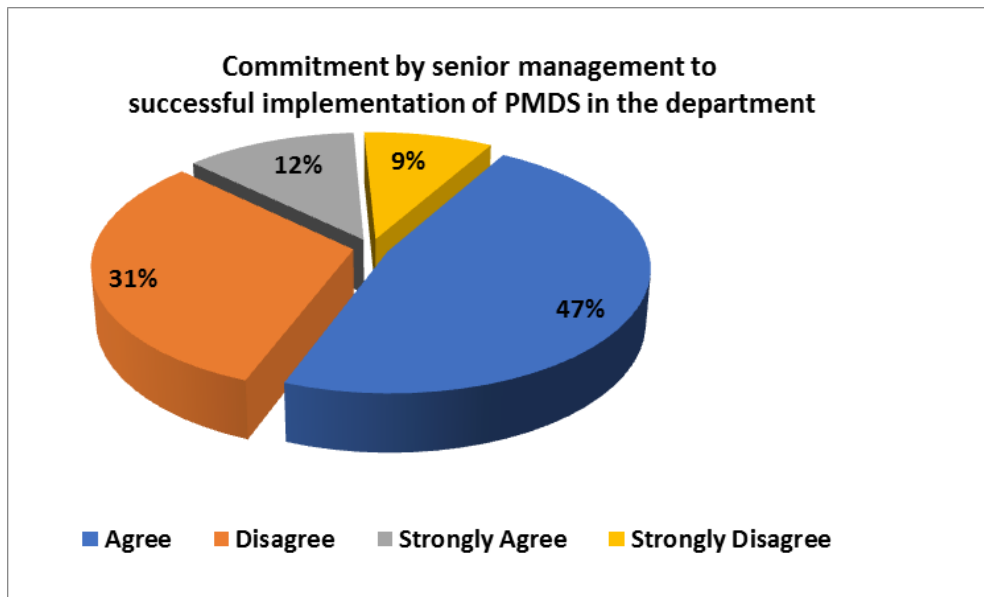
The graph above shows that the majority of the respondents (83 percent) agreed and strongly agreed that there is consistency in conducting performance appraisals per the PMDS requirements. Only 17 percent of the respondents in total disagreed and strongly disagreed with this statement. The above chart reveals a refreshing perception: that the majority of the respondents agree that managers and employees at the NSG are consistent with conducting performance appraisal which improves the implementation of the PMDS within the organisation. However, 17 percent of the respondents disagree, which means that they are not satisfied with the consistency of performance appraisals at the NSG.

Figure 5.9: Supervisors' knowledge of the PMDS used by the NSG



The findings depicted in the graph above regarding supervisors' knowledge of the NSG's PMDS policy indicate that 50 percent of the respondents agreed and 36 percent strongly agreed that their supervisors possess sufficient knowledge regarding the PMDS and should therefore know what needs to be done in terms of the effective implementation of the PMDS policy. However, 7 percent disagreed and 7 percent strongly disagreed with this statement, implying that they feel that their supervisors require more knowledge in terms of the requirements of the PMDS and how it should be implemented.

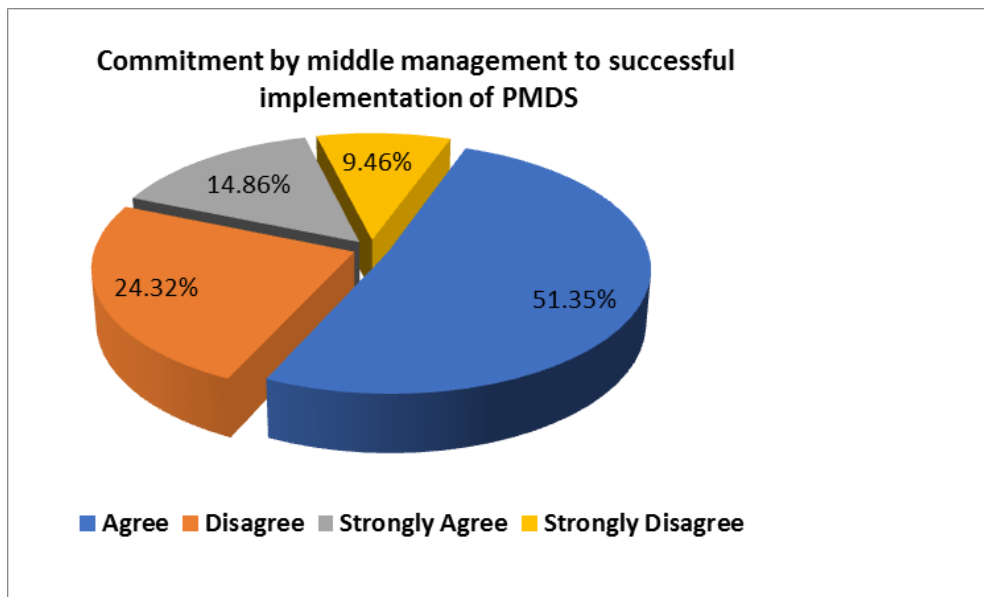
Figure 5.10: Commitment by senior management to successful implementation of the PMDS in the department



In the above graph, participants were asked if senior managers at the NSG are committed to the successful implementation of the PMDS after the completion of the MPC training. A large number of the respondents (60 percent) agreed and strongly agreed with this statement. However, 40 percent respondents disagreed, suggesting that senior managers at the NSG are not committed to the implementation of the PMDS post the MPC training. This also suggests that not all employees benefit from the support of their managers.

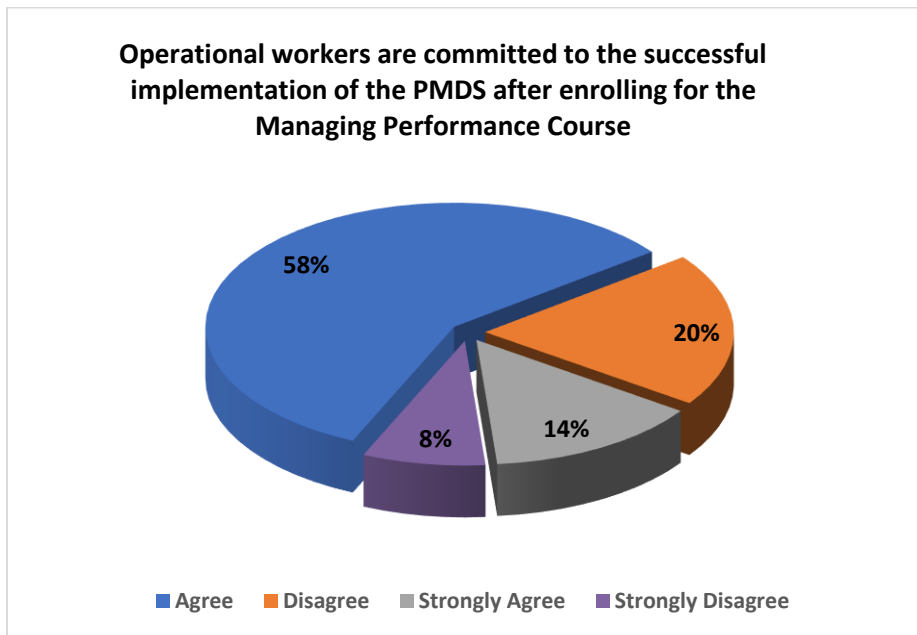
Given these findings, it can be said that senior managers are, to a certain extent, committed to the implementation of the PMDS. The researcher is of the opinion that the extent of buy-in managers have in the PMDS is likely to have a direct impact on its failure or success. Thus it is clear that commitment by management is fundamental to the effective implementation of the PMDS. The role of supervisors is to ensure that the performance of the employee is optimal. It involves initiating immediate interventions where there is poor performance, with training and development constituting one of those interventions. This requires managers to support their employees on a day-to-day basis by providing them with the opportunity to apply what they have learned from the MPC programme.

Figure 5.11: Commitment by middle management to the successful implementation of the PMDS



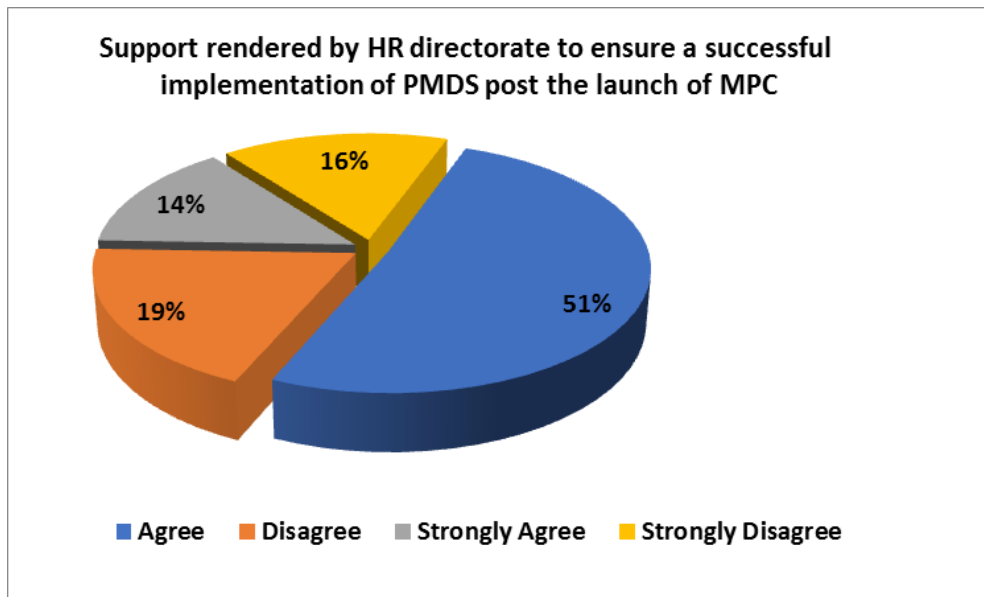
The above graph shows that 51 percent agreed and 15 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that middle management in the NSG is fully committed to the implementation of the PMDS after the MPC training. However, 24 percent disagreed and 9 percent strongly disagreed, meaning that subordinates do not benefit from their supervisors' support.

Figure 5.12: Commitment by operational workers to the successful implementation of the PMDS



As depicted in the graph above, 58 percent of respondents agreed and 14 percent strongly agreed that operational workers at the NSG are fully committed to the implementation of the PMDS after the completion of the MPC programme. However, 20 percent of the respondents disagreed and 8 percent strongly disagreed with this statement. Based on these findings, supervisors should work with operational staff to ensure that they understand the importance of the implementation of the PMDS as well as its benefits for the organisation thereof.

Figure 5.13: Support rendered by HR directorate to ensure a successful implementation of the PMDS post the launch of the MPC

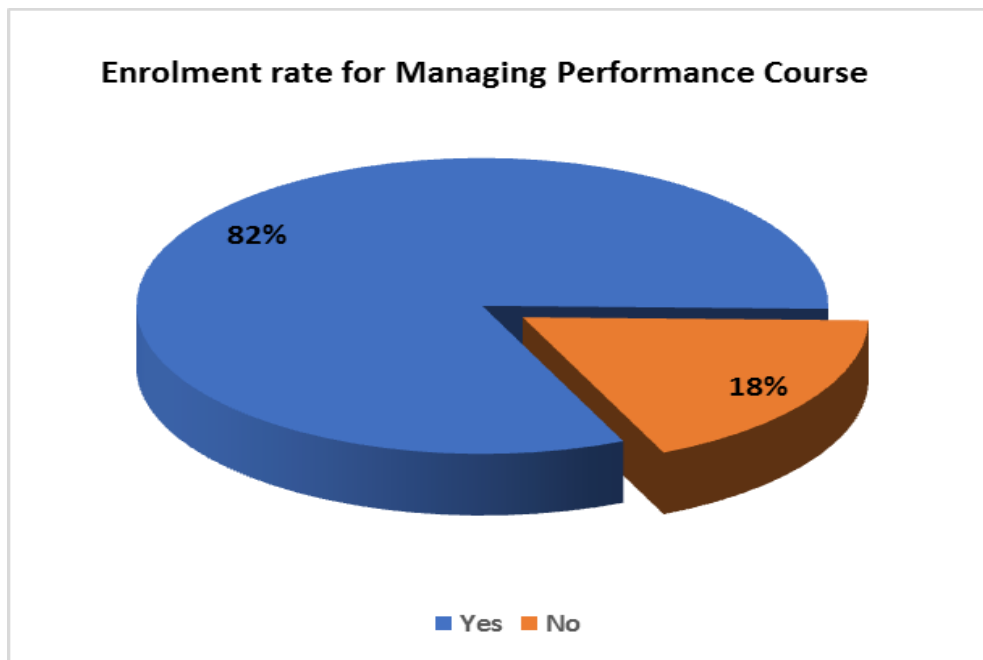


The graph above shows that the majority of the respondents (51 percent) agreed that HR provides enough support to ensure an effective implementation of the PMDS after the launch of the MPC intervention, while 14 percent of the respondents strongly agreed with this statement. It is therefore convincing that the HRM&D is fully committed to ensure the implementation of the PMDS within the department. However, 19 percent disagreed and 16 percent strongly disagreed. This suggests that not all employees were satisfied with the support HR has provided to ensure that the PMDS is implemented effectively in the department after the officials enrolled for the MPC intervention.

SECTION C: ASSESSMENT ON THE ONLINE MANAGING PERFORMANCE COURSE

Participants were asked to indicate if they enrolled for the Managing Performance Course. The findings depicted in the graph below show that a large number of the respondents have participated and successfully completed the online MPC programme.

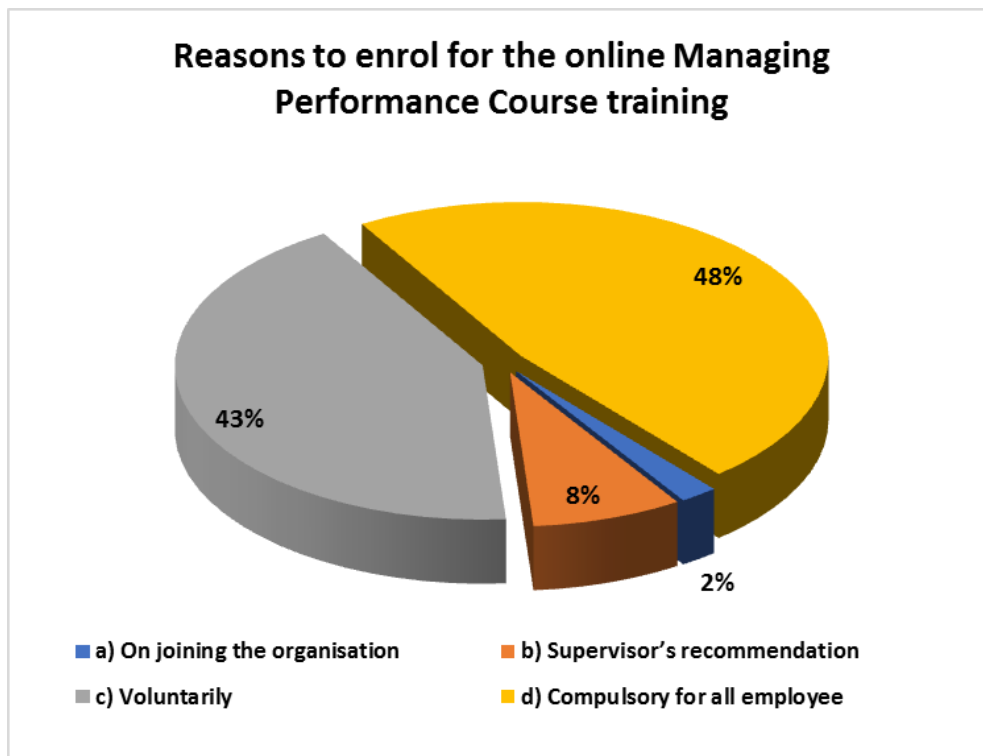
Figure 5.14: Enrolment rate for the Managing Performance Course



As depicted in the graph above, 82 percent of respondents completed the MPC programme, while 18 percent indicated that they registered for the course and did not complete it. The participants who did not complete the course after registration did not give clear reasons why they did not do so. It can be concluded that most employees from the NSG participated in the MPC training programme. The above information also shows that training on performance management is always provided to both newly appointed and normal staff members in order to improve the implementation of the PMDS within the department.

In theory, Fletcher (2008:98) supports training initiatives related to performance management. He strongly believes that the effectiveness of performance assessment can be attributed to PM training. Latham, Almost, Mann and Moore (2015: 6) maintain that PM training should not be limited to employees. Managers should also be trained to uphold objectivity and accuracy. The training of managers will indicate that there is a high level of commitment to improve the implementation of the system.

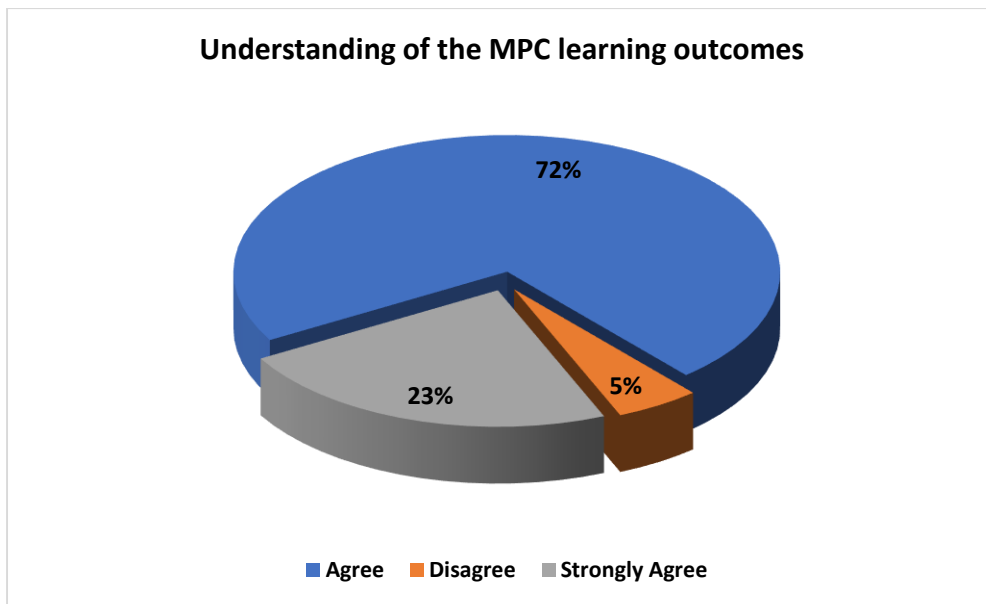
Figure 5.15: Reasons to enrol for the Managing Performance Course



As shown in the graph above, 48 percent of the respondents indicated that the initiative for enrol for the course came from the employer, as the course was made compulsory for all the employees; 43 percent reported that they voluntarily participated in the course; 8 percent indicated that their supervisors recommended that they enrol for the course; and 2 percent took part in the course because they joined the organisation.

The deduction that can be made is that most employees at the NSG are motivated to attend the training. Secondly, the fact that the majority of respondents indicated that it was compulsory for all the employees of the NSG to enrol for training through the MPC shows that the employer (management) is committed and dedicated to the development of its staff. It is disappointing, however, that the percentage of recommendations made by supervisors for their employees to enrol for the MPC is low. One of the responsibilities of a supervisor is to develop employees and monitor their progress in terms of performance, and this could be achieved through training and ongoing support. This is also in line with the expectancy theory, which according to Armstrong (2012:10) states that employees will be motivated to change their behaviour or performance if such a change will be rewarded.

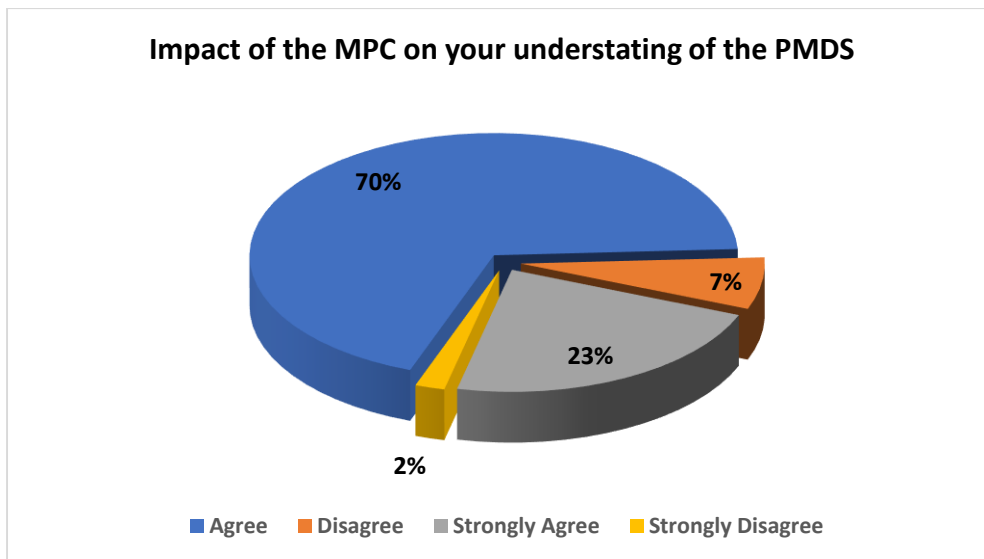
Figure 5.16: Understanding of the MPC learning outcomes



The graph above shows that the majority of participants (72 percent) agree and 23 percent strongly agree that they understood the learning outcomes of the MPC programme. Based on this information, it can be concluded that before participants could start with the completion of the MPC programme they went through the learning material covering the content of the PMDS and forms the basis of the performance management process and a comprehensive overview and understanding of the performance management system. Thereafter, participants went through the individual chapters where they worked through case studies that spoke to the outcomes of that unit. Case studies were based on practical scenarios, which made it easier for participants to understand the processes involved. The course therefore exposed participants to both the theoretical and practical aspects of performance management, and they ultimately understood what the learning outcomes for the course were.

Participants were asked to indicate if the course helped improve their understanding of the PMDS.

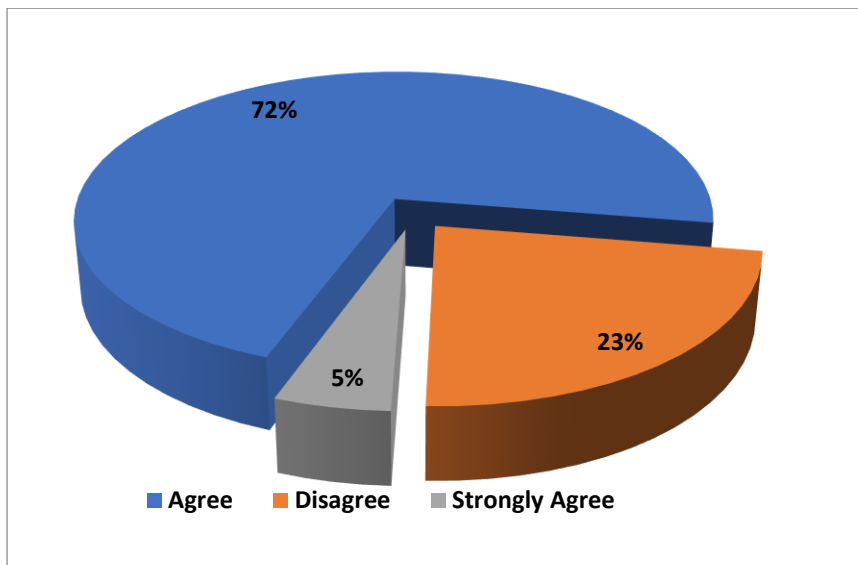
Figure 5.17: Impact of the MPC on your understating of the PMDS



As illustrated in the graph above, the majority of the respondents (70 percent) agreed and 23 percent strongly agreed that their understanding of the PMDS improved as a result of participating in the MPC training. This gives a positive outlook on the benefits that the programme has for the participants. However, 7 percent of the participants disagreed with this statement, meaning that the course did not benefit some employees in improving their understanding of the MPC.

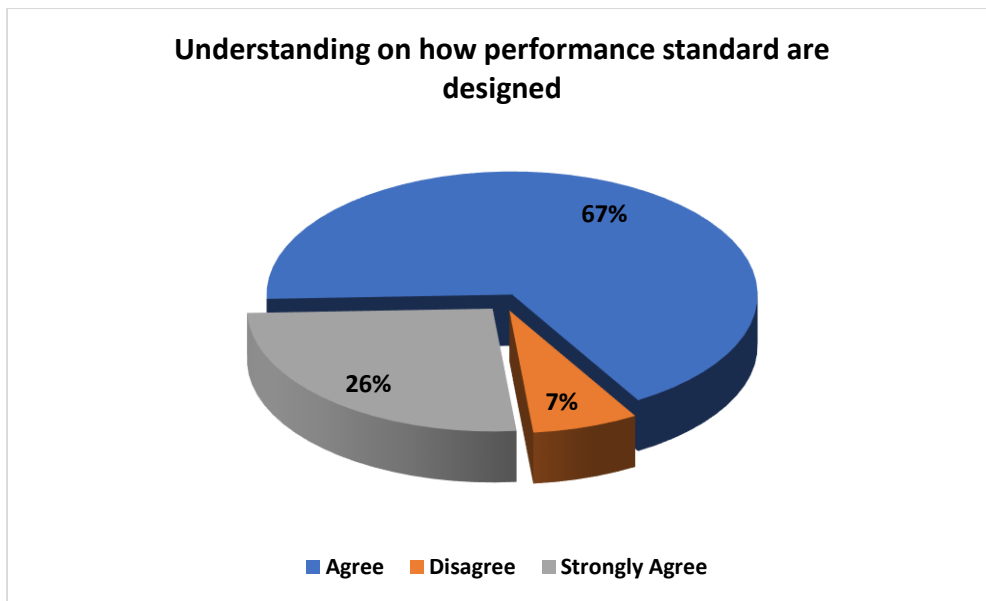
The statement below was meant to establish whether the MPC programme was relevant to them in gaining the necessary skills and knowledge in relation to the performance appraisal after the completion of the course. In this regard, job training is an important step in getting employees up to speed with the expected standards, as well as the new and changing roles of a position. Most organisations use either informal training or formal training programmes that rely on the job descriptions and functions of employees to identify training interventions and outline training objectives. The NSG provides formal training programs that are needs-based and competency-based.

Figure 5.18: Relevance of the MPC to performance appraisal



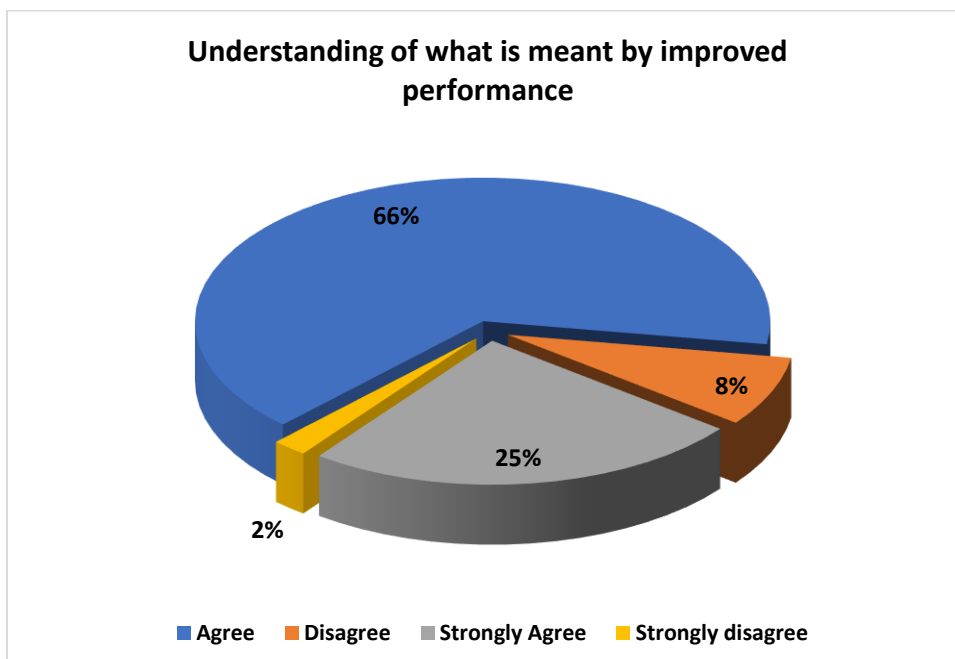
The graph above shows that 72 percent of respondents strongly agreed and 23 percent agreed that the MPC programme is relevant to the performance appraisal they know. Only 5 percent disagreed with this statement. The majority of the respondents therefore concur that the NSG's MPC programme was relevant and applicable to the performance appraisal they know. It is crucial that training provided in the workplace is relevant and applicable to address the challenges faced by an organisation. In this case, the challenge is the issue of the poor implementation of the PMDS policy in Government departments. The skills gained and knowledge acquired from a training intervention is beneficial to both the employee and the organisation. Bourn (2015:11) maintains that when the employer provides employees with a training opportunity, the hope is that skills gained through the training can be used to address challenges and increase productivity. Lastly, the implication of undertaking training that is irrelevant to an employee's responsibilities is that the employee's performance will not improve, and this has an impact on the overall performance of a component and, ultimately, the department. The cost incurred for irrelevant training could be deemed as wasteful as no positive results in terms of performance are yielded.

Figure 5.19: Understanding on how performance standards are designed



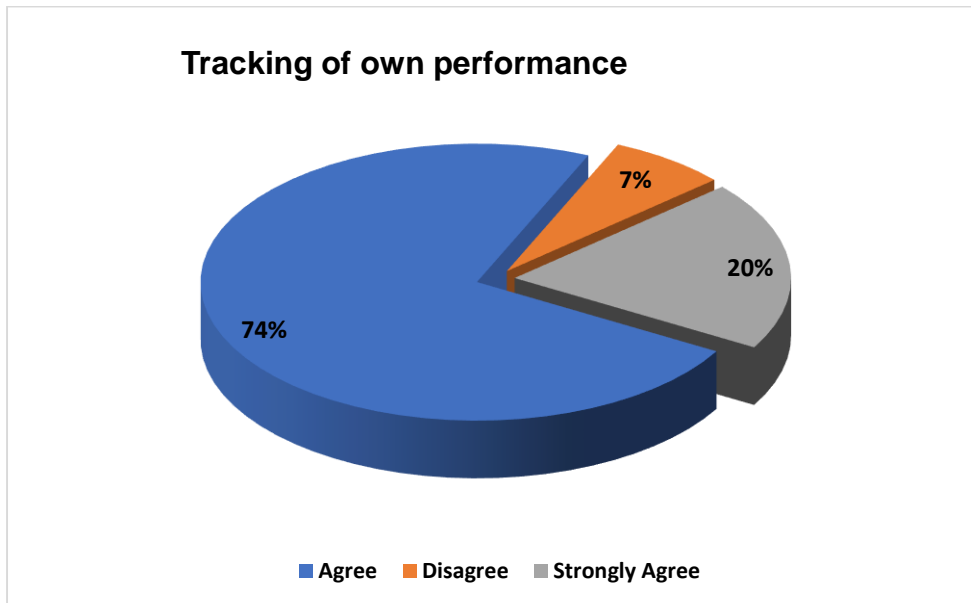
The graph above shows that the majority of respondents (67 percent) agreed and 26 percent strongly agreed that the MPC programme helped them to learn how performance standards are developed. Only 7 percent of the respondents disagreed with this statement. It can be concluded that activities and tasks in the course gave respondents an opportunity to gain knowledge and skills they did not have before they took part in the course.

Figure 5.20: Understanding of improved performance management



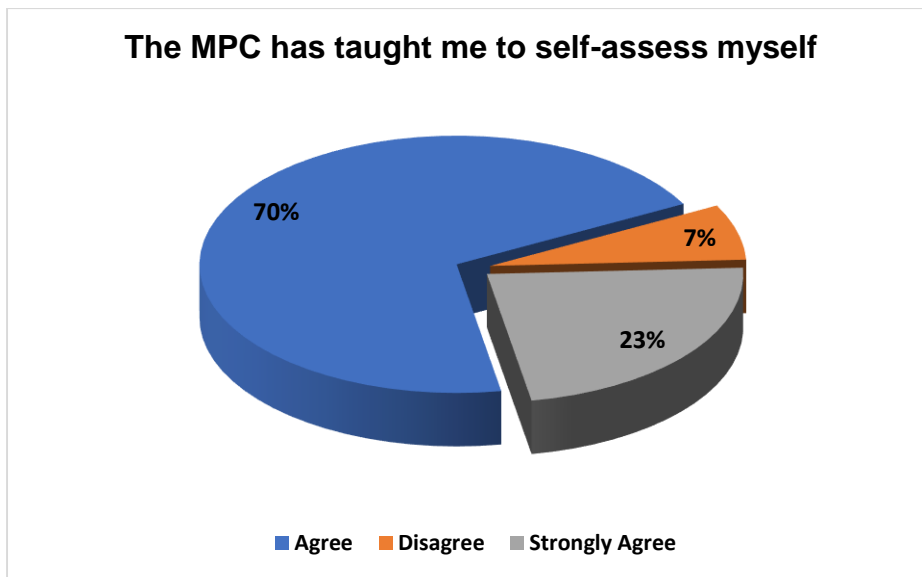
The graph above shows that the majority of respondents (66 percent) agreed and 25 percent strongly agreed that the MPC programme helped them understand what improved performance management means. Only 8 percent of the respondents disagreed and 2 percent strongly disagreed with this statement, indicating that they still do not know what improved performance means.

Figure 5.21: Tracking own performance



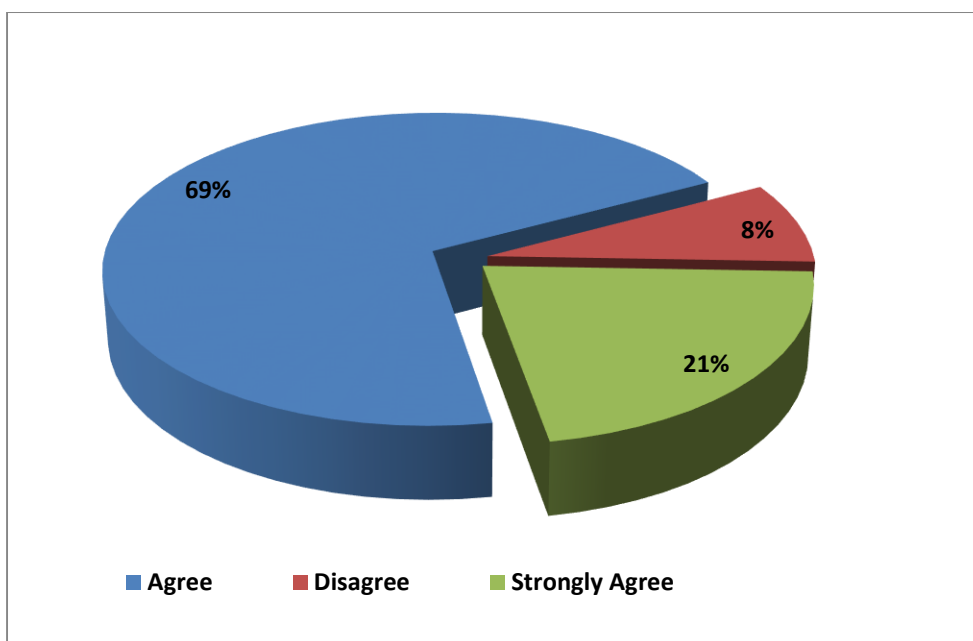
The above graph shows that the majority of respondents (74) percent agreed and 20 percent strongly agreed that the MPC programme helped them keep track of their own performance. Only 7 percent of the respondents disagreed with this statement. The benefit of this is that employees know prior to the performance assessment whether they have performed up to the required standard.

Figure 5.22: The MPC has taught me to self-assess myself



As depicted in the graph above, a large number of the respondents (70 percent) agreed and 23 percent strongly agreed that because of what they learnt through the MPC programme, they are now able to self-assess themselves. Only 7 percent disagreed with the statement. The above chart reveals that the majority of knowledge and that will help them better implement the system in the department. Respondents were asked to indicate whether the MPC programme helped them to use the PMDS as an employee development tool.

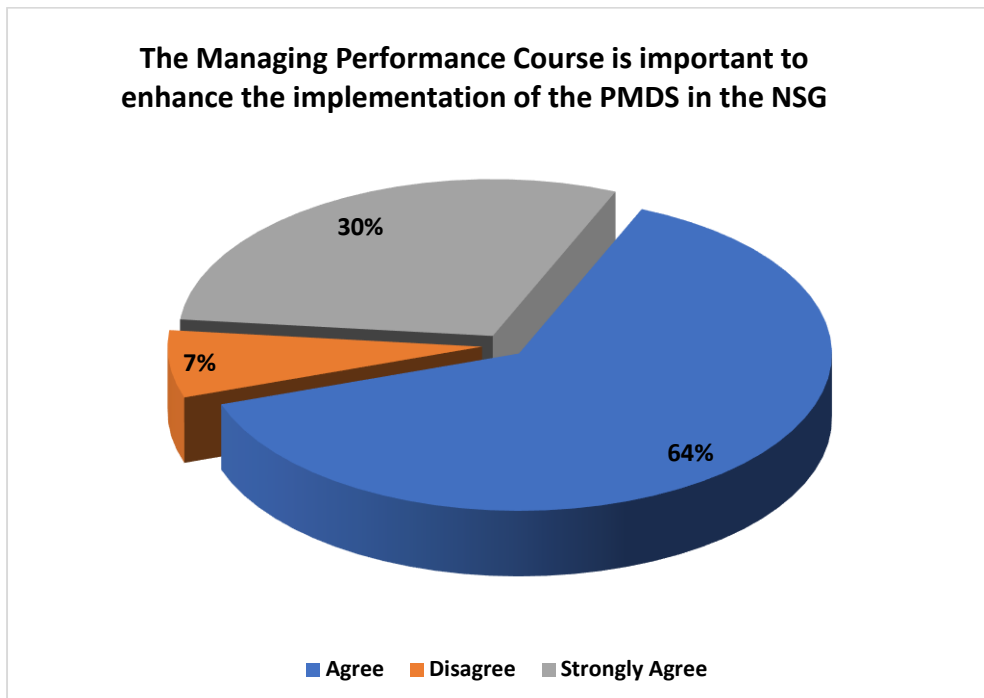
Figure 5.23: The PMDS is utilised as an employee development tool



The responses, as shown in the graph above, indicated that 69 percent of the respondents agreed and 23 percent strongly agreed with the statement. Only 8 percent disagreed with the statement. The chart depicts that managers and supervisors are making an effort to ensure that the personal developmental plans of employees address the challenge of poor performance, and that those areas which require attention are attended to.

In the section below, the researcher wanted to establish if the respondents realise the importance of the MPC in enhancing the implementation of the PMDS within the NSG. The findings, as depicted in the graph below, show that the majority of the participants (64 percent) agreed and 3 percent strongly agreed with this statement. Only 7 percent disagreed with this statement. It can be deduced from the above information that employees understand the importance of the PMDS, and that this is the reason why they do not see it as time consuming, despite the challenges they encounter during its implementation.

Figure 5.24: Implementation of the PMDS in the NSG through the MPC

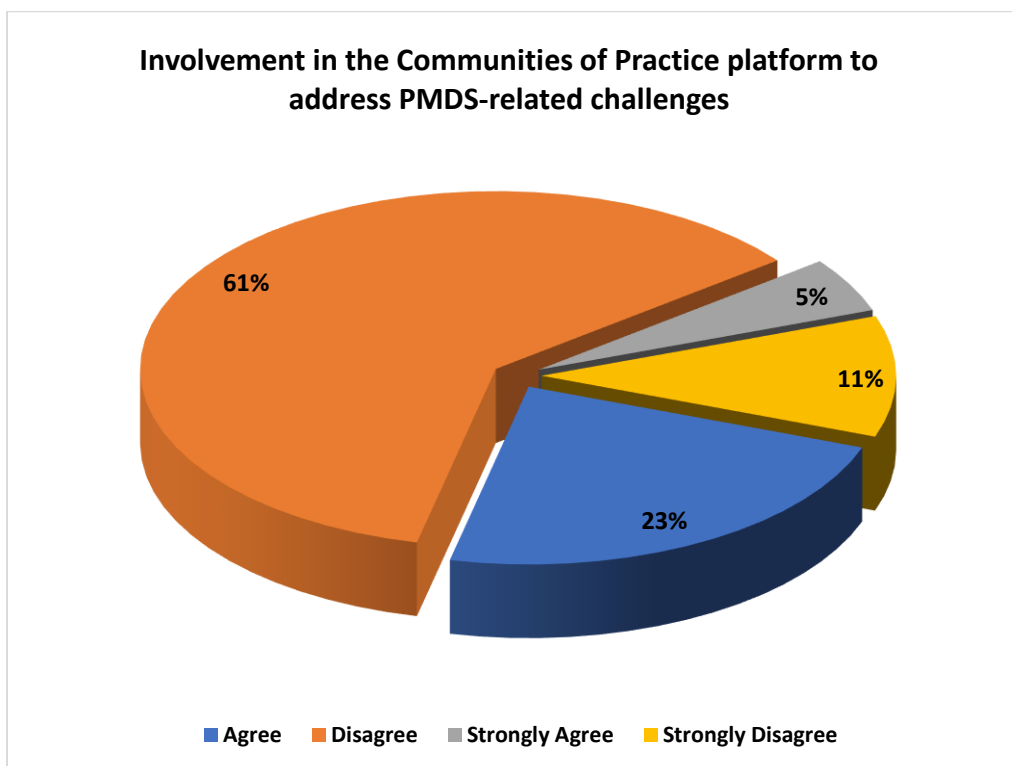


It can be deduced that the importance of training in improving the implementation of performance management and development in any organisation cannot be overemphasized. It is also important to mention that one of the reasons for failure in

the implementation of the PMDS in most departments is the fact that it is viewed as a forced bureaucratic chore which has very little to do with actual work: it is implemented only to satisfy statutory mandates, and as such is simply a case of malicious compliance.

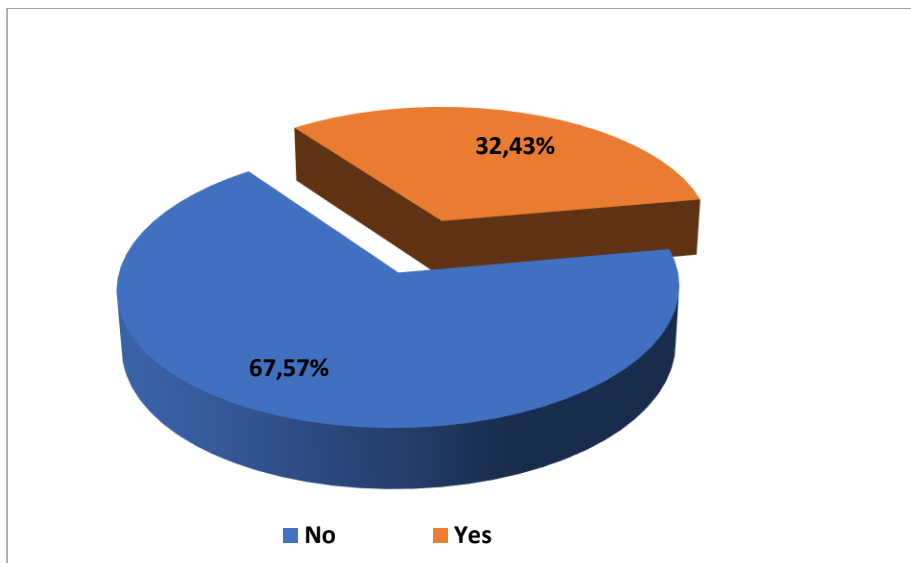
The respondents were asked to indicate whether they are involved in the Communities of Practice (COPs). This is a platform in which participants are given an opportunity to register and interact with other participants.

Figure 5.25: Involvement in the communities of practice



The results as depicted in the above graph indicate that 61 percent of the respondents disagreed and 11 percent strongly disagreed that they were active in the COPs for the MPC. This indicates that these participants did not want to explore the COPs for reasons which were not disclosed. However, 23 percent of the respondents agreed and 5 percent strongly agreed that they were involved in COPs for the MPC programme.

Figure 5.26: Are you responsible for assessing performance of staff in your unit?

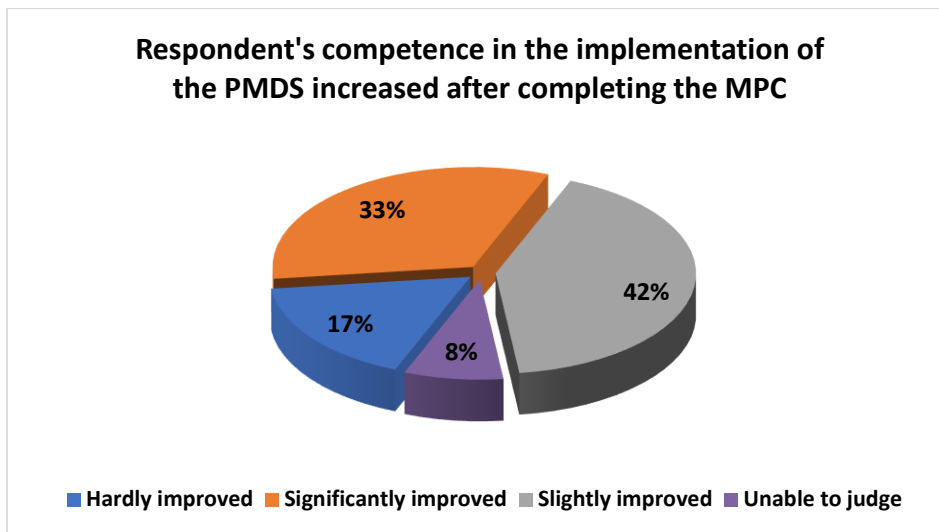


The chart above reveals that 68 percent of the respondents are responsible for assessing the performance of others in the department. This means that they are either middle or junior managers. On the other hand, 32 percent of the respondents indicated that they are not responsible for assessing the performance of others.

SECTION D: ASSESSMENT ON IMPROVED AREAS POST TRAINING

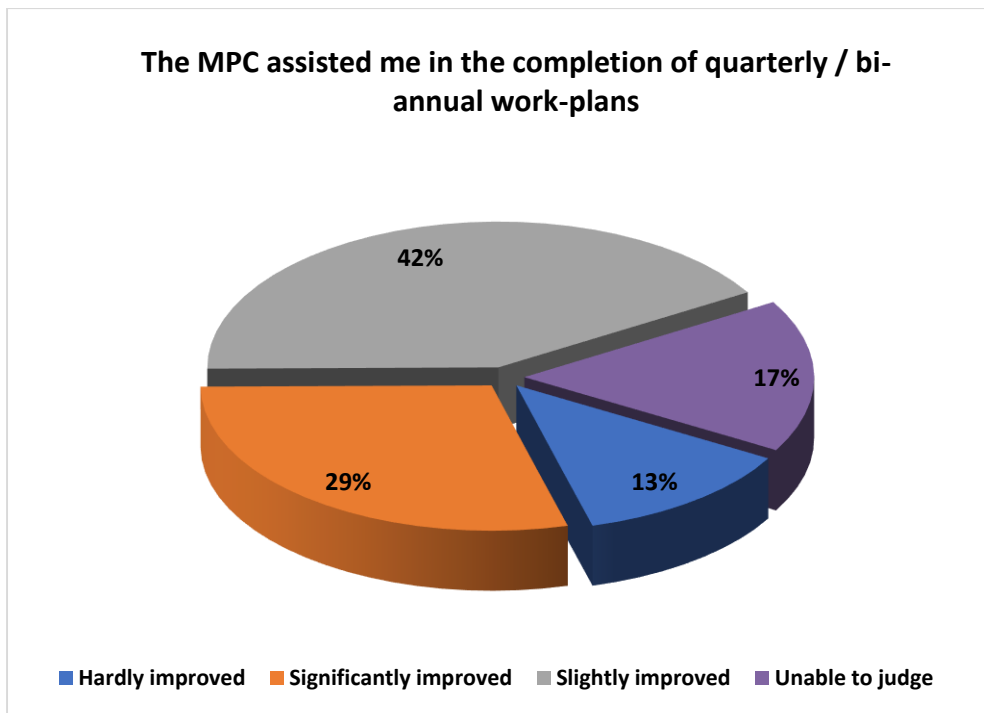
The NSG, in its training plans in relation to what the MPC had to achieve, had to ensure that the competencies mentioned below are covered in the content of the programme in order to help in the development of areas that show less competency levels on the PMDS by employees.

Figure 5.27: Competence in the implementation of the PMDS



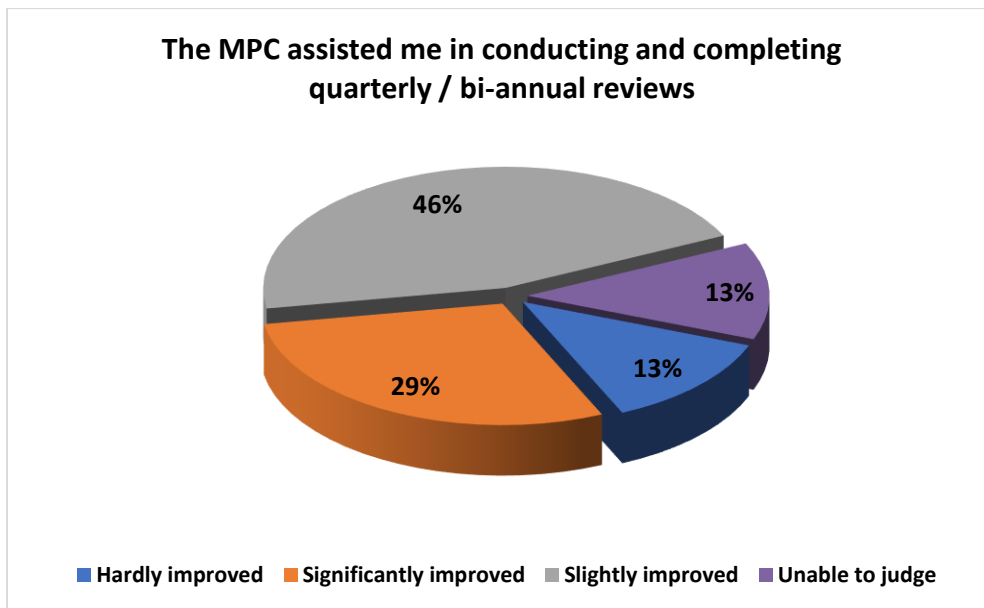
As illustrated in the graph above, 42 percent of the respondents indicated that their competence in the implementation of the PMDS slightly improved after the completion of the MPC programme, while 33 percent indicated a significant improvement in this area. 17 percent stated that their competence hardly improved and 8 percent of the respondents were unable to judge whether they are able to best implement the PMDS after completing the MPC. It can be concluded that employees are doing their best to ensure that the objectives of the system are met by using the knowledge they acquired from taking part in the MPC training intervention.

Figure 5.28: Completion of quarterly/bi-annual work-plans



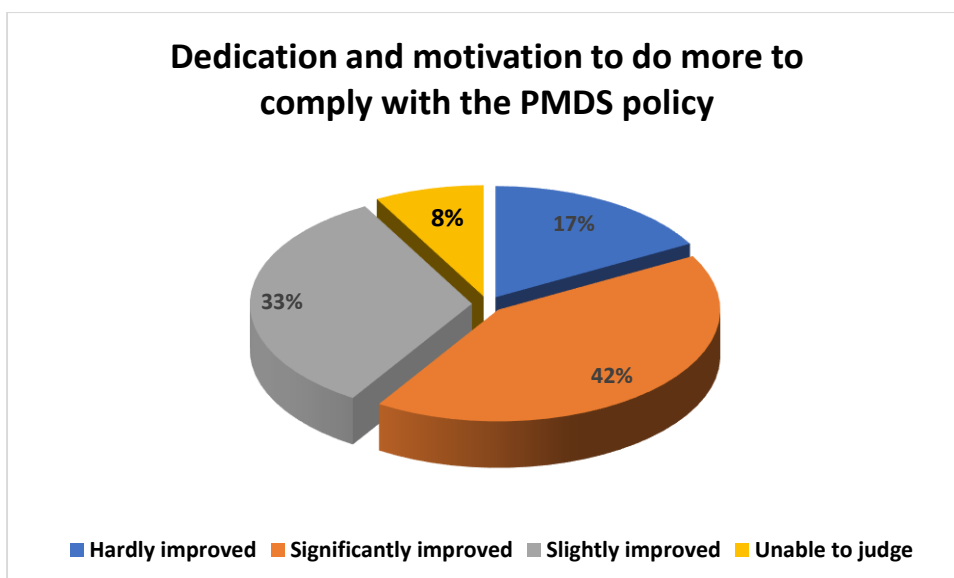
The graph above indicates that with respect to the completion of quarterly/bi-annual work-plans, 42 percent of the respondents reported a slight improvement in this area while 29 percent of the respondents said they significantly improved. 13 percent indicated that they hardly improved and 17 percent were unable to judge. The researcher wanted to determine the extent to which the MPC intervention assisted the participants in completing quarterly/bi-annual work-plans.

Figure 5.29: Conducting and completing quarterly / bi-annual reviews



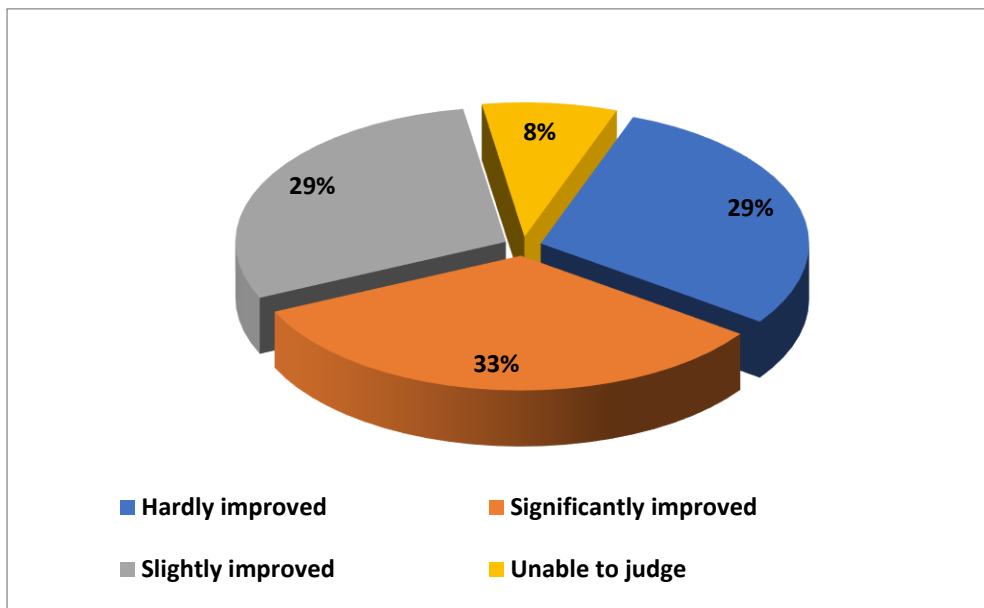
The graph above indicates that, with respect to conducting and completing quarterly/bi-annual reviews, 49 percent reported that they have slightly improved, and 26 percent reported that they significantly improved in this area. 13 percent indicated that they hardly improved, while 13 percent were unable to judge. It can be deduced from these findings that frequency in conducting performance reviews will improve.

Figure 5.30: Dedication and motivation to do more to comply with the PMDS policy



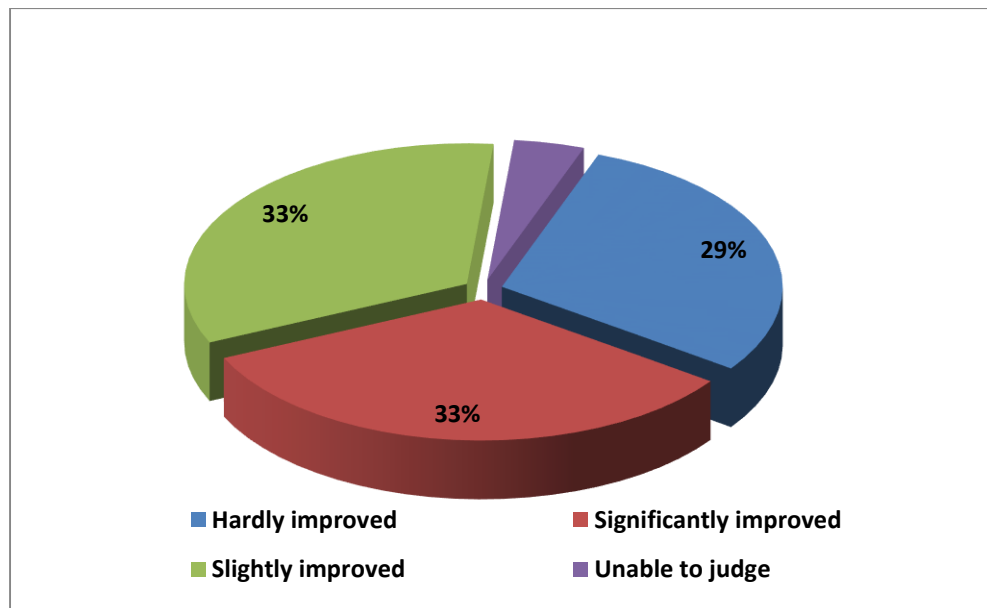
The graph above indicates that 42 percent of the respondents reported that they significantly improved in their dedication and motivation to do more to comply with the PMDS policy, while 33 percent reported that they have slightly improved in this area. However, 17 percent reported that they hardly improved in this area as a result of enrolling for the MPC and 8 percent were unable to judge. This could indicate that complying with the PMDS would result in a better implementation of the system.

Figure 5.31: Ability to assess others



The graph above shows that 33 percent of respondents reported that they have significantly improved in respect of being able to assess others, while 29 percent report that they have slightly improved in this area. 29 percent reported that they hardly improved in the area of being able to assess other employees, and 8 percent of the respondents were unable to judge. It can therefore be deduced from the above findings that the MPC has helped managers to better assess their employees after enrolling for the MPC programme.

Figure 5.32: Keeping track of the performance of others



The above graph illustrates that 30 percent of the respondents reported significant improvement and 35 percent reported slight improvement in this area. Another 30 percent indicated that they hardly improved and 4 percent were unable to judge. It can be assumed that after training, employees are able to track the performance of those they are responsible for managing.

5.4 QUALITATIVE DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The findings of this section are based on open-ended questions that were part of the survey questionnaire. The questions required participants to give their views on how the MPC can be improved in order to assist with the effective implementation of the PMDS within the NSG, as well as further comments, thoughts and questions. Based on the data that were automatically captured on the system, various themes were extracted from the data and will be briefly described below.

❖ Completion of the MPC programme

As indicated earlier in this chapter, only 61 participants completed the online MPC programme and 13 participants registered for the course but did not complete it. The research could not establish at this stage why the 13 participants from the NSG did

not complete the course. Therefore, a recommendation was made that more effort should be made to get all the NSG officials to register and complete the course in order to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the PMDS policy.

One respondent indicated that the completion rate of the MPC programme should be checked as some employees start the online course but do not complete it. Additionally, another respondent suggested the MPC programme should be made a mandatory course in the entire public service. This would help create awareness about the PMDS and possibly improve its implementation. It would also allow for ongoing learning within government departments, which would lead to performance improvement over time. In this regard, the roles played by managers and leadership are crucial to directing the training and development of employees both professionally and personally.

The evaluation of course outcomes is also of the utmost importance. To support this statement, one respondent highlighted:

“The NSG may have to seriously consider the outcomes of the evaluation of the course that is done by those who completed the course”.

Based on this statement, it can be concluded that it is imperative for the course developers, together with the managers, to consider those suggestions made by the respondents and devise ways of focusing on areas which require improvement in relation to the MPC as well as the PMDS.

❖ Quality of the Managing Performance Course content

One of the questions on the quality of the programme content required participants to indicate if they have acquired necessary skills and knowledge after they enrolled for the MPC to improve the implementation of the PMDS within the NSG. The research revealed that 70 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that the content of the MPC training programme was of good quality while 26 percent of the participants agreed with this statement. Only 3 percent disagreed with the statement. However,

one of the respondents provided a different opinion regarding the quality of the content of the MPC programme, stating that the course is not structured in a way that officials can find interesting. They claimed that the MPC contained too much information/content for an online course.

The following are some of the quotations extracted from the open-ended question in relation to quality of content for the MPC programme:

“Reduce the length of the document and contact continuous advocacy sessions on PMDS and separate the levels in training. Clarity on the scoring process is crucial and vital as it is not as transparent”.

“Other parts of the course material will have to be renewed due to the Public Service Regulations 2016 implemented on 01 August 2017”.

One respondent also added:

“The course is informational but the implementation part of it especially from the managers is a problem, they interfere with processes and procedures”.

❖ Transfer of learning

According to Erasmus and Van Dyk (2003:2), the purpose of training is to improve employee performance, especially when employees are unable to achieve what is required from them because of lack of knowledge and skills, or because of bad behaviour. It is therefore crucial that employees are able to transfer what they have learnt in training into their daily duties in the workplace in order to achieve their organisational goals and objectives and in turn improve productivity.

Once training has been conducted, employees go back to the workplace with the hope that they will perform duties assigned to them by their supervisors effectively and efficiently. However, one respondent indicated that:

“At this point I don’t know, because doing the course doesn’t guarantee change in the attitude of managers. The policy should be clearer, and it must be explained to staff. PMDS has always been a thorny issue but it needs both parties to engage and come up with a favourable solution”.

To ensure that the learning process is valuable and contributes to improving the knowledge and skills of employees in a certain area, one of the respondents made the following suggestion:

“Staff could be requested to complete an experiential module after which they should complete a Portfolio of Evidence. This can serve as tangible proof of the skills development and application. We should practice what we have learned”.

Another respondent added that in order for employees to be encouraged to transfer what they learnt during training into their daily duties:

“Supervisors should also enrol for the course and ensure that they apply it properly, because the system as it is right now is not applied consistently with favouritism, victimisation of other employees is one of the challenges encountered by employees.”

5.5 CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM WITHIN THE NATIONAL SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

Based on the findings outlined above, the NSG employees seem to have a clear understanding of what the PMDS is after they enrolled for the MPC. However, the implementation of the policy remains a challenge. This is revealed in the following themes below:

❖ Subjectivity

Significantly, part of having a successful implementation of the PMDS means conducting fair and just performance assessments of all employees. In this regard, the

issue of subjectivity is one of the challenges encountered in the implementation of the PMDS in the NSG.

Subjectivity and unfairness in the PMDS was identified as arising due to the bias of managers and supervisors. Individual employees claim that the system is no longer used as a managing performance tool but rather as a compliance tool. This is confirmed by one respondent who indicated that supervisors and managers use performance appraisal as a process to get back at employees; for instance, one of the respondents said the following:

“Performance appraisal is not fair to everyone. A manager decides if he will score you good or bad depending on if he/she likes you or not I think they must try to be quick and fast about calculating the scores”.

Another respondent added to this by saying:

“Yes make it fair to everyone because the problem is that a manager decides if he/she will score you good or bad depending on if he/she likes you or not”.

In this case, Van Dijk and Thornhill (2003) suggest that managers involved in the processes of PM contribute to its success or failure, and therefore require training in this area. A lack of knowledge and proper understanding of the requirements of the PMDS is likely to result in managers being biased and rating inaccurately. Through training, managers are most likely to gain knowledge on the appraisal procedures and their appraisal discussions are perceived as more satisfying. Additionally, Erasmus et al (2005:371) are of the opinion that common problems pertaining to PM are a lack of objectivity, poor links between performance and pay (as performance is only linked to rewards at the end of the year), the failure to relate performance to overall strategic performance objectives, and inadequate communication.

From the above discussion it is clear that some of the managers at the NSG are not fair during the assessment period. It appears that they use PM to penalise subordinates whom they perceive as troublesome, favouring others and being inconsistent in implementing PM processes.

Moreover, the following are some of the statements which were made by the respondents regarding subjectivity or fairness in terms of performance appraisals within the department:

“There is a need to introduce a more objectivity system to conduct performance appraisals within the department”.

“The PMDS is presented to be some sort of a team centralized system where by one team member’s poor performance affects the assessment of the others because their work is interlinked. This in a way makes the application of the policy to be subjective”.

Additionally, for one respondent, rewarding good performance was seen as a good initiative, which could have a domino effect on employees motivating each other to perform. However, the researcher notes that the allocation of rewards and recognition of performance might not be altogether objective and fair as there is a human element involved in the process. To try and mitigate this challenge, one respondent suggested that:

“In order to prevent favouritism with regard to the implementation of the PMDS, the public service should consider introducing a 360 degree performance appraisal to obtain feedback from an employee’s team members or colleagues within the same directorate”.

Some respondents felt that the intentions of the PMDS are theoretically fair. However, things are different in practice. This is illustrated in the following statement:

“I agree with the PMDS intentions of developing one’s skills and performance, however I do not find the calculator used to calculate or score employees on probation fairly, I think it should be consistent because others will be told that they do not qualify for performance bonuses while others are told otherwise”.

Lastly, one respondent highlighted that it is crucial that the PMDS

“... should remain objective to enhance the development of employees and their motivation. Employees must be assessed individually as per their KPAs and this should not be linked to the whole process of work done in a Unit even if someone’s work is dependent on the other person’s work”.

❖ Perceptions about the moderating committee

The departmental moderating committee is responsible for reviewing employees’ performance against the department’s performance at the end of each financial year. One respondent claimed that:

“The moderation committee is not consistent with the outcomes emanating from performance assessments. Some outcomes are favourable to others. A lack of communication, openness and transparency is also a challenge”.

It is evident based on these findings that, apart from the fact that the moderating committee does not have sufficient expertise and knowledge to manage and implement the system, a lack of support and commitment from some managers to ensure the effective implementation of the system is another stumbling block in the successful implementation of the system in this department.

❖ Poor communication and feedback of employee performance results

Effective communication is a key factor in any organisation. Erasmus et al (2005:374) argue that the effectiveness of performance management highly depends on effective communication and procedures for addressing questions and complaints and consistent and fair application of the rules within each group and across groups. Casio (1993:276) concurs and states that the effectiveness of performance assessments depends on relevance, sensitivity, reliability, acceptability and practicality. He claims that trust in the performance system, the attitudes of managers and employees, as well as the purpose and frequency of training on performance management play a significant role in the implementation of the system.

In order to improve the implementation of the PMDS in an organisation, it is very important to provide constant feedback on how to improve performance for the individual and the organisation, and to identify areas where employees require additional development and training. To support this statement, one respondent acknowledged that the human resources unit needs to improve on feedback. S/he stated:

“Feedback needs to be given at all times pertaining to the results of performance appraisals”.

Lastly, the importance of communication in trying to improve the implementation of the PMDS is supported by control theory, also known as feedback control theory. The appreciation of feedback given to employees regarding their performance is fundamental to this theory. This theory emphasises that it is through feedback that behaviour can be moulded. Based on the feedback employees are given, they are expected to take corrective measures if discrepancies between expected and actual performance exist (Armstrong 2009:2). This can be done through the use of Performance Development Plans (PDPs) which outline the type of training required to address challenges which hinder the employees from achieving what is expected by their managers.

The control theory of performance can improve communication in the organisation and encourage managers to provide feedback on a regular basis. It can also ensure that employees do not find themselves making the same mistakes every quarter. However, Buchner (2007:8) critiques this theory and maintains that it is mechanistic. He argues that the control theory focuses on the notion that employees are self-regulating and follow the same principles. The researcher concurs with Buchner, as humans do not function like machines but rather are found to be complex in nature. They do not possess a right or wrong behaviour button they can switch on and off. In addition, feedback is generally not sufficient, and in most Government departments it is often provided only during the last performance review of each financial year.

❖ **Failure to use performance results for career and employee development**

Participants were asked to indicate if the results of performance appraisals are used for personal and career development within the NSG. In this regard, it is imperative that the results of performance appraisals motivate employees to improve their career development through training and development. Half of the respondents who participated in the survey believe that performance appraisal results are used for personal and career development while the other half had different views. However, some respondents raised concerns. For example, one stated:

“... the PMDS system is not utilised to best benefit NSG staff and career development”.

Therefore, in order to contribute toward the effective implementation of the PMDS with the NSG, this is one of the areas that need to be taken into consideration and require improvement.

❖ **Lack of professional ethics in the Performance Management and Development System**

According to the PSC (2014:18), employees should always demonstrate the ability to engage in ethical behaviour and reasoning to explore and resolve ethics-related issues and dilemmas. It is important to understand the consequences of ethical or non-ethical actions and to make ethically sound decisions in the workplace.

The PSC (2014:18) further highlights that it is mentioned in Section 195 of the Constitution, 1996, that the basic values and principles governing public administration. One of the principles stipulated in Section (1) (a) states that “a high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained”. This implies that departments are expected to promote professional ethics throughout their leadership and management practices, in training, and in the implementation of the PMDS policy.

In relation to the issue of being ethical in the workplace, one respondent stated:

“I think all public servants need to have a mind shift when it comes to implementation of the PMDS. They should have an attitude of implementing it with integrity and honesty. Otherwise we will continue to have it good in black and white whereas practically it does not exist”.

This confirms that even though departments have a PMDS policy, there still seems to be a disjuncture between theory and practice.

Another respondent further highlighted the importance of ethics and professionalism, especially in the implementation of the PMDS, saying that:

“There is a lack of ethics and integrity, training, communication. Ethics, honesty and integrity needs to improve in the system of administering the PMDS”.

Additionally, one respondent mentioned:

“Everybody needs to comply with the system and must be used for everybody’s benefit and not used to disadvantage others”.

5.6 KEY FACTORS INFLUENCING A SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Even though there is an existing PMDS policy in place at the NSG, it is important for readers to note that there are some aspects of the system which are flawed and require attention. According to the respondents, the following factors are crucial to the successful implementation and maintenance of a well-administered PMDS.

5.6.1 Policy

Policy is one factor which should be taken into consideration to try and improve effective implementation of the PMDS in the NSG. In this regard, there were both

positive and negative comments that respondents made about the PMDS policy within the NSG. This is illustrated in the verbatim statements below:

In order for employees to understand the requirements of the PMDS as well as its implementation, a suggestion was made that:

“The PMDS policy should be clearer and it must be explained to all staff. PMDS has always been a thorny issue but it needs both parties to engage and come up with a favourable solution”.

Another respondent further mentioned that:

“PMDS is a very good policy. However, I think the problem is how the policy is implemented because those who implement it attach personal issues on it and at the end it does not serve any purpose”.

One respondent also added that:

“... during the drafting of performance agreements, it is not indicated what other extra duties one must perform to achieve exceptional performance”.

It can therefore be said that it would be good for the supervisors at the NSG to consider having such discussions with their employees. This will help employees know what the expectations of their managers are in order to prevent them from making impossible demands at the end of the performance review.

5.6.2 Managers

The role of managers in performance management cannot be overemphasised. This is acknowledged by one respondent who stated that:

“Strong leadership is required to address the root cause of the problem and poor performance is just a symptom of the problem and not necessarily a capacity / skills issue. Perhaps this issue could be highlighted in the MPC and that training & development is not the panacea to all problems facing the public service. We have

highly qualified officials in the public service”. So the question remains, why is there uneven / poor performance in the public service?

Another respondent made the following suggestion:

“Managers should not await for statutory periods of assessing subordinates, subordinates must be assessed continuously throughout a financial year”.

5.6.3 Performance management training

Training on matters related to PM was deemed important by the respondents. According to Fletcher (2008:18), the effectiveness of the PMDS implementation depends highly on the emphasis placed on training. Training on PM allows individuals to not only understand the rationale behind the system, but to also grasp its basic principles and the manner in which those should be carried out. Thus, in the context of PM, training is an intervention instrument to enhance the performance of individual employees and improve a level of compliance to certain policies such as the PMDS. Asserting the developmental part of PM is perceived as crucial by many academic writers.

Lastly, training and development initiatives planned by departments should be aligned with the training needs of the employees in order to address the challenges at hand. According to the PSC (2014:20), research conducted on training and development indicates that there is always a need to acquire and sharpen employees’ capabilities so that they are able to perform present and future responsibilities. For this reason, the NSG introduced the MPC training intervention with the aim of mitigating PM-related challenges encountered by Government departments, especially those which fall under the public service.

In this study, the respondents highlighted that in order to achieve an effective implementation of the PMDS in the NSG, the following activities should be considered:

One respondent articulated that:

“... for effective implementation of PMDS to happen, the HR department should champion the PMDS at every level in the department”.

In the case of the NSG, this is supported by one respondent who indicated:

“The Human resource management unit needs to workshop the MPC programme to all NSG staff members and implements the process there after”.

It can therefore be concluded that there is a need for an examination to be conducted in relation to the role of human resource directorates to ensure that they are appropriately skilled and have the relevant attributes and competencies to assist the organisation with the training of its employees to address challenges in areas which require improvement.

Another respondent went on to say that:

“A refresher course as well as participation in discussion forums must be compulsory in order for all managers to utilise PMDS effectively”.

Another indicated that there is a need for:

“... enough advocacy session between employees and their supervisors, especially new employees”.

This attempt would also help set a basic foundation for newly appointed employees to get the gist of what the PMDS policy is about as well as the manner in which it should be implemented within the department.

Some of the respondents understand the importance of performance management training in enabling both managers and subordinates to effectively implement the requirements of the PMDS policy. To this end, one respondent emphasised:

“Managers and supervisors to be encouraged to enrol for MPC in order to enhance their understanding on performance management related matters”.

This is in line with a recommendation made by one of the respondents:

“... the NSG encourages all supervisors in the public service to enrol for the MPC course so that they can effectively implement the PMDS policy”.

He or she went on to say:

“... during CIP training sessions participants are raising serious issues about the management of performance at their working sites. The challenges they raise point out that the supervisors are not implementing the policy effectively because they do not understand it. They are further not taking it seriously”.

Based on the above discussion, the researcher concludes that this could have a detrimental effect on the implementation of the PMDS within the NSG, even though there are mechanisms (such as the MPC) that have been put in place to address this challenge. In addition, it is clear that no department can make any progress in improving the implementation of the PMDS without having a proper understanding of what the policy means and how it is supposed to be administered.

To improve knowledge and understanding in the implementation of the PMDS policy, one respondent emphasised:

“... practice makes perfect, the consistent practice of what is in the PMDS against the MPC will improve confidence of all in the system and also in course uptake”.

Another respondent concurred with this and indicated that:

“... continuous refresher training should periodically be conducted in order for the NSG staff to continue best practice in the implementation of PMDS”.

There is a critical need for HR as well as supervisors to facilitate this process in order to ensure ongoing learning and improvements in PM within the organisation. One respondent said it is essential for:

“Human resource Management to workshop this program to all NSG staff members and implement the process there after. The organisation as a system needs diagnosis and thereafter one can be able to resolve the issues faced as a result of PMDS for example determining the right tool for the right purpose”.

This is in line with the statement made by another respondent, who indicated that:

“... poor organisational design and low staff morale are some of the contributing factors of uneven performance in the public service, as identified by the National Planning Commission. This continues to prevail which leads to poor performance. Therefore, training and development initiatives will prove to be ineffective to address a performance problem that relates to this root cause”.

5.6.4 Communication

Effective communication regarding matters related to the PMDS is perceived as one of the key factors that influences the implementation of the PMDS in an organisation. One respondent indicated that the HR directorates are responsible for ensuring that employees have a clear understanding of and communication pertaining to the PMDS. It is crucial that HR practitioners ensure that the developmental aspect of the PMDS is realised and that skills are aligned with the job requirements and the needs of the organisation.

5.6.5 Motivation/incentives

PM that is remuneration-driven is less confusing compared to other approaches. It provides a clear incentive and enhances motivation.

The remuneration-driven PM approach prioritises short-term matters at the expense of long-term capability issues. This approach tends to be costly if the design is incorrect. While legislation binds departments to not spend over a certain percentage of the remunerative budget on rewarding performance, this often fails to take into account that the return on the performance remuneration programme may not equal implementation costs (Lockett 1992:32).

5.7 DISCUSSION OF QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS

❖ Assessing the implementation of the Performance Management and Development System in the National School of Government

The respondents were requested to respond to a number of statements. They were asked to rate each item on a scale of 1–4 (1= strongly agree; 2= agree; 3= disagree and 4 = strongly disagree).

The findings revealed that the respondents have adequate understanding and knowledge of the PMDS and are clear on what needs to be done in order to improve the implementation of the system within the department. In this case, employees' knowledge on performance management is in line with the goal theory as stated by Wright (2006:124), who is of the opinion that performance management is a process which enables an organisation to set goals and objectives for various directorates, teams and individuals. This theory challenges individual employees to use their skills and knowledge to enhance their chances of success and promote innovation in the organisations in which they employed.

In terms of crafting performance indicators, the findings reveal that respondents are given an opportunity by their supervisors to craft the performance indicators which inform their daily duties, which in turn contribute towards attaining the organisational goals and objectives. In relation to consistency in conducting performance appraisals, the findings revealed a refreshing perception: a majority of the respondents agreed that managers and employees at the NSG are consistent in conducting performance appraisals, which improves the implementation of the PMDS within the organisation.

Despite the factors mentioned above, employees still claim that there are many challenges associated with the management and implementation of the PMDS in the NSG. For example, some respondents reported that poor performance is only brought to the employee's attention at the end of the performance cycle, which confirms a lack of communication and feedback from managers. This suggests that employees are not happy with how the system is being managed. However, it is interesting to note that a majority of the respondents (57 percent) claim that performance appraisal results are used for training and development so that employees can address those areas which require improvement. Some respondents did, however, share a different view in this regard.

The findings also reveal that a majority of the respondents (more than 60 percent) are of the view that senior managers, middle managers and operational workers are fully committed to ensuring the effective implementation of the PMDS in the department after training through the MPC. However, 40 percent of the respondents indicated that they do not believe that their supervisors actively engage in improving the current state of the PMDS within the department.

This could be as a result of lack of commitment towards the PM system, in which case supervisors engage with it solely for the purpose of maliciously complying with the requirements of the policy. Finally, the respondents also reported that they were satisfied with the support HR has provided to ensure that the PMDS is implemented effectively in the department after the officials have enrolled for the MPC intervention.

❖ The impact of the MPC in improving the implementation of the Performance Management and Development System

Most employees indicated that the MPC programme equipped them with the knowledge and skills required to better implement the PMDS within the NSG. These findings are revealed below:

In order for the implementation of the PMDS to stand a fair chance of succeeding, employees need to work hard and apply the knowledge they acquired from training to

address some of the challenges that hinder an effective implementation of the PMDS. In this case, the research findings reveal that the majority of the respondents participated in the course because it was compulsory for NSG staff, while 43 percent of the respondents reported that they voluntarily participated in the course. This means that most employees at the NSG are keen and motivated to take part in learning and development initiatives. Significantly, training and orientation on the PMDS is always provided to newly appointed and permanent staff members in order to improve the implementation of the PMDS at the NSG.

Secondly, the majority of the respondents (93 percent) confirmed that their understanding of the PMDS and how the system should be implemented has improved as a result of participating in the MPC training. Additionally, 93 percent of the respondents indicated that they can now develop their own performance standards after completing the MPC intervention.

Regarding employees tracking their own performance, the findings reveal that 94 percent of the respondents are now able to keep track of their performance and they understand the implication this could have for improving their performance throughout the year. This could potentially eliminate conflict when the performance scores are given by managers, as employees would already have a picture of where they stand. This could also provide an opportunity for them to improve in those areas which are lacking before they are officially assessed at the end of the performance cycle. Bacal (1999:29) strongly believes that this gives a platform for supervisors and employees to work together to prevent performance-related problems, deal with any problems that do occur, and revise job responsibilities (as is often necessary in most workplaces).

❖ **Improved areas post training on the Managing Performance Course**

Having an adequate knowledge and understanding of the PMDS and its requirements is only one part of the solution. Acquiring the necessary skills and being able to implement the requirements of the system is the second part. The research findings reveal that 42 percent of the respondents reported that their competence in the implementation of the PMDS slightly improved after the completion of the MPC

programme, while 33 percent indicated that there was a significant improvement in this area. Another challenge associated with the implementation of the system was an inconsistency in completing and conducting quarterly reviews on time. However, the findings reveal that there has been a slight change in this area, indicating that the MPC has benefited some employees in complying with the requirements of the PMDS (which in this case is conducting performance reviews on a quarterly basis).

5.8 DISCUSSION OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS

❖ Challenges with the implementation of the Performance Management and Development System in the National School of Government

The following section provides an analysis and discussion of the challenges encountered in the implementation of the PMDS in the NSG, as identified during data collection.

○ Subjectivity

Findings revealed that the managers in the department are not sufficiently fair in the manner in which they conduct performance appraisals. Some respondents mentioned that the results of the appraisals are often not a true reflection of the performance of employees but are based on biased supervisor-subordinate relationships. The managers decide to score employees well or badly based on whether they like the employees on a personal level. They often stall the process of calculating the scores for individual employees. Supervisors tend to use performance assessment results to punish those with whom they do not have good relations. When used as punishment, performance assessment does not encourage a high sense of responsibility and stifles innovation. Poor performance tends to affect the overall assessment results of other employees because their work is interlinked with that of their managers. This means that if a manager or supervisor gets a lower score that automatically affects the scores of their subordinates, despite the subordinates' high performance through the performance cycle. Lastly, favouritism and manipulation of scores in the review process further compromise the implementation of the PMDS in the department. This

subjectivity demotivates employees due to of the factors indicated above that their appraisal would not be based on their performance but on the personal relationship level.

- **Poor communication and feedback on employee performance results**

Findings revealed that communication and feedback on the performance results of the individual employees is of the utmost importance and needs to improve significantly. Managers should ensure that they constantly communicate with their subordinates about their performance results and inform them about those areas which require improvement. To those who perform exceptionally well, rewards should be given accordingly. There is, however, a challenge in government departments in that only those individual employees who are connected to their managers know exactly what is happening in the PMDS in their department. This indicates that the majority of employees are in the dark about their own progress and what needs to be done in order for the organisation to achieve its performance mandate.

- **Perceptions about the moderating committee**

The main concern raised by employees about the management and implementation of the system is the changing of scores by the moderating committee without the consent of the employee concerned. This is demotivating as employees are surprised by the changes in the scores which they agreed upon with their direct supervisors. Respondents reported that the judgments of the moderation committee are not consistent with the outcomes emanating from performance assessments. Some outcomes are unjustly favourable to particular individuals, and this shows that bias towards and victimization of employees by managers seem to be common factors affecting employees' performance.

- **Lack of professional ethics**

Some managers and supervisors are not ethical and are overpowered by the human factor, and therefore (irrespective of the actual performance of their subordinates) they rate their enemies poorly, while giving high ratings to their friends, family members,

and those they fear. The findings revealed that a lack of professional ethics and integrity could compromise the effective implementation of the PMDS in government departments. The ethics and levels of honesty and integrity need to improve in the system of administering the PMDS. All public servants and their managers need to have a mind shift when it comes to implementation of the PMDS. They should have an attitude geared towards implementing it with integrity and honesty.

- **Using performance results for career and employee development**

Motivation is one of the most crucial factors in improving employees' performance. Without motivation it is impossible for employees to be encouraged to perform effectively and beyond what their managers expect. The findings reveal that half of the respondents who participated in the survey believe that performance appraisal results are used for personal and career development in the NSG, while the other half indicated a different view, claiming that the PMDS system is not used to best benefit the NSG and career development. It is therefore very difficult to improve the performance of employees in this department through the MPC training because the employees are demotivated. They believe that the system is unfair and that it creates room for victimization and bias by managers and supervisors.

- ❖ **Important factors to implementing a successful Performance Management and Development System**

- **Quality of performance management intervention**

The findings revealed that participants feel that the length of the MPC programme should be reduced and continuous advocacy sessions should be considered. One respondent also added:

“The course is informational but the implementation part of it especially from the managers is a problem, they interfere with processes and procedures”.

A second respondent felt that online learning does not provide a platform to interact with other students and discuss the course and s/he put it as follows:

“... face to face session of the programme is highly recommended to allow other participants to interact in person”.

- **Monitoring of the completion rate for the Managing Performance Course**

The findings show that the majority of employees who participated in the MPC completed the course. However, there are those employees who registered for the course and did not complete it. In this regard, there is a need for mechanisms to be put in place to ensure that all employees complete the course. In order for the PMDS to stand a fair chance at succeeding, managers and their subordinates need to commit themselves fully to the completion and implementation of this intervention. It is also crucial that individual employees are supported by managers in ensuring that activities are completed as planned and that learning is transferred to day-to-day work activities.

- **Performance management training**

PM training is deemed important in trying to improve an effective implementation of the PMDS in government departments. PM training enables individuals not only to grasp the rationale behind the system, but also to understand its aim, structure and how it is supposed to be implemented. The responsibility of HR in this regard is to champion the training on performance management at all levels in the department as an initiative to improve the implementation of the PMDS. Again, one of the challenges that departments face is that supervisors are not implementing the policy effectively because they do not understand it. Furthermore, some of the respondents claim that managers and supervisors are not taking the system seriously. In this case, training on PM could be a solution in addressing the knowledge and skills problem. Finally, one associated with the effective implementation of the system. The system also needs to support organisational design and other team-based approaches to government outcomes.

- **Policy**

The policy needs to be re-designed and made simpler to understand and to interpret. It should be crafted in such a way that daily activities are linked to the overall performance of the unit. All cases lodged due to the system need to be addressed within 30 days of application, and proper training should be conducted with both operational and senior management staff to create a common understanding about the objectives of the system. The whole process requires transparency: for instance, the issue of the confidentiality of individual performance scores should be scrapped and team commitment should be encouraged. Direct managers should be responsible for presenting their employees' performance appraisals during meetings of the moderating committee, as direct managers understand the exact performance of their staff.

5.9 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS FROM DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

As highlighted in Chapter Two (on research methodology), in order to ensure that the research findings are credible, several data collection methods should be consulted. In addition to the questionnaire, official documents of the National School of Government were analysed. These documents include Annual Reports, presentations and memoranda. The documents that were consulted are dated from April 2014 to March 2017.

❖ Non-compliance with timeframes

Over the past few years, non-compliance with time frames and signing of performance agreements at the NSG are some of the challenges faced regarding the implementation of the PMDS policy.

In principle, one of the PMDS requirements is that performance agreements must be signed off and submitted to HR at the beginning of each performance cycle in each financial year for all employees, from levels 1–12 and 13–16. Following that, performance reviews for quarters 1, 2 and 3, as well as the final and bi-annual reviews, should be submitted as per deadlines dates set out by HR. The submission dates for

the quarterly performance reviews normally fall within three months after the start of the financial year and completion of the relevant quarters, while the submission dates for bi-annual reviews take place every six months of each financial year.

However, other employees are not complying with these requirements for various reasons, and this affects the implementation of the PMDS policy within the NSG.

5.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided data presentation and an analysis of the research findings. The analysis of data that were collected using tables and pie charts clearly indicates the findings regarding the challenges faced by individual employees in the NSG with regards to training to improve the implementation of the PMDS in the department. The research findings have been analysed in two forms. Firstly, quantitative data have been presented in the form of tables and pie charts. Secondly, qualitative data have been analysed by identifying themes that emerged from the comments made by respondents. The analysis of findings from document analysis was also given. The next and last chapter of the study will provide a summary of the conclusions as well as recommendations.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided the interpretation and discussion of the research findings. This chapter comprises a summary of the chapters, recommendations made with regard to the entire research study, the realisation of study objectives, and conclusions.

The researcher has attempted to analyse the effect of performance management training interventions in order to improve the implementation of the PMDS in the public service, and particularly in the NSG. Although research findings revealed that employees have gained an adequate understanding of the PMDS after enrolling for the MPC, the implementation of the system still remains a challenge due to a number of factors such as bias, a lack of communication and inconsistency in the implementation of the system within the department. These issues can be addressed through continuous engagements and workshops on the PMDS in order to improve its implementation.

6.2 SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTERS

Chapter One provided a general overview as well as background of the study to help the reader gain insights into the PMDS in the public service, as well as how programmes related to PM can help to improve the implementation of the PMDS and increase the skills of employees in various government departments. In the introduction, it was shown that the NSG plays a critical role in improving employees' understanding of matters related to PM through training and development. It was highlighted that while employees need to be managed to ensure increased and continuous motivation in the workplace, it is also essential that they should be provided with the required skills and competencies to achieve their individual and organisational objectives.

The historical background of the study outlined various aspects of PM from international, continental, regional, local and departmental perspectives. This chapter also included the motivation for the study. The research question (which compressed the research problem) was stated, and this question has guided the rest of the study. This was followed by an outline of the research objectives for the study. Finally, the structure of the dissertation and an outline of key concepts used throughout the study was provided.

Chapter Two was devoted to discussing the research methodology for data collection adopted in this study and how the collected data would be analysed. After the introduction, the researcher examined scientific research methods from which the research approach applicable to this study was chosen. The research approach adopted in this study was the mixed methods research approach. In order to substantiate findings, the researcher made use of a qualitative approach for one stage of the study and quantitative approach for the second stage of the study. Data collection techniques were highlighted prior to the outline of the limitations and delimitation for the study. With regard to data collection techniques, the researcher made use of the survey questionnaire, document analysis and internal departmental reports, the combination of which allowed for deeper probing in the subject. A non-probability sampling method (purposive sampling) was adopted in order to select all the NSG employees who took part in the MPC programme. The identified themes led to a better understanding of the factors affecting the implementation of the PMDS as well as the role of the MPC in resolving these challenges. Lastly, the chapter concluded by highlighting how the study has respected the principles of ethics, reliability and validity in a mixed methods research approach.

Chapter Three was devoted to the literature review pertaining to training and development and its effect on the implementation of the PMDS. Existing literature on PM was critically interrogated in order to gain an understanding of how other researchers have examined and conceptualised issues in the past.

The literature review began by outlining the function of HRM and its activities from a Public Administration perspective. Following this, the chapter provided the objectives of PM, highlighting the importance of these objectives on the implementation of the

PMDS in the public service. Thereafter, the chapter examined the theoretical orientation of the study by particularly emphasising learning theories and adult theories. It has been imperative for this chapter to look at past trends in the implementation of the PMDS in the public service before looking at its current implementation status and how training in PM can best address the barriers to its effective implementation in various government departments. In this chapter, particular emphasis was placed on the key role players in the PMDS, followed by the legislative framework on training and development. The legislative framework that governs training and development in the South African public service was also examined. The impact of training and development on PM was also highlighted. The chapter then looked at different training methods in order to promote efficient learning. This was followed by a brief overview of the purpose of training and development. Emphasis was also put on discussing different types of learning, significance of conducting TNAs, as well as training evaluation.

Chapter Four emphasised the functioning of the NSG, providing the profile of the NSG, discussing its historical background and how it came into existence, and outlining its organisational structure and strategic overview (including its vision, mission, and values). It then briefly outlined the operations of the NSG to show the contributions of each business unit to executing the NSG's mandate. Finally, it also examined training interventions offered by the NSG, including the online MPC programme.

Chapter Five was devoted to the presentation of the research findings stemming from the survey questionnaire as well as document analysis. Findings were presented by focusing on key themes derived from the research questions. Some of these findings were presented using diagrams. The next chapter discusses the results for the study and concludes with recommendations.

Chapter Six is devoted to summarising the themes of the study in order to establish conclusions and recommendations for the study. This section also covers the realisation of the study objectives.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the findings of the study, the following recommendations are submitted:

Recommendation 1

Completion rate of the course: The findings reveal that the majority of employees who participated in the MPC completed the course. However, there are employees who registered for the course without completing it. In this regard, the NSG needs to put mechanisms in place to monitor the completion rate of the course by employees. Supervisors should provide enough support to their employees by creating an enabling environment in order for employees to be eager to learn and complete courses they enrol for within a specified time frame. In addition, monitoring the completion rate of courses that employees register for must be included in supervisors' performance agreements so they can be assessed on whether they are managing the process properly.

Recommendation 2

Delivery mode of the MPC: The department needs to consider a new learning, unlearning, incremental and transformational training. These types of learning might also help improve the implementation of PMDS within the department. In addition to this, face-to-face training sessions for the MPC should be considered in order for participants to interact and share information, challenges and solutions with other colleagues.

Recommendation 3

Length of the course content: The content of the MPC programme should be checked and reviewed in order to align it with certain legislation such as the Public Service Regulations that were reviewed in 2016 and implemented on 01 August 2017.

Recommendation 4

Transfer of learning: Managers should support their employees by ensuring that they complete courses they enrol for by the planned competition date and that learning is transferred to day-to-day work activities. This can be done through undertaking training evaluations months after each employee attended training in order to ensure that learners apply what they have learned during the learning programme in the workplace. Further research on the factors that inhibit employees from transferring classroom learning to the workplace should be considered.

Recommendation 5

Communication and feedback of employee performance results: One of the findings of the study was the fact that supervisors do not disclose information such as what scores and activities are required for subordinates to be deemed high performers. Some participants further revealed that poor performance is not managed well and it is only brought to the employee's attention at the end of the performance cycle. It is therefore recommended that the NSG should put strategies in place in order to improve the PM processes in the Department, especially with regard to communicating poor performance prior to the assessment period. This process will assist in determining those factors which resulted to poor individual performance and in coming up with ways to address challenges.

Recommendation 6

Bias and subjectivity: Subjectivity, bias and favouritism are still factors when performance assessments are conducted within the organisation. It is therefore recommended that the NSG should apply the PMDS policy in accordance with its purpose and intended spirit. The MPC should be used as a tool to teach public servants about the PMDS policy and its requirements. This will assist in streamlining processes, eliminating subjectivity, bias and favouritism, and ensuring that strategic objectives are achieved. In addition, only trained and qualified officials should be responsible for managing and implementing an employee's performance in government departments.

Recommendation 7

Perceptions about the moderating committee: The departmental moderating committee is responsible for reviewing employees' performance against the department's performance at the end of each financial year. Respondents claimed that the judgments of the moderation committee are not consistent with the outcomes stemming from performance assessments. Some outcomes are unjustly favourable to certain individuals. A lack of communication, openness and transparency is also a challenge. Based on the findings of the study, it is evident that, apart from the insufficient expertise and knowledge of the moderating committee in managing and implementing the system, some managers' lack of support and commitment to ensuring the effective implementation of the system is another stumbling block in the implementation of the system. It is therefore recommended that the human resource management directorate (HRM&D) of the NSG should play an active role in enforcing transparency, openness and communication in the system. Once employees see some improvements in this area, their attitudes towards the PMDS would change gradually.

Recommendation 8

Professional ethics in the PMDS: The findings reveal that employees are not happy about the lack of professional ethics from their supervisors. For example, managers tend to disclose confidential information about the performance of a certain individuals to other colleagues. It is recommended that managers and supervisors need further training to fully understand that information regarding the performance of employees should be kept confidential. The human resource management directorate should facilitate this process and ensure that confidentiality forms are signed by all officials responsible for the performance information of employees. Those who are found guilty of disclosing confidential information should be held accountable for their actions.

Recommendation 9

Staff and career development: The findings reveal that the PMDS policy is not used to best benefit the NSG staff and career development. A recommendation in this regard

is that supervisors should recognise good performers by acknowledging their work. Employees who perform exceedingly well in their work duties and are keen to further their studies should be afforded opportunities for promotion and career development. In addition, in order to retain these high-performing employees, the department is advised to improve working conditions.

Recommendation 10

Commitment to the implementation of the PMDS: It is clear that commitment by management is fundamental to the effective implementation of the PMDS. Managers should reaffirm their commitment to the performance management system. A performance management committee should be established by HRD to monitor the behaviour of supervisors towards the implementation of the PMDS as well as in relation to staff morale.

Recommendation 11

Review of the PMDS policy: The PMDS policy needs to be re-designed and made simpler to understand and to interpret. Furthermore, the PMDS needs to be integrated with selection and recruitment processes within the organisation in order to allow for career growth through performance.

Recommendation 12

Awareness of the PMDS: Quarterly reports must be published to inform all employees about developments with relation to the PMDS in the department.

Recommendation 13

Performance management training: It is recommended that there should be increased awareness of PM training for supervisors and their employees in order to ensure that there is a common understanding of all challenges in the implementation of the PMDS. Additionally, supervisors should be encouraged participate in PM training interventions in order to enhance their understanding of matters relating to performance

management. Employees must be continuously motivated to attend training on PM matters. Training on performance management; Continuous training and re-training on PM should be emphasised and take place at regular intervals during the assessment year for all public servants in order to continue best practice in the implementation of the PMDS. This would assist both supervisors and subordinates in being knowledgeable.

Recommendation 14

Assessment periods: Managers and supervisors should not wait for statutory periods to assess subordinates; subordinates must be assessed continuously throughout the performance cycle/financial year.

Recommendation 15

Conducting performance assessments: A 360-degree assessment must be introduced in cases where an individual employee had been rated as a poor performer and also when is above fully effective. This kind of assessment can be explained as a process where one is assessed by team mates, colleagues, the senior manager of your manager, and even customers.

In light of the above findings and recommendations, there are some positive remarks highlighted about the impact of the MPC in improving the implementation of the PMDS in the NSG. These are briefly outlined below:

- The MPC is an effective training intervention as it has improved employees' understanding of the PMDS. However, it cannot solve all the challenges associated with the implementation of the PMDS in government departments.
- The Human Resource directorate fully supports the implementation of the PMDS in the NSG after the employees have enrolled for the MPC. However, to leave the implementation of the PMDS solely to the HR unit minimises the importance of a system that is a critical enabler and gauge of performance.
- The competence of the employees has since improved as a result of the MPC.

- The employees are now more dedicated to the successful implementation of the PMDS in their department.
- Due to the training on the MPC, the employees are now able to track their own performance to avoid surprises at the end of the performance cycle when performance assessments are conducted. This can also help employees to improve in areas which require improvements on time.

6.4 REALISATION OF STUDY OBJECTIVES

This section will outline how the findings of the study have been achieved in accordance with each research objective:

Objective One: Provide introduction and overview of the study.

To achieve this objective, Chapter One presented the background to the study to help the reader to gain insights of PMDS in the public service, and into how training programmes related to PM can help improve both the implementation of the PMDS and the skills of employees in the public service. The chapter further outlined the motivation for the study and provided a problem statement, a research question, and the research objectives of the study. Finally, the structure of the dissertation and an outline of applicable key concepts used throughout the study was provided.

Objective Two: Provide a theoretical foundation that guides the study.

To achieve this objective, the researcher developed various themes which addressed some of the challenges experienced in the implementation of the PMDS in the NSG. A questionnaire was developed and distributed to participants in order to obtain the responses that were analysed and interpreted according to various themes. This was covered under the section on qualitative research findings.

Objective Three: Assess the effect of performance management training on the implementation of the PMDS in the NSG.

This objective was addressed in two different sections of the questionnaire (Section C) which looks at assessing the MPC itself as well as (Section D) which looks at improved areas post training.

Objective Four: Outline performance management training interventions offered by the NSG.

This objective was achieved in Chapter Four of the study, as a profile of the NSG was given including the background of the institution and its organisational structure. This was followed by a brief overview of the different training interventions offered by the NSG, including the MPC.

Objective Five: Provide recommendations that might assist in improving the implementation of the PMDS in the NSG through performance management training.

This objective was achieved by establishing recommendations based on the findings of the study, which are intended to add value to the effective implementation of the PMDS in the public service, and at the NSG in particular, through PM training interventions.

6.5 CONCLUSION

The study intended to analyse the effect of performance management training interventions in the public service. The NSG was used as a case study for its MPC programme. The researcher gathered that a significant number of employees indicated that training on PM helped them to improve their understanding of how the system should be implemented. However, respondents indicated that the training on PM will not solve all PMDS challenges, especially if transfer of learning is not monitored. The employees further indicated that the MPC programme should be checked and reviewed in order to align it with certain legislation such as the Public Service Regulations. Significantly, employee performance should be assessed continuously throughout the performance cycle. Increased awareness on PM related matters and communication should be improved. The research further examined

theories of learning and also emphasised on the concept of adult learning and adult learners at the NSG. The concept of adult learning is deemed to be most suitable in advancing the skills of the adults (employees), which will enable them to deal with any work related challenges they encounter. The research proposed the exploration of different types of learning namely; new learning, unlearning, incremental and transformational training. These types of training have vast benefits as outlined in 3.10. Finally, the research highlighted the significance of staff and career development and indicated that in order for employers to retain high-performing employees, improved working conditions are a prerequisite, as well as training on PM programmes.

Further research on transfer of learning should be conducted, particularly to assess the link between learning and barriers to learning application after training has taken place.

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Analysing performance management training interventions in the public service



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Analysing performance management training interventions in the public service: a case of the National School of Government

QUESTIONNAIRE

This study is undertaken for the partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Master's degree in Public Administration at the University of Pretoria. The dissertation is titled: "**Analysing performance management training interventions in the public service: A case of the National School of Government**".

The purpose of the research project is to analyse the effect of performance management training interventions offered by the National School of Government. It endeavours to generate knowledge to be utilized in understanding how performance management training interventions can help improve the effective implementation of performance management and development system in the public service.

Your views are of importance to this study and I would appreciate it if you could participate by answering the questions to the best of your ability. The findings of this study will be used mainly for academic purposes. Be assured that your responses will be treated with a maximum level of confidentiality and anonymously.

I thank you in advance for your time, co-operation and contribution to this research project. The results and findings of this study will be made available in the dissertation that will be submitted at the University of Pretoria.

Yours Sincerely

Fezekile Iminqweno Dastile
dastilef@gmail.com

There are 17 questions in this survey

CONSENT

6 [A5]5. How long have you worked at the NSG?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

° ((A01.NAOK == "Y"))

Please write your answer here:

years

7 [A6]6. Do you have a disability? *

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

° ((A01.NAOK == "Y"))

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Yes
 No

8 [A61]6.1 Please specify: *

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

° ((A6.NAOK == "Y"))

Please write your answer here:

B. ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM (PMDS)

9 [B1]B. ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM (PMDS)

Please respond to the following statements as indicated:

*

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

° ((A01.NAOK == "Y"))

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I am aware about the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) used by the NSG.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I have knowledge about the contents of the PMDS used by the NSG to address challenges related to the implementation of the performance management.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I design my own performance indicators.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I have an understanding of the PMDS policy in relation to my work duties.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Performance appraisal results are used for personal and career development in the NSG.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Performance appraisal results are used for training and development of staff.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Poor performance is brought to the employee's attention only at the end of the performance cycle.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Performance appraisal is subjective.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Performance appraisal is done in a fair manner.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Performance appraisal is consistent according to the PMDS requirements.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. My supervisor has a good understanding of the PMDS used by the NSG.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12. Senior management is committed to the successful implementation of PMDS after enrolling for Managing Performance Course.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. Middle management is committed to the successful implementation of PMDS after enrolling for Managing Performance Course.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Operational workers are committed to the successful implementation of PMDS after enrolling for Managing Performance Course.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. HR directorate renders enough support to ensure effective implementation of the PMDS post the launch of the Managing Performance Course.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

C. ASSESSMENT OF THE ONLINE MANAGING PERFORMANCE COURSE

10 [C0]1. Have you enrolled for the online Managing Performance Course since you joined the organization? *

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

◦ ((A01.NAOK == "Y"))

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Yes
 No

11 [C1]2. How were you selected for the online Managing Performance Course training? *

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

◦ ((C0.NAOK == "Y"))

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- a) On joining the organisation
 b) Supervisor's recommendation
 c) Voluntarily
 d) Compulsory for all employees
 Other

12 [C2]C. ASSESSMENT OF THE ONLINE MANAGING PERFORMANCE COURSE

Please respond to the following statements as indicated:

*

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

° ((C0.NAOK == "Y"))

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3. I understand the learning outcomes of the online Managing Performance Course.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I understand what is expected of me after I completed the online Managing Performance Course.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. The course content of MPC impacted on your understanding of PMDS.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. The content of the online Managing Performance Course was of good quality.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. In my own opinion, the course was relevant to the performance appraisal I know.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. In my own opinion, the MPC training helped me understand how performance standards are designed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. The training helped me understand what improved performance management means.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Training on MPC taught me how to keep track of my performance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Training on MPC taught me how to keep track of the staff I am responsible to manage.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Training on MPC taught me how to self-assess myself.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. Training on MPC taught me how to assess others?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Training on MPC taught me how to solve performance problems.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
15. Training on MPC has taught me how to utilise PMDS as an employee development tool.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. The Managing Performance Course is important to enhance the implementation of the PMDS in the NSG.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. I am involved in the Communities of Practice platform to address PMDS related challenges.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13 [C4]3. Are you responsible for assessing the performance of staff in your unit? *

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Yes
 No

D. ASSESSMENT ON IMPROVED AREAS POST TRAINING

This area is about how would you rate your own improvement in terms of the implementation of PMDS and that of the staff you are responsible to manage since they have enrolled for the online Managing Performance Course.

14 [D1]D. ASSESSMENT ON IMPROVED AREAS POST TRAINING Please respond to the following statements as indicated: *

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

° ((A01.NAOK == "Y") and (C4.NAOK == "Y"))

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Significantly improved	Slightly improved	Hardly improved	Unable to judge
1. Competence in the implementation of PMDS.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Overall effectiveness and efficiency in conducting / completing quarterly / bi-annual reviews.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Completion of quarterly / bi-annual work-plans.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Dedication and motivation to do more to comply with the PMDS policy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

E. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

15 [E1]1. Do you have any other issues relating to the PMDS after enrolling for MPC you would like to raise? If so, what are those issues? *

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

◦ ((A01.NAOK == "Y"))

Please write your answer here:

16 [E2]2. Do you have any suggestion on what could be done to improve the implementation of the PMDS using the MPC? *

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

◦ ((A01.NAOK == "Y"))

Please write your answer here:



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