

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN THE
IMPROVEMENT OF SERVICE DELIVERY WITHIN A DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY IN
SOUTH AFRICA**

by

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Submitted in accordance with the full requirements for the degree of

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in the subject

INDUSTRIAL AND ORGANISATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

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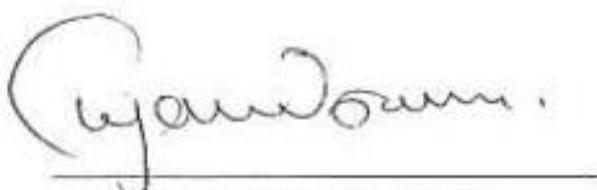
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

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December 2020

DECLARATION

I, Mapula Esther Mamburu, student number 31431895, hereby declare that this dissertation titled "The effectiveness of a skills development programme in the improvement of service delivery within a district municipality in South Africa", is my own work, and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



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DEDICATION

I dedicated this research study to the following people:

- My husband Thizwilondi Justice Mamburu;
- My daughter Khomotso Angel Mamburu; and
- My son Thikedzo Justice Mamburu.

They are my world!

SUMMARY

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN THE IMPROVEMENT OF SERVICE DELIVERY WITHIN A DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

by

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Department: Industrial and Organisational Psychology
Degree: M Com (Industrial and Organisational Psychology)

The aim of this mixed-methods research study is to investigate the effectiveness of a Municipal Skills Development Programme (MSDP) in the improvement of service delivery in a District Municipality (DM) in South Africa. A concurrent embedded mixed-methods strategy was used, as it uses one data collection phase during which both qualitative and quantitative data are simultaneously collected and treats both qualitative and quantitative research data gathered on an equal basis. Collected data were not integrated or triangulated but resided side-by-side as two different pictures of the effectiveness of the MSDP.

From a total population of 80 managers in the DM and its five Local Municipalities (LMs) who had attended the MSDP, qualitative data was gathered by conducting individual interviews with a convenient sample of 10 managers (Sample 1). Quantitative data was gathered by means of a self-designed questionnaire from a convenient sample of 50 managers (Sample 2). The audio-recorded and transcribed qualitative data obtained from the 10 semi structured interviews were analysed by means of content analysis, while the scores obtained from the 50 survey questionnaires were used to calculate the frequency of responses and then represented by figures and tables.

Qualitative findings indicated that the majority of participants (90% of 10 managers interviewed) are of the opinion that the implementation of the MSDP within the DM was successful and has led to improved service delivery. Quantitative results indicated that the total sample of 50 managers rated the MSDP as having improved service delivery in the DM. The overall mixed-methods assessment indicated that the MSDP is a successful way of improving the service delivery in a DM in South Africa and that the attendance of the MSDP by all managers is essential for improving the service delivery of local governments in South Africa.

A limitation of the study was that the study was conducted in only one DM and may not represent the views of all local government employees in South Africa. Recommendations were that the relationship between the MSDP and other organisational variables such as productivity, efficiency and effectiveness should be studied, while all managers of the DM who have not yet attended the MSDP should be encouraged to do so.

KEY TERMS:

Skills development, skills development programme, municipal skills development programme, mixed-methods research, service delivery, district municipality, local municipality

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CHAPTER 1: SCIENTIFIC ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the background and motivation for the study, the problem statement, the research questions, the aims of the study, the paradigm perspective and the research design will be discussed. As part of the research design, the research strategy, the research approach and the research method will be discussed. The chapter will then be concluded with the layout of the dissertation's chapters.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

World-wide municipalities or local governments are considered to be the closest form of government to the people (Grant, 2014; Mitlin, 2000), and these local governments are being called upon to play an ever-increasing role in providing services to local communities (Andrew & Shah, 2003). In South Africa, there are 283 local government entities, consisting of Metropolitan Municipalities, District Municipalities (DMs) and Local Municipalities (LMs) (Hawes & Mohamed, 2011). In reality the majority of DMs and LMs in South Africa are dysfunctional and ineffective in the provision of adequate services to their respective communities (Hoffman, 2008), this being evidenced by numerous protests which communities have engaged in over the last decade to demand adequate services and infrastructure delivery in their areas (Municipal IQ Hotspots Monitor, 2014). This is supported by Hawes and Mohamed (2011), who stated that South Africa has been inundated with service delivery protests. According to Fear, Botha, Young, Rautenbach, and Groenewald (2014), the most effective approach towards addressing poor service and infrastructure delivery is by capacitating municipalities with the required skills and knowledge. Khosa (1999) argued that the provision of running water, sanitation and health care must be recognised as a fundamental human right, while poor service delivery is a condition that is against the promises contained within the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996).

According to Meyer and Coetzer (2010), poor services and infrastructure delivery in most local municipalities is caused by the lack of skills aimed at building the capacity of municipal employees. Meyer and Coetzer (2010) further argue that LMs can provide their respective communities with adequate service delivery if their personnel are well educated and trained in all

areas of service delivery. These views are supported by the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs [DCOGTA] (2010), which highlighted challenges identified at the local municipality attributed to skills shortage in some of the mentioned areas of service delivery. In an attempt to address these challenges facing local government, the Municipal Skills Development Programme (MSDP) was created and implemented in 2010. The aim of this programme is to address the skills shortage of municipal employees in various areas. The first area is called student-to-government (S2G), in which unemployed and retrenched graduates are provided with the Information and Technology (IT) skills required to support local government in services and infrastructure delivery. The second area of the programme is aimed at training local government employees at all levels in all aspects of service delivery, while the third area is concerned with support for senior local government officials.

To date the MSDP has exposed senior local government managers to training aimed at improving their understanding of how IT can support service delivery. This includes their involvement in a seminar series around international models which empowered them to implement the most effective and efficient technology solutions to improve service delivery to South African citizens (Meyer & Coetzer, 2010). The programme has also empowered local government management at all other levels as well to address the challenges faced by their respective communities in a systematic fashion.

According to the Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority [LGSETA] (2009), the level and concentration of skills required differ according to the type of municipality, its functions, its location, that is, rural or urban, and the nature of the community it serves. As such, the MSDP is aligned and regulated according to the municipalities' needs, the challenges they face, the nature of the communities they have to serve, and the availability of resources needed for the implementation of programmes that are aimed at improving the quality of life of the communities. The MSDP thus aims to improve the quality of life of people who rely on services from municipalities.

This study explored the effectiveness of the current MSDP in the improvement of service delivery in a DM situated in the Free State province of South Africa. This DM is composed of five LMs which, according to the Department of Provincial and Local Government [DPLG] (2005), are compelled to provide specific services to communities, such as health care, public safety and emergency services, local economic development, water conservation and treatment, waste

management, client services and parks and community facilities. The results of this study will provide local government decision-makers with valuable and comprehensive understanding of the MSDP and whether it can be considered to be successful in improving service delivery in the DM.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Inadequate services and infrastructure delivery at most LMs in South Africa are generally closely associated with lack of skills in areas of service delivery. In this regard, the DPLG (2005) has identified that lack of adequate skills in the implementation of its policies and programmes is closely related to poor service delivery in various municipalities. Training and development of municipal officials is a critical priority that could adequately improve service delivery (Patterson, 2008). The MSDP was developed and launched in 2010 as a public private partnership and consists of a set of programmes to reduce South Africa's service delivery backlog by injecting skilled graduates and high-level training initiatives directly into local government (Meyer & Coetzer, 2010). If this programme is successful, most local municipalities will improve their reputation with respective communities because of their improvement in service delivery (White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service [WPHRMPS], 1997). This will also lead to improved local development, which is an important reason for the establishment of municipalities within the ambits of the local government sphere of operation.

As many LMs are currently dogged by protests by grass-roots groupings demanding adequate service delivery from them (Municipal IQ Hotspots Monitor, 2014), it is anticipated that if the improvement of service delivery cannot be attained at local government level, most of South African municipalities would be turned into chaotic enterprises. Hoffman (2008) is of the opinion that when the African National Congress (ANC) came to power, it was confronted with the challenge of expanding services such as electricity, sanitation and water infrastructure to many additional areas than had been serviced by the previous government. However, it was unable to meet this challenge due to its local government structures lacking adequate skills in service delivery. Skills development is therefore the most important aspect towards the improvement of service delivery at local government level (Hoffman, 2008). This study will thus explore whether the MSDP can lead to the improvement of service delivery and the enhancement of performance in a DM in South Africa. and whether these findings can be utilised to improve service delivery in other local governments in South Africa.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.4.1 Qualitative research question

From the background and problem statement, the following qualitative research question is formulated:

- How do managers who have attended the MSDP describe the effectiveness of the programme in improving service delivery in the DM?

1.4.2 Quantitative research question

From the background and problem statement, the following quantitative research question is formulated:

- How do managers who have attended the MSDP rate the effectiveness of the MSDP in improving service delivery in the DM?

1.4.3 Mixed-methods research question

From the background and problem statement, the following mixed-methods research question is formulated:

- What is the overall assessment of managers who have attended the MSDP regarding the effectiveness of the MSDP in improving service delivery in the DM?

1.5 AIMS OF THE STUDY

1.5.1 General aim of the study

The general aim of this study is to explore the effectiveness of a MSDP in the improvement of service delivery within a DM in South Africa.

1.5.2 Specific theoretical aims

The specific theoretical aims of this study are the following:

- To investigate the concept of skills development.
- To investigate the concept of service delivery.
- To investigate the concept of service delivery at local government level in South Africa.
- To investigate the concept of SDPs at local government level in South Africa.
- To investigate the theoretical relationship between SDPs and service delivery.

1.5.3 Specific qualitative empirical aim

The specific qualitative empirical aim of this study is as follows:

- To explore how managers who have attended the MSDP describe the effectiveness of the programme to improve service delivery within a DM in South Africa

1.5.4 Specific quantitative empirical aim

The specific quantitative empirical aim of this study is as follows:

- To determine how managers who have attended the MSDP rate the effectiveness of the programme in improving service delivery in the DM.

1.5.5 Specific mixed-methods empirical aims

The specific mixed-methods empirical aims of the study are:

- To provide an overall assessment by managers who have attended a MSDP regarding the effectiveness of the MSDP in improving service delivery in the DM.

- To make recommendations for further research regarding skills development and service delivery.
- To make recommendations regarding the contribution of this study to the field of Industrial and Organisational Psychology (IOP).

1.6 THE PARADIGM PERSPECTIVE

The meta-theoretical paradigm

Meta-theoretically this study is anchored in both the interpretive and positivist paradigms, as the research is mixed-methods in nature, utilising both qualitative and quantitative data gathering (Creswell, 2014).

According to Maree (2011), interpretivism maintained that social phenomena can only be observed from some internal reality. This means that understanding the meaning of a social reality emanates from the statements, opinions, feelings and beliefs that people attach to the social phenomena as they experience them (Maree, 2011). Epistemologically this metatheoretical paradigm is more subjective and tends to prefer the use of ‘softer’ data and is as such classified under qualitative research (Creswell, 2014).

The positivist meta-theoretical paradigm examines science from a ‘reconstructed logic’ perspective, insisting that there should be verifiability, disregarding self-report and mental concepts as the research methods (Maree, 2011). From a positivist paradigm perspective information is proven and discovered independent of the researcher, through measuring or observing of occurrences (Creswell, 2014). Facts are found by separating an occurrence to scrutinise its elements (Creswell, 2014).

1.6.2 The methodological paradigm

Methodologically this study followed a mixed-methods research approach (Creswell, 2014), as both a qualitative research methodology and quantitative research methodology were applied. However, qualitative and quantitative research designs differ in terms of their epistemological, theoretical and methodological underpinnings (Maree, 2011).

The mixed-methods strategy of this study utilised what Creswell (2009) referred to as a concurrent embedded strategy, which entails that the data in a single study are not compared but reside side by side as two different viewpoints of the phenomenon under investigation. In a concurrent embedded mixed-method approach, both qualitative and quantitative methodologies enjoy equal consideration (Creswell, 2014). According to Fielding (2012), mixed-methods allowed for greater analytical depth, as the data gathered from the different methods can be interpreted together in a meaningful way. While the qualitative phase of data gathering in mixed-methods is phenomenological in nature involving the subjective experience of the participants (Maree, 2011), the quantitative data-gathering phase is focused on counting and classifying features and constructing statistical models and figures to explain what is observed from an objective standpoint (Creswell, 2014).

1.6.3 The theoretical paradigm

The theoretical paradigm on which this study is based is Industrial and Organisational Psychology (IOP), which applies psychological theories and principles to organisations in order to increase workplace productivity and related issues such as the physical and mental well-being of employees (Muchinsky & Culbertson, 2016). This study will apply such theories and principles in order to improve the functioning of individual local government employees and the service delivery of such organisations. The study will be conducted within the theoretical sub-fields indicated below:

1.6.3.1 Organisational psychology

The field of organisational psychology refers to the study of how organisations function in total and how employees' function within an organisation, thus studying work at the level of the organisation and its influence on employees' behaviour and attitudes (Muchinsky & Culbertson, 2016). This study will focus on the skills of individual employees and the functioning of local governments regarding service delivery.

1.6.3.2 Organisation development

Organisation Development (OD) is defined as a body of knowledge and practice that enhances organisational performance and individual development, viewing the organisation as a complex system of inter-dependent elements (Cummings & Worley, 2015). OD interventions in such a

system are inclusive methodologies and approaches to organisation design, leadership development, change management, performance management, coaching, diversity and work/life balance (Eneh & Awara, 2016). This study will focus on the development and improvement of local government employees and municipalities to improve service delivery to clients.

1.6.3.3 Systems approach

The study adopts a system perspective which views organisation as a complex whole but dependent on the interaction of its parts to produce its required functions (Jackson, 2003). Katz and Kahn (1978, as cited in Amagoh, 2008) explained a system as consisting of inputs, a throughput and outputs, including elements such as purpose, people, structure, techniques and information which must be coordinated and integrated by managerial systems in order to maximise value for the organisation. In this context, the constructs of skills development (the MSDP) and service delivery are elements or sub-systems of the total system, which is a DM.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Gray (2014), a research design can be viewed as a detailed plan which researchers implement to pursue their research projects and includes all the necessary elements which are prerequisites for the successful implementation of a research project. Kumar (2011) stated that a research design must be viewed as a strategic plan for a research project which sets out the broad structures and features of the research study. Like any plan, the research design is used for the purpose of outlining the elements and the execution of certain tasks and activities before they are actually made possible or implemented (Kumar, 2011).

1.7.1 Research approach

A mixed-methods research approach was utilised for this study, with both qualitative and quantitative methodologies being used (Creswell, 2014).

1.7.1.1 Qualitative research approach

Bowie and Bronte-Tinkew (2008) defined qualitative research as a method which is mostly applied in studies which investigate new phenomena in that it relies heavily upon what the research

participants have to say about their experiences of such phenomena. This is supported by Creswell (2014) who argued that qualitative methods refer to research in which information generally is collected in non-numerical form which may provide deeper understanding about how participants feel and generally focus more on what happened than on whether particular goals were achieved. A qualitative research approach was necessary in this study because it provided the research participants with an opportunity to explain in in-depth details how they experienced the Municipal Skills Development Programme (MSDP) and its influence on the improvement of service delivery within their District Municipality (DM).

1.7.1.2 Quantitative research approach

According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007), quantitative research is when the study data are collected as numbers, percentages and scales that can easily be manipulated and analysed. Cohen et al. (2007) stated that for quantitative data, a precise sample number can be calculated according to the level of accuracy and the level of probability that the researcher requires in their work. Researchers can then report in their study the rationale and the basis of their research decisions. Quantitative research thus gathers data in a numerical form which can be put into categories, or in rank order, or measured in units of measurement to describe the characteristics of the phenomenon under investigation. This type of data can be used to construct graphs and tables of raw data (McLeod, 2017). A quantitative research approach was relevant in this study because it provided the research participants with an opportunity to rate the effectiveness of the MSDP in improving service delivery in the DM. These rating could then be expressed as numbers, percentages and scales which could be presented in the form of tables and graphs, and these visual representations made it easier to interpret and understand the ratings of managers regarding the effectiveness of the MSDP.

1.7.1.3 Mixed-methods research approach

Creswell (2014) defined mixed-methods research as both a method and a methodology that focuses on conducting research that involves collecting, analyzing and integrating quantitative and qualitative research in a single study or a longitudinal program of inquiry. Creswell (2014) stated that researchers mix both qualitative and quantitative data to integrate the two fundamental ways of thinking about social phenomena. Creswell (2014) added that mixed-methods research is needed because while each main method gives a partial picture of the social phenomenon under

investigation, mixed-methods provides in-depth information of the phenomenon from multiple sources, such as interviews and questionnaires.

The concurrent embedded mixed-method research strategy, one of six propagated by Creswell (2009), was considered most appropriate for this study, as it uses one data collection phase during which both qualitative and quantitative data are simultaneously but independently collected and treats both qualitative and quantitative research data gathered on an equal basis in order to obtain a complete picture of a phenomenon under investigation. Creswell (2009) noted this aspect of equality when he stated that the collected data within a concurrent embedded strategy may not be compared but reside side-by-side as two different pictures for the assessment of a single phenomenon of interest. In the current study the need was to investigate the subjective experiences of managers who had attended the MSDP as well as the objective, rated perceptions of managers who had attended the MSDP. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) of the MSDP and whether it was considered to be successful in improving service delivery in the DM.

1.7.2 Research method

1.7.2.1 Research strategy

a Qualitative research strategy

The qualitative strategy of inquiry that was used in this study was a case study, which Creswell (2014) explained is a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explored in depth a programme, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals. A case study approach was considered to be appropriate for the qualitative part of this study as it provided an in-depth exploration of the effectiveness of the MSDP.

b Quantitative research strategy

The quantitative part of this study utilised a survey, non-experimental research strategy of inquiry, which according to Partidar (2013) is needed when conducting studies that do not require experimental approaches and settings. Survey research is described by Bonds-Raacke and Raacke (2014) as a research methodology where questionnaires are designed to obtain information from a

large number of respondents regarding behaviours, attitudes, perceptions, or opinions of respondents about a social phenomenon. A survey, non-experimental research design was considered appropriate for the quantitative part of the study as the perceptions and opinions of a large number of managers regarding the effectiveness of the MSDP had to be assessed and analysed.

1.7.2.2 Research setting

South Africa is divided into 283 municipalities, based on three legal categories, namely eight densely populated Metropolitan Municipalities, 44 DMs and 231 LMs (Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998). This research was conducted in one of the 44 DMs which has five LMs within its area of jurisdiction. The main function of the DM is to coordinate the delivery of municipal services to inhabitants between the five local municipalities.

1.7.2.3 Entrée and establishing researcher roles

The researcher is a public servant employed by National Department of Labour in the skills development unit based in a local office situated in the DM. The researcher's work responsibilities entail working closely with other government departments, institutions and public entities including the five LMs within the DM. As the researcher is well known to the management teams and employees of the DM and its five LMs, permission to conduct this research was easily obtained while the data-gathering process was facilitated by this positive working relationship.

1.7.2.4 Research procedure

In order to conduct the research, permission was firstly obtained from the Management Team of the DM and then from the Management Teams of the five LMs within the DM. After this was granted, the researcher requested ethical clearance to conduct the study and it was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the University of South Africa, after which the study commenced.

a Qualitative procedure: Conducting the interviews

Each of the five LMs was requested to identify two managers who had attended the MSDP, and who were willing to participate in the study. On the scheduled dates and times, the researcher

from which the sample was drawn (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007), it was decided to use convenience sampling as the sampling scheme for this mixed-methods research

a *Qualitative study samples*

Sample sizes in qualitative research should not be too small to make data saturation difficult, and not be too large to make a deep, case-oriented analysis difficult (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). Each of the five LMs were requested to identify two managers who had attended the MSDP, and who were willing to participate in the study, which provided a sample of 10 interviewees.

b *Quantitative study sample*

As the quantitative empirical aim of this study was not to calculate statistical relationship between variables, but only to analyse the quantitative data in terms of frequencies and means to determine how managers who had attended a MSDP rated it on improving service delivery in the DM, a sample of 50 managers was deemed adequate for this purpose. The size of this sample was according to the guidelines provided by Creswell (2014) regarding sample sizes for basic, descriptive statistical analyses. The researcher subsequently requested each of the five LMs to identify 10 managers who had attended the MSDP but who were not one of the two managers identified to be interviewed for qualitative data, and who were willing to participate in the study. This provided a second sample of 50 participants.

1.7.2.6 *Data collection methods*

Data collection is a process through which the participants in a research study are requested to share their respective experiences of the problem under review with the researchers, either through interviews or the completion of survey questionnaires (Neuman, 2014), or through the use of both as in mixed-methods research (Creswell, 2014) which was used in this study.

a *Qualitative data collection: Semi-structured individual interviews*

As the qualitative empirical aim of this study was to explore how managers who had attended the MSDP describe the effectiveness of the programme to improve service delivery within a DM in South Africa, the use of semi-structured interviews using open-ended questions to gather

qualitative data from Sample 1 was deemed appropriate for this study. According to Cohen and Crabtree (2006), semi-structured interviews are characterised by factors such as the interviewer and respondents engaging in a formal interview, with the interviewer developing and using an interview guide.

a *Quantitative data collection: Surveys*

According to Bowie and Bronte-Tinkew (2008), quantitative methods of data collection referred to research in which information is collected in numerical form, such as numbers, ratios of numbers and percentages, and that these methods have the advantage of being able to collect data from a large number of individuals within a very short space of time. For this study, a cross-sectional survey was used to gather quantitative data at one point in time by means of a self-administered questionnaire (Creswell, 2014), which was developed specifically for the DM. The customised questionnaire was used to gather quantitative data from Sample 2.

1.7.2.7 *Recording of data*

a *Recording of qualitative data*

During the semi-structured individual interviews, audio recording and field note taking were used to capture each participant's responses to the open-ended questions posed to them individually, as propagated by Jebreen (2012). Permission to record the interview was requested from each individual manager at the beginning of the interview, which all interviewees consented to. The interviews were then recorded for later transcription and analysis. During the interviews the researcher also made notes while managers were answering the open-ended questions in order to capture details and behaviour that was not articulated verbally.

b *Recording of quantitative data*

The quantitative data obtained from the survey questionnaires were recorded by capturing the scores allocated by each respondent to each of the questions on spreadsheets for further statistical analysis.

1.7.2.8 *Data analysis*

a Qualitative data analysis

As a case study was used as the strategy of inquiry in this study (Creswell, 2014), in which the researcher explored how managers who had attended the MSDP describe the effectiveness of the programme to improve service delivery, the qualitative data obtained from the individual interviews were analysed by means of content analysis, using six steps which are based on and adapted from the six steps propagated by Creswell (2014, pp. 247 – 249). These steps were (1) Transcribe and prepare the data for analysis, (2) Study the complete data obtained to form an overall impression, (3) Group the verbatim responses of interviewees under each appropriate question asked, which become the themes, (4) Identify sub-themes from the themes (questions), (5) Discuss the findings and (6) Draw conclusions from the findings.

b Quantitative data analysis

In this study, descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies were calculated for Sample 2 using Excel spreadsheets and presented in the form of tables and graphs to illustrate how managers rated the MSDP on various questions. According to Field (2005), frequency distributions showed the number of observations or scores obtained for each question in a survey instrument. This approach was followed as the quantitative empirical aim of the study was to determine how managers who had attended a MSDP rated the effectiveness of the programme, and not to determine the relationship between variables.

c Overall assessment of the qualitative and quantitative data

As a concurrent embedded mixed-methods research strategy was used in this study (Creswell, 2009), the qualitative and quantitative data were analysed separately and not compared but considered side-by-side to give an overall composite assessment of two different pictures of the MSDP. As the mixed-methods, empirical aim of the study was to provide an overall assessment by managers who have attended a MSDP regarding the effectiveness of the MSDP in improving service delivery in the DM, both types of data were treated on an equal basis, and integration or triangulation of data was not utilised.

1.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE QUALITATIVE DATA

The criteria for the trustworthiness of qualitative data are, according to Guba (1981), (1) credibility, (2) transferability, (3) dependability and (4) conformability. The criteria are meant to address the positivists' equivalent of internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity respectively to ensure trustworthiness of qualitative data. In qualitative research, validity and reliability are achieved when the researcher rigorously follows a number of verification strategies in the course of the research process which together, incrementally and interactively contribute to and build reliability and validity, thus ensuring rigor (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2002). The four criteria for trustworthiness of qualitative data proposed by Guba (1981) were all applied to ensure the trustworthiness of the qualitative data.

1.9 QUALITY OF THE QUANTITATIVE DATA

According to Creswell (2014), from a positivist's perspective, reliability and validity are considered the most important and effective concepts which determines the quality of quantitative data. In this sense, reliability is essentially a synonym for consistency and replicability (Kumar, 2011).

The first strategy employed to ensure the quality of the quantitative data was to use a sample of 50 participants for the survey, which was deemed adequate for calculating frequencies and means (Creswell, 2014) to determine how managers who had attended a MSDP rated it on improving service delivery in the DM. The second strategy employed to ensure the quality of the quantitative data was to develop the survey questionnaire using the steps propagated by Borg and Mastrangelo (2008) and Wiley (2010), namely (1) study questions used in similar questionnaires, (2) compile a draft questionnaire with appropriate questions, (3) conduct a pilot study to test its face validity, and (4) compile the final questionnaire. The final survey questionnaire used in the study could thus be considered to be a reliable and valid instrument which was able to accurately and reliably assess the responses of participants regarding the effectiveness of the MSDP in ensuring service delivery in a DM in South Africa.

1.10 QUALITY OF THE MIXED-METHODS DATA

The quality of mixed-method data is generally concerned with ensuring that quality is adequately and independently addressed in both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Mixed-methods validity, also called *data legitimation* (Onwuegbuzie & (Johnson, 2006), was addressed by ensuring that four of the nine legitimation types propagated by Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2006) were adhered to. These were (1) *Sample integration legitimation*, (2) *Inside-outside legitimation*, (3) *Weakness minimization legitimation* and (4) *Multiple validities legitimation*.

1.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Seidman (2006), ethical considerations can be understood to mean guidelines and rules which the social sciences profession have developed to protect the participants in research from being physically, psychologically and emotionally harmed by the researchers and research projects. Seidman (2006) mentioned a number of ethical considerations which must be addressed in research, and the following were addressed as part of ethical considerations:

- Obtaining permission to conduct research from the custodians of programmes.
- Preventing harm to subjects.
- Informed consent.
- Participants must not be deceived.
- Anonymity of participants.
- Confidentiality of data.

1.12 CHAPTER LAYOUT

The study will consist of the following chapters:

Chapter 1: Scientific orientation to the research. In this chapter the background and motivation for the study, the problem statement, the research questions, the aims of the study, the paradigm perspective and the research design will be discussed. As part of the research design, the research strategy, the research approach and the research method will be discussed. The chapter will be concluded with the layout of the dissertation's chapters.

Chapter 2: Skills development and service delivery. In this chapter, service delivery and skills development will be discussed. The chapter will start with a discussion of local government service delivery challenges in South Africa. Thereafter the concept of skills development will receive attention and the chapter will be concluded with a discussion of the legal framework supporting skills development in South Africa.

Chapter 3: Skills development programmes. In this chapter skills development programmes (SDPs) will be discussed. The chapter will begin by defining SDPs, after which the barriers to SDPs will receive attention. This will be followed by a discussion of suggested strategies to address the barriers to SDPs. The chapter will be concluded with an explanation of the Municipal Skills Development Programme (MSDP) that was evaluated as part of this study.

Chapter 4: Research methodology. In this chapter, the research methodology will be discussed. The discussion will include the research design, the research approach, and the research method. As part of the research method, the research strategy, the research setting, the population and sample, data collection methods, and data analysis will be discussed. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of the quality of the qualitative and quantitative data and ethical considerations.

Chapter 5: Findings and results of the study. In this chapter, the findings of the qualitative study and results of the quantitative study will be reported and discussed. The chapter starts with a recap of how the qualitative data was gathered and analysed after which the findings of the individual interviews are reported. This is followed by a recap of how the quantitative data was gathered and analysed after which the results of the survey questionnaire are reported. The chapter is then concluded with a discussion of the qualitative findings and quantitative results.

Chapter 6: Conclusions, limitations and recommendations. In this chapter the conclusions, limitations and recommendations of the study are discussed. The chapter starts with conclusions regarding the specific literature aims, the specific empirical aims and the general aim of the study. Thereafter the limitations of the literature review and empirical study are discussed, and the chapter is concluded with recommendations for future research, for the participating DM as well as for the field of Industrial and Organisational Psychology.

In this chapter the background and motivation for the study, the problem statement, the research questions, the aims of the study, the paradigm perspective and the research design were discussed. As part of the research design, the research strategy, the research approach and the research method were discussed. The chapter was then concluded with the layout of the dissertation's chapters.

CHAPTER 2: SERVICE DELIVERY AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, service delivery and skills development will be discussed. The chapter will start with a discussion of local government service delivery challenges in South Africa. Thereafter the concept of skills development will receive attention and the chapter will be concluded with a discussion of the legal framework supporting skills development in South Africa.

2.2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE DELIVERY CHALLENGES IN SOUTH AFRICA

For the past few years, public service delivery protests had been rife in local municipalities across South Africa, with angry residents taking to the streets in demonstration against the poor performance of their respective local municipalities (Clark, 2011). Grant (2014) reported that research from the University of Johannesburg indicated that there had been a sharp rise in the number of people killed in service delivery protests in the last decade. Most of the South African communities were involved in service delivery protests in order to demand urgent provision of public services they had been promised by the ANC-led government. In the process, arson, vandalism and other criminal activities were also included in the aftermath of the protests (Clark, 2011).

According to Grant (2014), the protests marked an indication that several local municipalities were indeed failing to provide their respective communities with public services which had been promised during the election campaigns, such as water, electricity, housing, sanitation and health services. In this regard, Maromo (2014) reported that the Economic Freedom Fighter (EFF) leader, Julius Malema, had noted that the protesters at Moretele area were burning government buildings due to their frustration. In these circumstances, local municipalities become the victims of poor service delivery protests, as they are the institutions closest to the people (Grant, 2014). According to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996), everyone has the right to basic services. However, having been deprived of this basic right by their respective municipalities, local communities have shown their disagreement by taking part in widespread service delivery protests.

Makhafola (2014) reported, for example, that residents in the Gauteng and North West provinces had vowed to continue protesting against poor service delivery until the government acceded to their demands. By government, the residents are referring to their respective local municipalities. Types of services delivered by local municipalities within the South African context include anything the communities need for their daily existence. Clark (2011) stated that municipalities make up this sphere of government because they are mandated by the constitution to provide basic services such as water, electricity, roads, education, health, etc. to the communities falling within their jurisdiction. Although the kinds of service usually demanded by local communities across South Africa include housing, electricity, sanitation, education, health facilities and water, OECD (2013) stated that these could be extended to include a demand for jobs and political change.

2.2.1 Service delivery defined

Service delivery within the public sector entails that more expenditure should be directed towards client satisfaction and training and skills development programmes, rather than towards paying the salaries of public servants. Service delivery entails that the Public Service Commission (PSC) must concentrate on the development and sustenance of internal human resources management and training capacity. Houldsworth and Jirasinghe (2006) viewed service delivery as a concept that concerns the nature and extent to which organisations, including local municipalities, are capable of enhancing the performance of their respective employees, which is determined by the manner in which they were trained and skilled for the purpose of providing clients with the most quality services they initially demanded. Giguere (2005) pointed out that service delivery is a process which must include two important aspects, namely (1) employees must be trained and skilled in areas where they can adequately and effectively provide clients with good services and products, and (2) skilled employees must provide clients with what they demand for the improvement of their quality of life.

2.2.2 Status of service delivery in South Africa

Although the status of service delivery within South African local municipalities is considered ineffective at present, there are a number of developments which were not available under the previous political dispensation (Coetzee, 2013). Local municipalities were suddenly tasked with increased responsibilities which had not been the case in the past when service delivery was provided only to a small segment of society. The current service delivery within local

municipalities and other governmental institutions is closely associated with skills development, which is contained in legislation specifically promulgated to promote lifelong learning on the part of employees and those individuals who have not yet been absorbed into the labour system (Coetzee, 2013). Skills shortage is a serious challenge experienced daily within South African society. Mayer and Altman (2005) maintained that there is a dire need for the supply of low-, medium- and high-level skills on a large scale as demanded by the current South African economy. The South African economy should be replaced by what is known as a knowledge-intensive economy, an economy that is defined by the nature of employees who are well educated and trained in line with their workplace environment. This indicates that the previous South African apartheid dispensation encouraged the creation of more low-skilled jobs than highly skilled jobs. In this context therefore, Mayer and Altman (2005) argued that there was a great shortage of highly skilled employees in the labour market. This situation led to the South African economy failing to create sufficient jobs to absorb new labour market entrants, which in turn resulted in a high unemployment rate and slow economic growth and development in society.

Improvement of service delivery within South African society requires management of institutions and enterprises, including municipalities, to move from a directive to a more supportive approach in managing performance (Houldsworth & Jirasinghe, 2006). In this context, management should provide support to employees with the necessary education and training which is related to their workplace areas. A skills development process determines improvement of delivery of services and products by these organisations. McGrath (2007) contended that the South African government showed very strong positive strides toward training and skills development issues because much had been implemented so far. Promulgation of the two legislations, namely the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998) and the Skills Development Levies Act, 1999 (Act 9 of 1999), indicated that skills development is taken very serious within Public and Private sector organisations within society. There is therefore a strong political will in government to manage the process of education and training for people at the workplace and those that are currently unemployed. Mayer and Altman (2005) contended that South African organisations need to conduct their management systems according to internationally competitive standards. These standards require that all members of the workforce should have access to education and training for the enhancement of their performance and in the process improve service delivery. Paterson and Du Toit (2005) maintained that the current South African workforce is characterised by racial, gender, occupational and sectoral unevenness in the distribution of skills, employment and training opportunities. Training opportunities are an effective strategy for the development of workers and

redressing the problems associated with the previous dispensation (Fear et al., 2014). This condition is currently being addressed by means of the introduction of affirmative action, employment equity and other legislation, policies and programmes that are being formulated, implemented and evaluated. This shows that the current South African economy is responsive towards the societal and economic needs in that a close relationship has developed between higher education and economic development (Coetzee, 2013).

According to Houldsworth and Jirasinghe (2006), skills development is simply about building human capital and customer loyalty. These are the two most important concepts without which business cannot kick-start and develop. Business cannot operate unless it satisfies a certain class of clients who demand products and services for the improvement of their quality of life. Despite this, society is experiencing what is termed the professional crisis symptom (Mayer & Altman, 2005).

According to Kraak (2005), skills shortage in the professional category is one of the greatest challenges facing government's attempt at improving human resources development in South Africa. This is supported by Coetzee (2013) who stated that to enhance and improve service delivery, highly skilled production and supervisory levels in organisations need to be provided within training and skills development programmes (SDPs). SDPs in the Public and Private Sectors are aimed at the enhancement of performance on the part of the workforce, which ultimately determines the improvement of service delivery. All levels of government organisations, including local municipalities, are expected to educate and train individuals who were previously excluded from occupying highly skilled positions at management, supervisory and operational levels (McGrath & Paterson, 2008). These levels of skills are the cornerstones and main prerequisites for the improvement of service delivery.

It must be recognised that SDPs within local municipalities and other public institutions are an obligation so that organisations that fail to adhere to the promulgations and requirements are defined as non-adherent. Kruss (2004) mentioned that SDPs are an approach aimed at redressing the past inequalities within the South African dispensation. In this context therefore, training and SDPs are aimed at redressing the inequalities that were created by the apartheid dispensation. It is therefore important that these programmes enjoy the support of all community structures within society (Mummenthey, 2010; Ra, Chin, & Liu, 2015.) In this analysis therefore, the most effective structures which can demand the provision of SDPs in the workplace are management, supervisors

and trade unions. McGrath (2007) asserted that South Africans generally utilise the most effective and adequate mouthpieces on the part of civil society and trade unions. These structures are capable of demanding proper and effective access to training and skills development endeavours for individual employees and other members of the public who are unemployed in order to improve their skills base. In this context, therefore, Kraak (2008) mentioned that training and SDPs will be successful only when employers, including the public service, are obliged by collective institutional and regulatory arrangements to value the benefits of a more skilled workforce.

2.2.3 The influence of apartheid on service delivery in South Africa

According to Kraak (2005), even though the apartheid system has been eradicated, the South African economy is still displaying stagnation and decline in certain sectors leading to serious inflation and unemployment. The South African new democratic society requires educated people to occupy and maintain key democratic institutions and to participate in their civic processes (Kraak, 2005). South Africa has a new economy that requires broad, multifunctional capabilities that enable the country to continuously innovate and adapt to rapid changes in the global economy. People need to be trained in their respective functional sectors to equip them with the necessary skills. Mayer and Altman (2005) asserted that the South African economy requires skill-intensive industries and investment in human capital development. The previous South African socio-economic and political dispensation has been identified as the main cause of a high level of unemployment within South African society, due to most individuals not being adequately trained and skilled for effective service delivery (Kotze, 2012).

Kotze (2012) argued that SDPs are aimed at assisting unemployed individuals with employment opportunities within South African society, as unemployment is still a major factor affecting societal economic development. For Kruss (2004), higher education prepares students who are unemployed to create their own jobs and pave their way to become employable in the future. Individuals become employable once they possess certain occupational skills that are on demand in the labour market. SDPs experience numerous problems when unemployed individuals cannot be employed, even after they have actively participated in the programmes. There is still a large number of individuals who have acquired education and training in areas of their choice and have not yet been accommodated in employment opportunities within the South African economy (Kruss, 2004).

2.2.4 Service delivery and the development of social action campaigns

Inadequate services and infrastructure delivery at most local municipalities in South Africa are generally closely associated with lack of skills (Kotze, 2012). In this regard, the Department of Provincial and Local Government [DPLG], (2005) has identified that the lack of adequate skills development in the implementation of its policies and programmes is closely related to poor service delivery in various municipalities. Training and development of municipal officials is a critical priority that could adequately improve service delivery (Patterson, 2008). This is supported by Hoffman (2008) who reported that various South African municipalities are ineffective in the provision of adequate services to their respective communities; this being evidenced by numerous protests which communities engage in in order to demand adequate services and infrastructure delivery in their areas (Municipal IQ Hotspots Monitor, 2014). Hawes and Mohamed (2011) agreed that South Africa has been dogged by continuous service delivery protests.

Poor service delivery is a condition that is against the promises contained within the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996) which, according to Ngcwangu (2014), maintained that the provision of running water, sanitation and health care must be recognised as a fundamental human right. Due to her experience at local government level, this researcher is of the opinion that poor service and infrastructure delivery in most local municipalities is caused by lack of skills needed to build the capacity of municipal employees. This view is supported by Meyer and Coetzer (2010) who argued that local municipalities can provide their respective communities with adequate service delivery if their personnel are well educated and trained in areas of service delivery.

2.2.5 Service delivery and collaboration with stakeholders

Effective and improved service delivery towards communities is determined by a high level of collaboration (Coetzee, 2013). The type of collaboration needed between service delivery and skills development is achieved between management, employees, trade unions and customers within the public sector (Govender & Bisschoff, 2007). Existing training service providers are highly skilled and yet they are not within the influence of government training initiatives (Patterson, 2008). In this regard, close collaboration between management and agencies of training providers, especially the external training providers, must be attained if skills development within the South African context is to be improved.

2.2.6 Service delivery and customer satisfaction

According to Fear et al. (2014), customer satisfaction is a result of adequate and effective service delivery. Internal customers such as employees and external customers such as communities are said to be satisfied once they have received services and products they required from an organisation. Employees who were educated and trained along with this requirement have a high regard for customer satisfaction (Fear et al., 2014). Skills development is a concept which has been introduced within the South African context to push for the upward mobility of the workforce (Meyer & Coetzer, 2010). In this respect, Kirkpatrick (2006) noted that performance of individual employees within organisations, including local municipalities, is rewarded with authority. This authority is a concept which is closely associated with skills development in that it suggests that individuals who are due to be rewarded with authority are those that are educated and trained in areas of satisfying customers with adequate services (Kirkpatrick, 2006). In this regard, Tranter and Percival (2006) stated that performance reviews must be used to identify an employee's strengths, weaknesses and standards of performance, which should lead to further training and development. This is supported by Dean (2002), who stressed that a performance review is a key component of the performance management process and should lead to an improvement in the skills of employees so that they in turn can raise their levels of performance in their areas of operation, and thus enhance customer satisfaction. Performance reviews should as such lead to the motivation and development of individuals and have the potential to enhance employees' self-esteem, sense of purpose and direction (Dean, 2002).

2.3 EDUCATION, TRAINING, SKILLS AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Kruss (2004) argued that the concepts of education, training and skills are important concepts that are closely associated with skills development, as skills development is provided to individuals through education and training. Erasmus, Loedolff, Mda, and Nel (2010) contended that the training and development of employees is a complex issue, as no single stakeholder can be held responsible for this task. Erasmus et al. (2010) reported that education and training could just as well be provided to individuals through a variety of levels, for example studying at a university and/or attendance of workshops. OECD (2013) stated that education and training improve the levels of skills, as skills are transmitted to employees and community members through SDPs.

2.3.1 Education

Higher education for the improvement of service delivery in organisations can be any qualification higher than Grade 12, such as a diploma or degree (Steyn, De Klerk, & Du Plessis, 2011). Kruss (2004) maintained that higher education should broaden and expand its traditional scope to ensure that critical and analytical skills are better focused on and directly relevant to economic needs. Higher education prepares individuals and members of the workforce for thinking analytically and independently, thereby enabling them to make informed decisions (Kruss, 2004). This is supported by Lubbe (2013) who viewed higher education as one which is aimed at preparing individuals for becoming directly employable in new occupational fields, leading toward the effective economic development of society.

The Skills Development Planning Unit (SDPU) in the South African Department of Labour [Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act No 97 of 1998, as amended in 2011)] reported that in the public sector, especially in local municipalities, higher education is aimed at training and skilling employees to excel at service delivery. In South Africa, higher education is usually provided by Universities, Technikons and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges, which prepare graduates with general and specialist technical knowledge for employment (Skills Development Act, No 97 of 1998). In a nutshell, higher education plays a significant role in preparing individuals for work-related tasks and/or employment. Kruss (2004) suggested that higher education should be oriented towards the needs of industry and society and focus on present as well as future creation of knowledge. Once higher education programmes have taken place, individuals are able to perform better in the workplace, so higher education institutions tend to prepare individuals for employability. According to Kruss (2004), the direct employability model denoted and suggested that once individuals are readily skilled, they can enter the labour market without difficulty.

2.3.2 Training

According to Raymond, Bawa, and Dabari (2016), training refers to the process of applying appropriate educational methodology to those situations in which improved performance can result from effective learning. Raymond et al. (2016) added that training policies should be developed which will provide guidelines on the detailed planning of training, by defining the scope and aims

of the training schemes, the basis of the training plans, the procedure for developing formal training schemes, and the methods of evaluating and controlling training.

The concept of training in the public sector as a whole was captured in the White Paper on Public Service Training and Education [WPPSTE] (1997). The WPPSTE (1997) stipulated that its principal aim is to establish a clear vision and policy framework to guide the introduction and implementation of new policies, procedures and legislation. These aimed at transforming public service training and education into a dynamic, needs-based and proactive instrument, capable of playing an integral and strategic part in the processes of building a new public service for a new and democratic society in South Africa. The WPPSTE (1997) was developed to address the three key challenges in the public service training and education environment: (1) The fragmented and uncoordinated approach to training and education across the public service resulting in the absence of resources and accountability for ensuring that public servants are empowered and developed to take on the challenges they face; (2) the lack of a strategic, needs-based, outcomes-based and competency-based approach to Public Sector Training and Education, directly related to the developmental needs of the public service as outlined in the RDP, the WPTPS and other related policy documents; and (3) the inappropriate nature of the training and education that is provided by many in-service and external providers.

From a local government perspective, the South African Local Government Association (SALGA, 2010a) developed a learning framework for local government with the aim of supporting managers and employees in municipalities to address learning in the workplace. The Learning Framework is a model that attempts to frame Personal Development Planning (PDP) in relation to effective learning. Its objective was to ensure that local government aspires to building learning municipalities in which employees acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes from their daily experience, educational influences and resources in their environment (SALGA, 2010a).

SALGA (2010a) stated that the learning framework focuses on learning needs of the employees which should be addressed through management committing to the following principles: (1) the continuous training and development of its employees to achieve its vision, mission and strategic objectives and empower its employees to implement its Integrated Development Plan; (2) manage training and development within the ambit of relevant national policies and legislation; and (3) build a pool of suitably qualified candidates for higher positions at all levels, with particular

reference to groups whose promotion will promote employment equity and address scarce and critical skill shortages.

According to Van der Westhuizen (2007), training is a process through which employees in an organisation are provided with knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to improve the global performance of that organisation and enhance customer satisfaction and leads to a change in skills. In this context therefore, training is the process through which Human Resources (HR) practitioners are able to identify employees' lack of the competencies, knowledge, skills and attitudes required to perform their organisational tasks and projects, and other anomalies with the aim of improving them. Nel, Swanepoel, Kirsten, Erasmus, and Tsabadi (2007) contended that effective training leads to more productive workers and greater personal satisfaction, job enrichment and a feeling among employees that the organisation is interested in their advancement. SDPs are thus not only needed to improve the personal growth of employees within an organisation, but also take external consumers, such as customers, into consideration (Kotze, 2012).

The WPPSTE (1997) further acknowledged that whilst the policy concentrates on the provision of formal training and education opportunities, it nevertheless recognises the key role that can be played by less formal though no less important forms of staff development, especially through on-the-job learning opportunities such as coaching, mentoring, work shadowing, job rotation, job enrichment, and participation in multi-skilled project teams. The WPPSTE (1997) outlined the following anticipated outcomes:

- Strategically linked to broader processes of transformation, institution building and human resources development within the public service;
- Strategically linked to the NQF and SAQA frameworks, as well as to the Department of Labour's proposals for a new Skills Development Strategy;
- Strategically planned and effectively resourced;
- Based on the elevation of the importance and status of training and trainers;
- Effectively organised, coordinated and accredited in ways which promote quality, accountability and cost-effectiveness;
- Flexible and decentralised within national norms and standards;
- Based on broad participation and involvement by all relevant stakeholders;

- Capable of promoting uniform outcomes through a multiplicity of accredited providers;
- Capable of promoting access by all personnel to meaningful training and education opportunities;
- Capable of promoting the empowerment of previously disadvantaged groups;
- Capable of facilitating the development of effective career paths for all public servants;
- Demand-led, needs-based and competency-based; and
- Capable of promoting positive learning outcomes which add value to individual and organisational capacity.
-

For Eneh and Awara (2016), training represented an important aspect of strategic human resources management practice in that it impacts basic skills to new recruits, create positive changes in employees' behaviour and attitude to work. Knowledgeable and highly skilled employees improve organizational productivity and profitability, create competitive advantage, and facilitate growth of an organization. Training as a critical component in the strategic human resource management practice enables organization to achieve optimisational efficiency and effectiveness, and continuous improvement in realizing its set goals (Eneh & Awara, 2016). With training, Eneh and Awara (2016) argued that employees are seen as valued and essential assets and core partners in creating competitive advantage in the organization and they can contribute to organisational decisions and actions that yield the greater and competitive advantage for the organization. The training process must therefore include training needs assessment, development of the training programme material, presenting the training programme, programme evaluation and learner assessment, which is typically managed by an organisation's HR Department, including in municipalities (Skills Development Act, No 97 (1998)).

2.3.3 Skills

According to Swanepoel, Easmus, Van Wyk, and Schenk (2003), skills included knowledge, attributes and attitudes which individuals require to carry out their day-to-day activities effectively for the purpose of ensuring that their customers and clients receive the level of service delivery that they expect. Coetzee (2013) revealed that skills are utilised by management to ensure that their organisations maintain a high level of customer satisfaction. This is supported by Le Roux, Loedolf, Louw, Nel, and Roman (2004), who stated that a high level of skills is required to ensure

a high level of service delivery. In the context of municipalities, skills enable individual employees to provide communities with services and products necessary to improve their livelihood (Kotze, 2012).

At the organisational level, Hayes (2002) argued that in most circumstances managers and leaders lack the necessary skills to deal effectively with organisational change, such as being able to communicate effectively, work with teams, confront employees, negotiate, motivate and manage relationships with others effectively. Anand and Nicholson (2004, p. 10) advised that "the ability to manage change effectively, to bring real benefit to the business is an essential skill for all decision makers". Management skills in areas such as needs analysis, planning, and project management, and soft skills in areas such as interpersonal relations and understanding business cultures are essential to ensure that organisations, including municipalities, function effectively (Anand & Nicholson, 2004).

2.3.4 Different skills addressed by skills development

Coetzee (2013) maintained that there are different forms of skills needed within different organisations for the improvement of services required by their clients, including technical skills and reading, writing and numeracy skills. These skills are also required by people to enable them to access employment, enhance their performance and improve self-growth and professionalism (Coetzee, 2013). According to Kirkpatrick (2006), the following skills are essential for the effective functioning of organisations:

- Core professional skills, which are required from a certain category of individuals who are regulated by their respective professional councils and bodies.
- Specialty skills, which include specific technical or functional skills that ensure that employees remain market-relevant so that they are always able to provide customers with high-quality services. Giguere (2005) suggested that specialty skills are regulated by what they term skilled behaviours, which is defined as a complex sequence of actions which has become so routinised through practice and experience that it is performed without much conscious thinking or deliberation. Patterson (2008) defined these skills as the specific skills that are

related to what people do in their day-to-day activities, such as skills required to perform a certain task within a particular government department.

- Industry skills, which are aimed at improving the business between clients and organisations so that clients are attracted into doing business with these organisations that care about their wants and needs.

2.4 THE CONCEPT OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

2.4.1 Skills development defined

Skills development entails some form of government-led and private sector initiatives for the purpose of raising skills levels in the working population and those entering work within a particular society (Houldsworth & Jirasinghe, 2006). It must be reiterated that within the South African context, skills development is an initiative that is spearheaded by government through its legislation, policies and programmes.

Kirkpatrick (2006) maintained that institutions, organisations and other business enterprises should regard their respective employees as important products without which they cannot achieve their respective business goals and objectives. Kirkpatrick (2006) reported that employees play an important part in every organisation because they are individuals who are capable of driving the vision and mission of organisations. In this arrangement, employees cannot drive the organisation to the desired goals and objectives unless they were adequately educated and trained in their categories of workplace requirements.

Skills development is an employment programme that provides financial assistance to eligible individuals to help them obtain the skills training they need to obtain employment, the most important financial support being in the form of bursaries (OECD, 2013). Bursaries that are obtained by public servants are intended for higher education, such as university level education. Kruss (2004) noted that the contribution to knowledge and economic wellbeing is accomplished at graduate professional level. In the public sector, government employees access bursaries that support their study programmes at universities, colleges, technikons and Further Education and Training (FET) colleges (OECD, 2013). Bursaries and other forms of financial assistance are

necessary to provide public servants and employees with the necessary qualifications related to the delivery and improvement of effective and efficient service delivery.

An SDP is an occupation-based intervention, because once completed it will constitute a credit towards a qualification registered in terms of the National Qualification Framework (NQF) within the South African context (Mummenthey, 2010). An SDP is furthermore training provided by an accredited Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) within the Education and Training Quality Assurance body (ETQA). Mummenthey (2010) pointed out that an SDP must comply with certain prescribed standards for accreditation so that any persons and/or institutions which have developed a skills programme can apply for a grant from a SETA.

Anchoarena and Nozawa (2005) saw an SDP as being a cornerstone for the fulfilment of social and economic integration, as it provides access to training and development by unemployed eligible participants who need to learn additional basic to advanced skills to help them find work. SDPs are currently provided to individuals and communities which were previously marginalised and socio-economically and politically deprived of skills and employment opportunities. According to Kruss (2004), the South African economic sector needs highly skilled workers in order to attract investors and lead the country towards economic growth. Once individuals have been provided with education and training programmes, they will be capable of improving their own self-growth, professional development and global service delivery. In this regard, Kotze (2012) argued that both the Public and Private Sectors play an important role in linking higher education and training and skills development with the job market within a society, as these provide individuals with skills that are required in the workplace (Kruss, 2004).

Skills development is a concept that is service delivery oriented, as Houldworth and Jirasinghe (2006) stated that service delivery to clients can only be conducted when management can adequately and effectively develop and manage the talent of their respective employees. This means that training and skills development are the most important components of service delivery without which the latter cannot be realised (Houldworth & Jirasinghe, 2006). Service delivery, in turn, means providing individuals and communities with the basic needs for improving their quality of life, such as sanitation, electricity, and the rest. In this regard, communities are said to be living in a modest way when they are provided with adequate and effective service delivery by their respective local municipalities (Jagannathan, 2013).

Service delivery is a requirement for globalisation (Mathis & Jackson, 2011). This view is supported by McGrath (2007) who stated that education and training have a strong relationship with the concept of globalisation, which is of course defined by the nature and adequacy of quality services provided to clients. The quantity and quality of existing education and training in a given country determine whether the country's economic make-up can indeed meet the challenges of globalisation which are constrained within the concept of effective and adequate service delivery (McGrath, 2007). This is supported by Fear et al. (2014) who contend that citizens will be assessed according to whether they are provided with the basic needs obtained by others in other areas in the global village. If the citizenry's service providers are adequately trained and educated, they are more likely to act like other nationals who belong to the global community. Houldworth and Jirasinghe (2006) noted that service delivery in the context of globalisation requires high levels of education and training, and in this context, governments are expected to prepare, educate and train their respective nationals according to the requirements of the globalisation process.

2.4.2 The component concepts of skills development

According to Coetzee (2013), skills development can best be defined and described if it is divided into a series of related concepts that can be individually defined and described. This approach is termed conceptualisation, which entails the process through which a theory is divided into a series of concepts that compose it, which are individually defined and described in relation to its development and articulation (Coetzee, 2013). To understand skills development better, its component concepts are named and described below, which will also assist in answering the question as to why skills development is necessary in organisations (Coetzee, 2013).

2.4.2.1 Skills development addresses inequality within society

The first component of skills development is that it can eradicate inequalities in societies that were previously defined by discrimination, deprivation, stigmatisation and other forms of exclusion, such as was the case in South Africa prior to 1994 (Coetzee, 2013). According to Paterson and Du Toit (2005), the previous apartheid regime in South Africa created the skills shortage problem, as occupational and skills inequalities were strongly determined by inequitable access to education and employment opportunities on the basis of race, class and gender. During the apartheid era, education and work opportunities were unequally distributed among racial groups, with Africans being highly marginalised. Horwitz, Browning, Jain, and Steenkamp (2002) noted that in the past

in South African, Blacks were legislatively prohibited from occupying trades and skilled work, as this type of work was categorically reserved for Whites. This is supported by Badroodien (2005) who asserted that Black South Africans never had access to skills development during the apartheid era.

The Skills Development Act, [Act No. 97](#) (1998) and the Skills Development Levies Act, ([Act No. 9](#) of 1999) were promulgated for the purpose of redressing the previous unequal distribution of skills development and employment opportunities in South Africa. Despite this Mayer and Altman (2005) stated that the apartheid legacy continues to act as a brake on the growth and development of the entire South African economy, as discrimination is still experienced in the workplace today. For this reason, Landsberg, Kruger, and Nel (2011) stated that there is an urgent need to reverse the legacy of apartheid within South African society, which they argue can be achieved through the reduction of poverty and inequality and the training and re-skilling of the majority of South African's citizens.

Mayer and Altman (2005) further advised that as South Africa develops as a democratic state, its economy takes the form of a globalised village, and people need to be educated and trained into high-level skills in order for the country's economy to adapt to the challenges and changes that are associated with the concept of globalisation.

According to Coetzee (2013), a skills development intervention is also an effective approach needed for addressing affirmative action, which in the context of skills development is a process specifically intended to uproot the past apartheid system's oppression, deprivation and stigmatisation of certain groupings within the South African society. In this respect, Coetzee (2013) named a few approaches, which were used by the previous apartheid regime to deny certain segments of the population certain rights and freedoms, such as racial and gender classification, geographical segregation, and discrimination against the aged, the disabled and individuals infected with the HIV and AIDS disease. In this respect affirmative action is an effective approach to ensure that previous disadvantaged groups receive the skills needed to obtain employment in both Public and Private sector organisations (Coetzee, 2013). This is supported by Donald, Lazarus, and Lowana (2005), who argued that an effective approach to redress the marginalisation and deprivation experienced by most low-class communities in the past is utilising affirmative action as a vehicle to improve their quality of life. According to the skills development approach, Donald et al. (2005) pointed out that individual employees within organisations must be provided

with education, skills and attitudes in order to enable them to occupy the highest possible levels in organisations which were previously occupied by their White counterparts.

According to Kotze (2012), skills development also addresses the concept of equality, which means that all individuals are equal before the law, and as such must enjoy equal opportunities to access education and training processes to improve their livelihoods. This is supported by Coetzee (2013) who stressed that the concept of equality within the South African context is meant to increase access to high-quality and relevant education and training and skills development opportunities, including workplace learning and experience, to enable effective participation in the economy. Equality therefore calls for all the role players within communities and society to participate in SDPs without fear of marginalisation, deprivation and exclusion in the process (Coetzee, 2013). Equality was promulgated in Section 9 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, (Act No 108 of 1996), which stipulated that everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law. Equality to access opportunities such as those provided by SDPs is therefore one of the cornerstones ascribed by the Constitution.

2.4.2.2 *Skills development is a lifelong learning approach*

The second component of skills development is that it is required to address lifelong learning on the part of participant (Fear et al., 2014). Lifelong learning means that all individuals must be provided with an opportunity to learn as long as they like, without being discriminated against and isolated owing to aspects such as age, gender, educational qualifications, occupational levels, and religious and political affiliations (Fear et al., 2014). This view is supported by Broderick, Mehta-Parekh, and Reid (2003) who reported that every person should be provided with an opportunity to learn and/or to be trained from childhood to adulthood, despite his/her age, sexuality and disability status.

An example of a lifelong SDP is the Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) programme which is aimed at developing the knowledge, skills and attitudes of South Africans in their workplace (Swanepoel, et al., 2003). ABET is closely supported by the following South African government institutions: Department of Labour, Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Welfare, Department of Health, Department of Land Affairs, Department of Water Affairs, Department of Agriculture, Department of Mineral and Energy Affairs, Department of Arts, Culture, Science, and Technology, Department of Correctional Services, South African Police

Services, the Service Corps of the South African National Defence Force, Department of Education, and the Department of Public Works.

Heystek, Nieman, Van Rooyen, Mosoge, and Bipath (2008) emphasised that lifelong learning is a process through which individual clients are taught and trained in respect of the necessary activities and practices needed to improve their own personal growth and the quality of life of the communities within which they exist at large. Broderick et al. (2003) stated that lifelong learning gains support from the entire society in that it addresses the socio-economic imbalances of the past South African dispensation. People, whether they are old, Black or White and from diverse cultural backgrounds and political affiliations, are offered an opportunity to learn and be trained to improve their own livelihoods and those of others (Broderick et al., 2003). The advent of recent technologies which are determined by globalisation entails that everybody should be afforded an opportunity to acquire education, knowledge, skills and attitudes in every area of interaction. This will result in the improvement of the quality of life of all. Robbins, Judge, Odendaal, and Roodt (2016) maintained that lifelong learning is a component of globalisation, which simply means the process through which nations and regions become one global village. The participants in the global village are enabled to interact with each other by means of using the same languages, styles, technology, methodologies and approaches to solve problems experienced in this regard (Mathis & Jackson, 2011).

The component of lifelong learning also suggests that skilled and qualified people in disciplines central to social and economic development still require some form of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for the development of the organisations and the society (Coetzee, 2013). A new trend of skills development is required to improve the nature of service delivery at organisations, businesses and government institutions.

2.4.2.3 *Skills development addresses the shortage of skills*

The third component of skills development is that it addresses the shortage of skills (Coetzee, 2013). Skills are closely related to the concept of competence, meaning that only individuals who were accordingly educated and skilled can make a difference in their own livelihoods and the general service delivery field and practice (Kotze, 2012). Employees who have completed their skills training have a high likelihood of providing their organisations and clients with adequate

services, as these individuals are capable of complying with rules and regulations governing the industries of their organisations (Coetzee, 2013).

Coetzee (2013) described skills as attributes which are related to the economic development of organisations, institutions and other entities, as a skilled and capable workforce that shares in and contributes to the benefits and opportunities of economic expansion is a primary prerequisite for the growth of communities and society in general. Economic expansion is determined by the effectiveness and efficiency of the skills development system in which employees of any organisation provide clients with adequate services needed to sustain their livelihoods (Kotze, 2012).

The most disadvantaged and marginalised sectors as far as skills development is concerned within South African society are rural areas and informal settlements, as these sectors experience a high level of unemployment, poverty and other forms of deprivation, discrimination and exclusion (Fear et al., 2014). As skills are necessary in order to empower these sectors of society, Coetzee (2013) argued that an increased focus on skills for rural development and informal settlements is needed in order to support government's prioritisation of this development. Rural populace requires a variety of skills in order to improve their quality of life because they lack the necessary basic needs such as water, housing, electricity, education, health facilities and safety (Fear et al., 2014). Since the rural sector of South African society is generally farming in nature, the sector must be provided with knowledge, skills and attitudes for the adequate improvement of their living standards in relation to the areas within which they exist (Coetzee, 2013).

According to Fear et al. (2014), SDPs are aimed at the transfer of skills from those who have the knowledge and understanding to those without it. Skills transfer entails that people in the know, such as managers and supervisors, must be able to train and/or send others for the training process (Fear et al., 2014). Secondly, SDPs are aimed at the transformation of South African society in general, a concept that entails that those who have been less educated and trained be adequately connected with the labour market (Coetzee, 2013). The transformation process within South Africa has been particularly slow because of a lack of mobility of the workforce, largely as a result of inadequate training for those already in the labour market, and the transformation process cannot be adequately realised unless serious efforts are made to increase the skills levels of individual employees within organisations (Coetzee, 2013). Thirdly, Lubbe (2013) contended that SDPs should address a concept of whole life weapon, which entails that once individuals have been

adequately educated and skilled, they are capable of running their lives without reliance on others. This type of weapon is required for the improvement of individual employees' development and self-growth, and sustainability of their general livelihoods (Lubbe, 2013).

A final aspect regarding skills is that most organisations in South Africa lack the necessary skills to educate and train their own employees, and this necessitates the use of outsourcing to external service providers and/or external organisations such as TVETs, colleges, technikons and universities (Kotze, 2012).

2.4.2.4 *Skills development is a form of human resources development*

The fourth component of skills development is that it is another form of human resources development (Fear et al., 2014). That is, organisations cannot achieve their goals and objectives unless they have the right human resources necessary to steer them towards this achievement. Organisations must therefore design and implement selection systems that enable them to hire better people who are capable of providing adequate services to their clients (Fear et al., 2014). When employees are not readily educated and trained in line with skills development, they should be provided with the necessary skills to improve this condition.

Newly employed individuals need to be adequately trained in the areas of service delivery and the improvement of the livelihoods of the communities who require services from organisations (Kotze, 2012). HR departments in organisations should use a variety of skills training techniques in order to enhance the knowledge, skills and attitudes of their new employees in relation to attainment of goals and objectives they seek to achieve (Kotze, 2012). An emphasis in this regard is placed on skills training that enables trainees to enter the formal workforce with the necessary attributes to create a difference in the livelihoods of people in general (Coetzee, 2013).

Highly developed, educated and trained human resources address a condition of attrition (Tshabangu, 2013). People who are well cared for and are satisfied with the workplace environment have a less likelihood of resigning and seeking employment elsewhere (Fear et al., 2014). This is supported by Coetzee (2013) who stated that skills development is an approach to develop and improve a workplace's readiness to encourage employees to stay in their original employment capacities as long as possible.

Coetzee (2013) stated that organisations or countries may borrow some knowledge and skills they do not have in order to improve their own, and suggests that like all other countries, South Africa must seek to supplement its particular skills needs from other countries that are regarded as doing well. According to Fear et al. (2014), it is good practice for HR departments to impart skills from other countries, particularly scarce and critical skills needed for economic growth, as such skills obtained from other parts of the world may enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of local HR practices.

2.4.2.5 *Skills development is a cornerstone for leadership development*

A fifth component of skills development is that it is the cornerstone of successful leadership development in organisations (Kotze, 2012). According to leadership development requirements stipulated by Kotze (2012), organisations are expected to address the following aspects when developing leadership skills:

- Leaders should be developed to engage in the processes of developing plans, implementing the plans and monitoring and evaluating the plans.
- Leaders should be developed to utilise a variety of leadership styles that are effective enough to steer a skills development process towards the attainment of goals and objectives.
- Leaders should be developed to respect the demographic, geographic and cultural boundaries from which their followers were drawn.
- Leaders should be developed to take cognisance of the importance of competencies and a culture of high performance.
- Leaders should be developed to create a long-term impact on the organisation's development and success.

According to Kotze (2012), such leadership development is contained within the requirements of the training and skills programmes available in organisations that are regulated by global requirements, rules and regulations.

A sixth component of skills development is that it should seek to improve the economy of communities and organisations (Coetzee, 2013). As the economy of any given society is constrained by a severe lack of skills, a skills development system must be provided in order to address poor economic development conditions (Coetzee, 2013).

Fear et al. (2014) are of the opinion that a lack of skills development systems leads to factors such as inefficiency and waste. This is supported by Kotze (2012), who viewed the absence of coherent strategies in the economic and industrial sectors, compounded by the lack of systematic skills development to support and sustain growth and development, as leads to ineffectiveness and inefficiency. Coetzee (2013) argued that skills development is an effective and efficient approach to direct energy and resources towards the enhancement of the economic fabric of organisations, as economic development is closely associated with skills development.

According to Coetzee (2013), for societies to achieve high levels of economic growth and address the socio-economic challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality, communities must work together to invest in education and training. The failure of business and public organisations to equip their workforce with knowledge and skills to adapt to changes is a serious barrier to economic development (Coetzee, 2013).

Coetzee (2013) stated that trade unions and worker education and training initiatives are able to use the critical networks of organisations to educate individuals in pursuance of the needs that are beneficial to the economic development as a whole. According to the Skills Development Act (1998), SDPs should be applied to all sections of the organisation, including internal and external clients and trade union officials. Coetzee (2013) added that this is a relevant approach towards the development of the economy, as the education and training of different stakeholders such as employees and consumers of services is closely related to the economic element of skills development. For Fear et al. (2014), the economic element of a skills development approach is determined by the process of getting graduates and new entrants to the labour market fully productive and adding economic value in the shortest possible time, as educated and trained staff are capable of utilising available resources as effectively and efficiently as possible.

2.4.2.7 *Skills development is a democratic obligation*

A seventh and last component of skills development is that it addresses education and training in the Public and Private sectors, which is aimed at facilitating the democratic process, social and economic equity, and economic growth in South Africa (Patterson, 2008). According to Patterson (2008), education and training is necessary for the improvement of the socio-economic and political development of society, and skills development coupled with education and training is basically aimed at changing the nature of social, economic and political developments of a society. Patterson (2008) reported that training and skills development is a critical transformation element required during the prioritisation process of effective strategic interventions needed to improve service delivery. On the other hand, Broderick et al. (2003) maintained that improved service delivery is a democratic obligation stipulated within the Constitution, and that Public servants and management require the necessary skills and training in order to improve their drive towards the provision of service delivery to the communities. This is supported by Patterson (2008), who confirmed that a skills development approach within the South African Public and Private sectors is ensured through policy frameworks which were translated from the Constitution (1996), such as the Skills Development Act (1998) and the Skills Development Levies Act (1999).

2.5 THE LEGAL FRAMEWORKS SUPPORTING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

Skills development in South Africa is supported by a legal framework consisting of various laws, strategies and white papers, which are discussed below.

2.5.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, No 108 (1996)

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) is a primary legislative framework from which all other legal frameworks are stipulated and developed and is a basis from which a number of legislations were promulgated from the national and the provincial levels. In relation to skills development, the Constitution (1996) aimed at providing expression and to articulate the significance of human resources development towards the achievement of the required level of service delivery and transformation of South African society. The responsibility of providing all citizens with basic services is constitutionally devolved down from the national to the provincial

and to the local government level, which is the level of government closest to the people (Mitlin, 2000).

The Constitution (1996) supported skills development in South Africa by specifically addressing the aspects of service delivery, the developmental duties of municipalities, and the improvement of the democratic values and principles of citizens who are knowledgeable and skilled enough to develop and drive transformation forward. The Constitution (1996) therefore emphasised a need for the Public sector to provide citizens with basic services that restore their human dignity, rights and justice.

2.5.2 Skills Development Act, No 97 (1998)

The significance of the Skills Development Act (1998) is to ensure that some of the critical objectives of the Constitution (1996) and the White Paper on Transformation of Public Service [WPTPS] (1997) are fulfilled by means of providing public servants with different methods of acquiring education, training and attitudes necessary to improve service delivery in a professional, fair, productive, accountable, needs driven and transparent manner.

The Skills Development Amendment Act, 2011 (Act 26 of 2011) was promulgated with the aim of addressing two main priorities:

- The need to improve the skills and increase productivity to compete successfully in the global economy; and
- The need to reverse apartheid imbalances and to create a more inclusive and cohesive society.

This is supported by OECD (2013), who maintained that the Act forms part of the integrated strategies for advancing the skills of the South African workforce and improving the productive labour force to meet the requirements of the economy. In this regard Fear et al. (2014) stated that South Africa requires highly skilled individuals who are capable of moving from one area of the workplace to the next at their will.

The Act stipulated that education and skills development must be achieved through the establishment of the National Skills Authority (NSA), the National Skills Fund, the development of the levy-grant and the establishment and development of the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). In a nutshell, the Act is a legislative framework which can only be realised if SDPs are implemented emanating from the Skills Development Levies Act (1999), which is concerned with the establishment and funding of the NSA, the SETAs, learnerships and SDPs.

2.5.3 Skills Development Levies Act, No 9 (1999)

The Skills Development Act (1998) made provision for the promulgation of the Skills Development Levies Act (1999). According to Hammond, Strydom, and Mabena (2011), the Skills Development Levies Act (1999) stated that firstly, the most important attribute related to skills development is the establishment of the SETAs and the establishment of its funding structure. Secondly, the Act promulgates the establishment of the NSA, which is responsible for:

- Reporting to the Minister of Labour on the progress made in the implementation of the national skills development strategy;
- Conducting investigations into any matter arising out of the application of the Skills Development Act (1998); and
- Exercising any other powers and performs any other duties conferred or imposed on it by the Act.

In a nutshell, the Skills Development Levies Act (1999) is a legislative framework especially promulgated for the purpose of making possible the implementation of the skills development programmes which fall within the Skills Development Act (1998).

2.5.4 Human Resources Development Strategy, 2008

According to Lubbe (2013), Human Resources Development (HRD) refers to formal and explicit activities, which enhance the ability of all individuals to reach their full potential. Lubbe (2013) stated that by enhancing the skills, knowledge and abilities of individuals, an HRD strategy serves to improve the productivity of people in their areas of work, whether these are in formal or informal settings. According to the Human Resource Development Council of South Africa [HRDCSA] (2008), increased productivity and improvements to the skills base in a country supports economic

development, as well as social development, and an HRD strategy is aimed at connecting individuals with personal growth and professional development.

According to Mathis and Jackson (2011), the HRD strategy (HRDCSA, 2008) was developed to support the transformational agenda of South Africa society. Mathis and Jackson (2011) stated that by enhancing the skills, knowledge and abilities of individuals, HRD served to improve the productivity of people in their areas of work, whether in formal or informal settings. Increased productivity and improvements to the skills base in a country supports economic development, as well as social development, so the South African central national concern is to accelerate development so that there is a match between supply and demand for human resources (Mathis & Jackson, 2011). The HRD strategy is about taking purposeful actions to increase the aggregate levels of skills in the workforce so that we can maximise opportunities for individuals, and thereby benefit society as a whole (HRDCSA, 2008).

2.5.5 White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1997

The WPTPS (1997) is geared towards the improvement of the South African public service, which is seen as a critical component in service delivery affecting the daily livelihoods of citizens. An important and effective mechanism related to the implementation of the WPTPS (1997) is called the Batho Pele principles (people first), which are essential to realise the purpose of this paper.

According to the WPTPS (1997), its main aims are the following:

- To transform and improve the public sector so that service delivery is both
- effective and efficient and can meet the basic needs of all South African citizens.
- To provide a policy framework and a practical implementation strategy for the
- transformation of public sector service delivery.

The WPTPS (1997) stipulated that the transformation of public sector service delivery, including that of local municipalities, must be subjected to the skills development of the public servants who are expected to drive the venture towards an adequate articulation of the purpose, namely improving service delivery as the ultimate goal of the public service transformation programme.

According to Coetzee (2013), the WPTPS (1997) was especially compiled for the purpose of driving South African society towards transformation, as it was directed towards the eradication of the past deprivation, marginalisation and discrimination principles practised by the apartheid dispensation up to 1994. The WPTPS (1997) is an important legislative framework that was promulgated from the Constitution (1996), and it effectively guides the public servants towards providing improved government services to the public. This is supported by Mathis and Jackson (2011) who stated that the introduction of the WPTPS (1997) was based on the need for educated, trained and developed human resources that are capable of dealing with the new delivery expectations and challenges in South Africa.

2.5.6 White Paper on Local Government, 1998

The White Paper on Local Government, 1998 [WPLG] (1998) laid a foundational framework within which a transformational local government has to operate to achieve its objectives. This WPLG (1998) states that developmental local government is local government committed to working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and to improve the quality of their respective lives. The main object of the WPLG (1998) is to encourage local governments to work together with local communities in order to find sustainable ways to meet their needs and improve the quality of their lives.

According to Kotze (2012), the reality in South African cities, towns and rural areas is far from the anticipated ideal, as many South African communities are still divided. This is supported by Ngcwangu (2014), who stated that millions of South Africans lived in dire poverty and are isolated from services and opportunities, as the previous local government system did very little to help those with the greatest needs. However, Ngcwangu (2014) also added that the current transitional system has not yet been able to do much to reverse these long-standing patterns of inequity and unmet human needs.

Broderick et al. (2003) argued that in future, local government must play a central role in representing various South African communities, protecting their fundamental human rights and meeting their basic needs. Local government must focus its efforts and resources on improving the quality of life of all communities, especially those members and groups belonging to communities

that were previously marginalised, excluded and discriminated against, such as women, disabled people and the very poor (Broderick et al., 2003).

2.5.7 The Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, No 32 (2000)

The Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (2000) is a final important legislative framework addressing education and skills development within South Africa. The Act is aimed at transforming South African society by addressing the following aspects at local government level which support skills development in South Africa:

- A municipality must adhere to the core principles, mechanisms and processes that are necessary to enable them to move progressively towards the social and economic upliftment of local communities.
- A municipality must ensure universal access to essential services that are affordable to all through improved service delivery.
- SDPs provided to local municipalities must ensure the improvement of performance management on the part of local municipal employees.
- Role players such as local communities and municipal employees must be involved in deciding who should attend SDPs to ensure an improvement in service delivery.

The Act is therefore an important legal framework that is aimed at ensuring that communities are provided with basic services. Lubbe (2013) reported that local government employees must be provided with the necessary skills to meet the service delivery needs of the local communities. Supporting this the Act stipulated that an effective performance management system is the primary mechanism to monitor, review and improve the implementation of service delivery and other initiatives at local government level.

2.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, service delivery and skills development were discussed. The chapter commenced with a discussion of local government service delivery challenges in South Africa. Thereafter the concept of skills development received attention and the chapter was concluded with a discussion of the legal framework supporting skills development in South Africa.

In the next chapter skills development programmes will be discussed.

CHAPTER 3: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter skills development programmes (SDPs) will be discussed. The chapter will begin by defining SDPs, after which the barriers to SDPs will receive attention. This will be followed by a discussion of suggested strategies to address the barriers to SDPs. The chapter will be concluded with an explanation of the Municipal Skills Development Programme (MSDP) that was evaluated as part of this study.

3.2 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES DEFINED

A Skills Development Programme (SDP) is viewed as a process through which a variety of aspects intended to improve the levels of knowledge, education, skills, training and attitudes are introduced to sectors of the community, including institutions and organisations (Fear et al., 2014). SDPs which are considered important are those that are concerned with education and training to improve the level of service delivery (Landsberg et al., 2011). This is supported by Coetzee (2013), who stated that SDPs that contribute towards the revitalisation of vocational education and training and that are closely related to work-relevant education and training and promote occupationally directed research and innovations, are of utmost importance.

SDPs are especially designed to develop core areas of specialisation and to drive the overall development of communication, general consulting, project management, sales skills and the economic development of organisations, and are thus necessary during the process of vocational guidance and the building of careers (Kotze, 2012). This is supported by Houldsworth and Jirasinghe (2006) who explained that SDPs are avenues through which individual employees within organisations and institutions are provided an opportunity to upgrade their skills to keep pace with continual changes in those enterprises.

According to Kotze (2012), there is a need for more extensive SDPs that improve qualifications, support career-pathing, enable greater flexibility and mobility, and increase productivity within the labour market. An SDP is central to the objectives of skills development which is particularly concerned with supporting the South African government's goals for rural development (Coetzee, 2013). In South Africa, an SDP has been introduced into various local municipalities for the

purpose of improving their employees' knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to provide customers with adequate service delivery (Fear et al., 2014). It must be noted that the concept of customer in this regard includes both internal clients who are the employees of a particular municipality, and the external clients who are the actual consumers of the services provided by the municipalities (Fear et al., 2014). Coetzee (2013) argued that services are in fact all the basic needs that people require for the development, improvement and maintenance of livelihoods, and to achieve this a public service that is skilled and capable of delivering quality service efficiently is required.

South Africa suffers from a critical skills shortage and a high unemployment rate, so SDPs that can address these challenges should be evenly distributed throughout all sectors and communities (Broderick et al., 2003). SDPs should also tackle the serious shortage of skilled workers in major industries that are vital to the African continent's economic growth (Broderick et al., 2003). On the other hand, SDPs also address the problem of unemployment through its job creation ventures, as they provide developmental training to unemployed eligible participants who need to learn additional basic to advanced skills to find work (Mathis & Jackson, 2011).

Fear et al. (2014) stated that SDPs also develop the type of leadership that is necessary to steer the development and maintenance of good governance within organisations, and leadership development and soft skills training is all about providing organisations with the kind of business impact they want. All organisations, including local municipalities in South Africa, want to be seen as providing the communities and clients with the right services they require in order to improve their quality of life (Fear et al., 2014).

Kotze (2012) noted that new entrants to the labour market require strong support from government and the private sector in order to realise their goals and objectives. SDPs are a means of enabling institutions, organisations and companies to conduct training programmes internally and to make training more accessible and affordable to the new entrants to the labour market, while external training could be provided when there is adequate funding to support education and training programmes (Kotze, 2012). Houldsworth and Jirasinghe (2006) explained that SDPs usually led to good business practices in that it satisfied the client and ensured quality products and the continued growth of organisations and communities.

3.3

BARRIERS TO SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

SDPs that are introduced within different organisations and institutions experience a variety of barriers which inhibit their respective free flow and are in fact obstacles that tend to interrupt the effective and efficient formulation, implementation and evaluation of SDPs (Landsberg et al., 2011). Ten barriers that tend to undermine SDPs in organisations will be discussed below.

3.3.1 Organisations and institutions fail to participate in skills development programmes

According to Badroodien (2005), most organisations and institutions in South Africa are not willing to adequately participate in SDPs because they have not as yet designed and implemented programmes in their own situational localities. Badroodien (2005) noted that although some organisations and institutions in the South African economy are actually training workers, most are not yet participating in the levy-grant scheme, some are not claiming back their levies, some are treating the skills levy-grant as a form of tax, and some are not registered because their annual turnover is less than R250 000. The South African legislation and policies related to skills development demand that all organisations and institutions that qualify for participating in an SDP should freely do so before they are coerced and/or penalised (Mummenthey, 2010). The barrier of non-participation or unwillingness to participate in an SDP is closely associated with the slow pace of treating education and training as the most important aspects towards the improvement of service delivery, which is the mind-set inherited from the previous apartheid dispensation which viewed skills development as an unnecessary intervention (Ngcwangu, 2014).

3.3.2 Sector Education and Training Authorities are not supported by organisations and institutions

Paterson (2005) highlighted that the skills development levy-grant scheme (Skills Development Levies Act, 1999) was implemented to provide an incentive for training in the public and private sectors, who are compensated for their participation in a SDP. Although Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) are responsible for administering the levy-grant scheme related to SDPs, only about two-thirds of enterprises are registered with their respective SETA. According to McGrath and Paterson (2008), this lack of support for the SETAs has become an important barrier to the implementation of SDPs. This is supported by Kruss (2004), who stated that SETAs

have a negative or non-existent relationship with the higher education institutions. As SETAs are the main driving force within skills development, their failure to establish positive relationships with the education and training providers such as colleges, technikons, TVET Colleges and universities results in the poor implementation of SDPs (Kruss, 2004).

3.3.3 Ineffective implementation of skills development programmes by the Public Sector

A third barrier to the implementation of SDPs is that the South African Public Sector is still lagging in its education and training mission (Paterson, 2008). As the largest employer of people in South Africa, it could have addressed the skills shortage of a large number of communities but failed to implement the necessary SDPs required to skill their employees (Paterson, 2008). According to Anchoarena and Nozawa (2005), the public service has a serious limitation as far as training and skills development is concerned, as SDPs sponsored by the state are usually scattered and often not well coordinated.

3.3.4 Poor information submitted through Workplace Skills Plans

Another barrier to SDPs is that organisations and institutes have failed to adequately include their training needs in their Workplace Skills Plans (WSPs), which is an instrument designed to collect skills needs in organisations and institutions (Paterson, 2008). The failure to provide the necessary training needs information renders a skills development process inadequate and ineffective and places a burden upon the SETAs who have to manage the process (Paterson, 2008). The Skills Development Act (1998) compels organisations to compile WSPs which are used to compile and consolidate Sector Skills Plans (SSPs) by SETAs for the different economic sectors. The Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority (LGSETA) has been mandated to make possible the implementation of skills development initiatives and interventions that cover the training and development of local municipal workers, the unemployed, traditional leaders, ward councillors with the objective of uplifting communities through basic service delivery, particularly water and sanitation, provision of housing, a clean environment and all the basic human rights which the state is duty-bound to accomplish (Paterson, 2008). Although there has been a high rate of submission of WSPs and SSPs in compliance with the skills development regulations over the last few years, the quality of the plans has not been up to standard (LGSETA, 2013).

3.3.5 Poor implementation of skills development programmes by training providers

A fifth barrier to SDPs is that skills development providers, be they individuals, institutions or agencies, are uncertain of their role in the process and also lack the knowledge and skills essential to the effective implementation of SDPs (Govender & Bisschoff, 2007). The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) of South Africa (2013). The HSRC (2013) maintained that the rigid and highly bureaucratized quality assurance regime adopted by ETQAs units within SETAs has stifled the responsiveness and the innovation of providers with regards to meeting real skills needs, particularly skills needs on the ground with communities. In addition, the skills system itself is not providing the skills needed for either new entrant to the market as well existing employees (HSRC, 2013).

3.3.6 Unavailability of funding to support skills development programmes

Lubbe (2013) noted that most of the community development programmes and their respective projects in South Africa which are part of SDPs fail to achieve the desired aims and objectives due to not being adequately funded (Lubbe, 2013). A reason for this identified by Paterson (2008) is that some governmental institutions and organisations failed to submit their WSPs to their respective SETAs, resulting in the SETAs not being able to release the necessary funds required to implement SDPs. A further problem is that some SETAs do not receive the necessary funds required for administration and implementation costs, making it difficult to manage the skills development process (Landsberg et al., 2011).

3.3.7 Cultural diversity and skills development programmes

South Africa is a culturally diversified society and the diverse educational and training needs of individuals and communities need to be addressed differently (Mummenthey, 2010). The seventh barrier of SDPs is thus that these programmes need to be adapted to address the diverse needs of individuals drawn from different cultures (Lubbe, 2013). People need to be trained to interact effectively with others who are from different cultures, ethnic groupings and countries. In this respect OECD (2013) state that multiculturalism and cultural pluralism involves creating a cohesive society where individuals of all backgrounds interact and participate equally, while maintaining their cultural differences.

Mummenthey (2010) argued that addressing cultural diversity is also a means of addressing the imbalances of the past political dispensation in which only Whites enjoyed participation in SDPs while the majority of Blacks were disenfranchised in the process. As such, Landsberg et al. (2011) stated that denial, resistance, non-participation and failure to support the programmes in this context can be expected.

According to Steyn et al. (2011), the concept of cultural diversity entailed that employees in institutions and organisations must be provided with education and training regardless of their orientations such as race, age, sex, ethnic, religion and political affiliation. The concept of cultural diversity is also closely associated with the development of a leadership style which is capable of establishing and maintaining a values-driven culture that respects the needs of clients as well as the improvement of the organisational functionality (Jagannathan, 2013). On the other hand, the values and culture expected from employees and other role players is one which promotes, protects and fulfils the safety and security of others and their respective human rights in the workplace (Kotze, 2012). In this regard, SDPs are not only geared towards the improvement of knowledge, skills and attitudes of the stakeholders but also requires them to comply with the policies, rules and regulations of organisations.

3.3.8 The effect of unemployment in South Africa on skills development programmes

Trade Economics (2019) pointed out that the South African unemployed figure for the third quarter of 2019 was 6.73 million or 29.1% of the total labour force. According to Trade Economics (2019), the challenge of unemployment is most pressing among young people who constitute approximately 14.67 million young people (or 63.4% of the labour market) between the ages of 15 - 34 and who are not employed. Large numbers of unemployed people have been trained through learnerships, internships, short skills programmes including new venture creation, only to remain unemployed as the skills systems fails to link business skills training with occupational skills or wider assistance that small enterprises need to be established (HSRC, 2013). In this context therefore, many qualified unemployed persons are not suitable for employment in a workplace (SDPU, 2012), and SDPs are necessary to improve the quality of life of educated and less educated individuals.

This is supported by Fear et al. (2014) who state that many youths in South Africa are unemployed because the labour market considers them to lack the necessary skills, so SDPs should adequately address this challenge. According to Kotze (2012), the skills needed include basic numeracy and literacy, artisanal, technical and professional skills, as well as management skills and others that are fundamental to the development and growth of the economy.

3.3.9 The nature of courses offered by higher education institutions and skills development programmes

Higher education institutions have a limitation that was identified by Kruss (2004) who maintained that they do not offer adequate 'soft skills' such as problem solving, communications, entrepreneurship, good citizenship, managerial skills and leadership skills. Kruss (2004) argued that these are the most important skills required for the purpose of improving service delivery in South African communities and the improvement of the quality of life of the general population. Kruss (2004) stated that higher education programmes are not relevant for the development of individual participants in the areas of workplace experiences and operational practices, and that most graduates, upon leaving higher education institutions, are not well prepared with the general and specialised high-level skills required by their labour market. In this context, Kruss (2004) argued that higher education institutions are not in line with SDPs.

3.3.10 The influence of pressure groups on skills development programmes

The last barrier to SDPs is what Mummmenthey (2010) and Ngcwangu (2014) identified as the tendency of pressure groups to interfere with the implementation of these programmes. Giguere (2005) explained that structures such as trade unions, associations and education and training providers are all part of these pressure groups while Reddy (2014) defined pressure groups as some form of institutions established and developed for the purpose of forming social action campaigns to demand proper service delivery from government and its institutions, including local municipalities. According to Giguere (2005), a positive aspect of pressure groups is that they played a major role in influencing the nature of how SDPs are planned, implemented, monitored and evaluated, as they pressurise government institutions, including local municipalities, to provide their respective local communities with adequate, successful and sustainable SDPs.

Although Reddy (2014) is of the view that pressure groups play an important role in certain aspects of the SDPs process, Jagannathan (2013) and Mumenthey (2010) argued that the downside of this involvement is that they have a tendency of interfering with the planning and implementation of SDPs, which is basically the function of management. Reddy (2014) identified four disadvantages of pressure groups regarding SDPs:

- Most pressure groups lack the education, skills and attitudes necessary for the establishment, development and improvement of SDPs.
- Pressure groups tend to be influenced by the ruling political parties. For example,
- the largest South African pressure group, namely the Congress of South African Trade Union (COSATU), is an ANC-led organisation. That is, the demands presented by such types of pressure groups are not necessarily those of the communities and the employees in general, but those of the political party.
- Local democracy is violated by corruption which has become the public service's most troubling problem.
- Most of the pressure group leadership is composed of individuals with a low level of education and inadequate skills, so the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of SDPs in South Africa is controlled by people with limited skills.

3.4 STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE BARRIERS TO SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Landsberg et al. (2011) stated that the improvement of the SDPs process depends on the extent to which the barriers to SDPs can be reduced. The following 10 strategies have been identified that, when implemented, will ensure that the 10 barriers to SDPs identified above will be overcome or eliminated.

3.4.1 Skills development funding

The first strategy to overcome the barriers to SDPs is to ensure that adequate funding for such programmes is received from the relevant SETA. In this regard, Erasmus et al. (2010) stated that a SETA may fund a SDP if the programme complies with the requirements stipulated in the Skills Development Levies Act (1999), which means that many businesses, organisations, local municipalities, and public health and educational institutions are eligible to receive funding for a SDP.

3.4.2 Empowerment and coaching of employees

Secondly, skills development is an essential prerequisite for the improvement of organisational performance, so to ensure that the barriers to the effective implementation of SDPs are overcome, it is important to meet the education and training needs of employees at different levels of organisations (Lubbe, 2013). Skilled employees are defined as empowered employees who have the capacity of taking increasing responsibility for the satisfaction of their personal and professional needs, while empowered employees do not need regular and consistent supervision because they can work without reliance on others (Giguere, 2005). This is supported by Carl (2000) who defined empowerment as a process of development and growth through which individuals go that enables them to make independent decisions and to act autonomously with a view to making a contribution towards the development of their particular environments.

According to Houldsworth and Jirasinghe (2006), the empowerment process of employees is influenced by the level of coaching they receive from their respective supervisors and managers. This is supported by Kirkpatrick (2006) who argued that organisations which encourage a high level of coaching create a culture of high performance among employees, as coaching is an important component of empowerment in that it releases the capacity to self growth and professional development in individuals. Empowered and well-coached employees are self-reliant in nature and are also capable of improving business practice and providing customers with highly qualified services and products (Kirkpatrick, 2006).

3.4.3 Application of good business practices

A third strategy to overcome the barriers to SDPs would be to ensure that good business practices are applied by employees after attending such programmes. Jagannathan (2013) explained that good business practices are aimed at satisfying clients, delivering quality services and ensuring the continual growth of an organisation. This is supported by Houldsworth and Jirasinghe (2006) who stated that good business practices are able to improve profit and ensure growth and operational excellence by organisations, institutions and other related entities. Kirkpatrick (2006) maintained that value is created for an organisation's clients by high performers who produce desired outcomes better than those of its competition and those high performers are only produced through an effective SDP. Houldsworth and Jirasinghe (2006) stressed that there is a strong link between good business practices, organisational performance, client satisfaction and employee skills development. At a government level the White Paper on Public Service Training and Education (WPPSTE) (1997) stated that its vision is based on the belief that any organisation is only as strong as the people who work for it, and in particular on the conviction that training should and must play an integral and strategic part in the processes of building a new public service for a new and democratic society in South Africa.

3.4.4 Improvement of financial management

The barriers to SDPs can also be overcome if the skills development process, in line with the improvement of service delivery, leads to an improvement of financial management in organisations (Fear et al., 2014). According to Paterson (2008), poor service delivery in institutions and organisations is closely associated with poor financial management, and that financial management skills are a major area of training needed in the Public and Private sectors. For example, Paterson (2008) argued that managers in the Public sector in South Africa should all be trained and skilled to evaluate all their activities to ensure that they comply with the Public Finance Management Act, No 1 (1999) [PFMA].

The PFMA (1999) is legislation and a policy framework that is intended for all government institutions, public entities, municipalities and some private companies that function closely with government (De Clercq, 2008). The PFMA (1999) is promulgated for the purposes of regulating financial management in Public Sector institutions, ensuring that all revenues, expenditures, assets and liabilities of institutions are managed efficiently and effectively, and provides for the

responsibilities and accountability of persons entrusted with financial management (Anand & Nicholson, 2004). The PFMA (1999) directs the financial management of organisations and institutions, and in this regard its requirements and regulations are necessary and critical within the concept of SDPs in order to safeguard the use of funds expended by the relevant SETAs, public organisations and public servants (De Clercq, 2008).

3.4.5 Development of information and communication technology skills

A fifth strategy to overcome the barriers to SDPs is to satisfy the high demand for information and communication technology (ICT) skills (Fear et al., 2014). As the South African economy moves towards a globalised economy, there is an increasing need for especially senior managers who are skilled in ICT (Fear et al., 2014). However, according to Paterson (2008), public sector senior management seriously lacked expertise in ICT. This is supported by the LGSETA SSP report that emphasised the fact that there is a huge gap in ICT skills at local government senior management level (LGSETA, 2014). In this regard, SDPs that emphasise ICT training should be directed towards managers at all levels in the Public Sector, starting with senior managers. SDPs could also be improved by including aspects of ICT which have been identified as the most critical and scarce areas within the local government sphere (LGSETA, 2014).

3.4.6 Employment creation in the Public and Private sectors

Kruss (2004) maintained that SDPs will be considered to be successful if they are ultimately able to improve the employability of communities and lead to job creation. In this respect Kruss (2004) argued that SDPs are not always taken seriously, as they tend to fail to provide individuals with an opportunity of being employable in the near future. Kruss (2004) stated that SDPs are essential to develop a highly educated and trained workforce that is equipped for greater occupational mobility and flexible work patterns. This means that SDPs are viewed as a vehicle that must equip and empower employees to perform at their maximum potential which will then lead to adequate service delivery. On the other hand, Mathis and Jackson (2011) noted that as the Public sector is regarded as the most important employer in South Africa, it should support SDPs by employing as many individuals as possible who have completed their SDPs.

3.4.7 Provision of increased financial assistance

According to Mngomezulu, Dhunpath, and Munro (2017), lack of sufficient funding has consistently been cited as a key reason for student academic failure and progression. Financial challenges are a serious barrier that has a negative impact on individuals involved in skills development and students at higher institutions. Although it is acknowledged that South African government adopted parts of legislations and policy frameworks that addressed and supported the funding of skills development initiatives, the interventions had not produced the required results (Chelechele, 2009). In addition, the South African Department of Education introduced various funding schemes aimed at assisting students from underprivileged background to acquire qualifications in institutions of higher learning (Mngomezulu et al., 2017). Due to a lack of financial support towards skills development, the government was unable to fill vacant posts in provincial and national government which in turn led to inefficiencies and ineffectiveness in the functioning of the departments and timely implementation of policies (Chelechele, 2009). The situation is compounded by insufficient financial assistance as Paterson (2008) argued that there are not enough bursaries provided to individuals to study at institutions of higher education such as colleges, technikons and universities. In this regard Kruss (2004) noted that the contribution to knowledge and economic wellbeing of a society is accomplished at the graduate professional level, and that this is the level at which more financial assistance in the form of bursaries are required.

3.4.8 Closer collaboration between organisations and training providers

Another strategic intervention to assist in the reduction of barriers to SDPs is closer collaboration between organisations and the providers of education and training (Engelbrecht & Green, 2011). Govender and Bisschoff (2007) defined a training provider as a body that delivers learning programmes that culminate in specified National Qualifications Framework (NQF) standards or qualifications and manages the assessment thereof. Govender and Bisschoff's (2007) definition implied that these bodies developed the training material, educated and trained individuals, and assessed them on elements of whether they have gained knowledge, skills and attitudes relevant to their workplace or not. Accordingly, a close collaborative relationship must be established and developed between organisations and their respective skills development providers (Govender & Bisschoff, 2007).

3.4.9 Monitoring and evaluation

An effective monitoring and evaluation (M & E) process is an important strategic intervention to reduce the barriers to SDPs, as such a process is focused towards the improvement of the planning and implementation of such programmes (Jagannathan, 2013).

Monitoring is defined by Shapiro (2001) as a systematic collection and analysis of information as the project progresses, and must therefore be viewed as an on-going process that takes place from the very beginning of an SDP. Monitoring is aimed at improving the effectiveness and efficiency of an SDP, as it helps keep the work on track and alerts management when things are going wrong (Shapiro, 2001).

Evaluation on the other hand, entails the comparison of actual programme impacts against strategic plans, and asks the question whether the programme has indeed achieved what it intended to achieve (Shapiro, 2001). This is supported by HSRC (2013) which stated that evaluation looks at the impact of learning programmes and such evaluation must be used to inform better planning and implementation within the skills development system. An evaluation process can thus be used to determine whether SDPs have achieved what they have been planned to achieve in the improvement of the quality of lives of people (Shapiro, 2001). M & E should thus ultimately be used to achieve service delivery targets (HSRC, 2013).

Another effective M & E approach which could be used to improve SDPs is called a joint evaluation, or joint-M & E, which is when public and private managers utilise both insider and outsider evaluators. According to Aubel (2004), the aim of a joint-M & E approach is to provide the most effective M & E process for education and training development programmes.

3.4.10 Involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the skills development process

Stakeholders can be viewed as government, SETAs, associations, communities, institutions, trade unions, employers, who have direct or indirect interest in the delivery of SDPs. According to HSRC (2013), the skills development environment in South Africa required the participation and inclusiveness of everyone to achieve systematic alignment and participation realised by other countries towards achieving strategic skills development objectives. The HSRC (2013) argued that partnerships and arrangements are often required to between and amongst different stakeholders to

drive the skills development agenda in different sectors of economy. This will ensure that the required resources in the form of information, funding, skills, knowledge and expertise will be pulled together from different partners for the purpose of enhancing skills development delivery system.

Anand and Nicholson (2004) noted that every SDP is a nexus set of political and social relationships among those with an association or interest in the programme. In this regard, HSRC (2013) stressed that successful implementation of Vocational Education and Training in South Africa, for example, is dependent on efforts, active participation and involvement of the employers in providing work experience opportunities, as well as customised training for employed people. According to Patterson (2008), government is the most important stakeholder in SDPs, as the Public sector employs nearly one-fifth of the country's workforce. With regard to the need for skills development, the Public Sector is defined by high levels of poor service delivery and as such its HRD must be augmented through education and training so that it can improve the quality of life of communities (Paterson, 2008).

Kruss (2004) identified the following important stakeholders in the skills development process, and argues that SDPs will only be successful when all these stakeholders are adequately involved:

- The Public sector (government);
- The Private sector;
- Professional associations;
- The different SETAs; and
- Training providers.

3.5 THE MUNICIPAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (MSDP)

3.5.1 An overview of the Municipal Skills Development Programme (MSDP)

Radebe (2006) is the first South African scholar who coined the concept of a municipal skills development programme (MSDP) in the literature. This scholar did so while attempted to determine to what extent a MSDP implemented in the City of Johannesburg during the period 2001-2006 improved the livelihoods of informal traders in the city. Radebe (2006) explained that the concept of a MSDP was established during the 2000s in many South African local

municipalities with an initial aim to improve the informal sector, which was then called Small, Medium and Micro enterprises (SMME). Mumenthey (2010) explained that SMME development in South Africa in the early 1990s was defined as a viable programme for those who were marginalised regarding the obtaining of employment and other money generating opportunities. During the 2000s, local municipalities were then expected to skill members of SMMEs which were regarded as a sector which lacked serious and proper knowledge, skills and attitudes to run sustainable businesses (Radebe, 2006). SMMEs were in fact an attempt by local municipalities to organise and finance economic development in all sectors existing within their ambits, including entrepreneurs (Radebe, 2006).

Radebe (2006) explained that the MSDP was an approach which South African local municipalities created to develop the entrepreneurship of their informal traders with the purpose to improve the economic development of all stakeholders, including informal traders, consumers and the management and operations of local governments. Radebe (2006) stated that the MSDP could be simply defined as a programme aimed at educating and skilling community members to empower them to contribute towards economic development so that eventually they are no longer dependent on other people, government grants and other funding resources, but are self-reliant economically and otherwise. Thus, Radebe (2006) argued that the MSDP was an attempt by local municipalities to provide communities and their respective employees with education, skills and attitudes to improve their livelihoods. In this respect, Radebe (2006) found that informal traders and the communities around Johannesburg who were exposed to the MSDP were more empowered than those who were not exposed to the programme.

Landsberg et al. (2011) explained that the MSDP was set up to address the challenges facing local government, such as poor service delivery. In terms of the State of Local Government in South Africa Report compiled by SALGA (2010b), there is a critical need for improved capacity and skills for both councillors and municipal officials, especially in technical, management and leadership skills. According to this report, municipalities have poor skills base, a lack of committed training and skills development, and a lack of career pathing which hampers the effectiveness of service delivery (SALGA, 2010b). Reddy (2014) maintained that the MSDP is an aspect that is closely associated with the attribute of capacity building and development. That is, capacity development goes hand in glove with the necessity to educate and skill local communities for the purpose of developing their self-reliance, self development and the global improvement of their respective living standards. Reddy (2014) further explained that the MSDP

is planned, implemented and evaluated within the jurisdictions of local municipalities, whereas SDPs are relevant to the full spectrum of socioeconomic development across the whole of society.

Meyer and Coetzer (2010) stated that whereas the concept of a MSDP was only introduced in the early 2000s in South Africa, the programme is currently extended to many different local municipalities. This shows that the MSDP is being conducted and will continue to be conducted within South African local municipalities in future (Meyer & Coetzer, 2010). Thus, the MSDP was officially launched in 2010 as a formidable public-private partnership which consisted of an ambitious set of programmes to reduce South Africa's service delivery backlog by injecting skilled graduates and high-level training initiatives directly into local government (Meyer & Coetzer, 2010). It was determined that MSDPs would be the most effective intervention in the improvement of service delivery, fighting corruption, enhancement of public financial management, and many more (Meyer & Coetzer, 2010). According to Reddy (2014), if the MSDP is successful it would result in most local municipalities enhancing their reputation with respective communities because of their improvement of service delivery. This would also lead to improved local development, which is one of the main reasons for establishing local municipalities within the ambits of the local government sphere of operation (Reddy, 2014).

Radebe (2006) argued that every local municipality in South Africa wanted to be seen as providing adequate and effective service delivery towards its respective communities, and such a reputation is the main frame of reference sought throughout the whole of society. However, Radebe (2006) noted that this reputation was tarnished by a series of challenges, such as lack of funding, lack of education, the inadequate skills of municipal managers and their respective followers, and lack of political will on the part of policy-makers. Radebe (2006) further indicated that municipalities were expected to provide the informal sector with adequate and quality services to improve its livelihood and economic development. In this respect Meyer and Coetzer (2010) argued that the MSDP is an area in which municipal managers, supervisors and the operational staff must be highly equipped in categories of education and skills development in order to provide informal traders and community consumers with adequate and quality services. For municipalities to function optimally, they quires the efficient development and management of their human resources which will intern translate to effective and efficient service delivery (Cloete, Eigelaar-Meets, Fortune, & Sewell, 2017).

According to McGrath and Paterson (2008), skills development and education and training programmes, which are elements contained within the MSDP, have the capacity to enable participants and recipients to obtain a high level of knowledge, skills and attitudes in areas of decision making, planning, and M & E. McGrath and Paterson (2008) noted that empowered and skilled community members are those that are defined as capable of taking charge of their own improvement of livelihoods without reliance on others. In this instance therefore, the MSDP is a type of SDP aimed at capacitating communities and other consumers of municipal services with education and skills they can apply in their daily living and operations (McGrath & Paterson, 2008).

Mathis and Jackson (2011) noted that the MSDP currently purports to educate and train the unemployed and retrenched graduates as well as municipal managers with the ICT skills required to support local government in services and infrastructure delivery. That is, the MSDP developed from a level where it was initially regarded as a basic intervention required to improve the livelihoods of informal traders within the Johannesburg area, to a higher-level intervention where it now became part of the SDPs of municipalities throughout South Africa (Mathis & Jackson, 2011). This is supported by Houldsworth and Jirasinghe (2006), who maintained that an important aspect of the MSDP is that it is aimed at employee education and training which attempts to specifically benefit local governments in higher level areas of management, supervision and operations, which are all relevant for adequate and effective service delivery. According to Houldsworth and Jirasinghe (2006), the skilling of senior officials and managers in South African municipalities is critical to ensure adequate and effective service delivery to communities.

The MSDP also has an important element of addressing unique changes that challenge service delivery within various local municipalities in South Africa (Tshabangu, 2013). This is due to the fact that the different local municipalities in South Africa are not similar and equal in nature. A presentation by the LGSETA (2009) mentioned that the level and concentration of skills required differ according to the type of municipality and its functions, the location of the municipality, and the nature of the community it serves. In these circumstances, therefore, the MSDP should be aligned with and regulated according to the local municipality's needs, the challenges they face, the nature of the communities they serve, and the availability of resources needed for the implementation of SDPs (Landsberg et al., 2011).

Another MSDP intervention which is aimed at addressing the skills shortage of local municipality employees is the student-to-government (S2G) approach (Landsberg et al., 2011). The S2G approach is a form of learnership and mentoring programme provided to students at recognised South African colleges and universities who are supervised and mentored in the management, processes and operations of local government functionalities (Landsberg et al., 2011). In this type of MSDP intervention, students may be paid a specific stipend while they initially gain a high level of expertise in proper delivery of the services needed by local municipalities, and they can then contribute to the high level of skills needed by local municipal managers, supervisors and operational staff in their attempt to improve service delivery in their respective occupational areas (Landsberg et al., 2011).

The MSDP also provided senior municipal managers, supervisors and their respective operational staff with competencies aimed at improving their understanding of the utilisation of ICT (McGrawth & Paterson, 2008). Meyer and Coetzer (2010) contended that ICT is an important approach to the improvement of service delivery in local municipalities because it provides a platform for municipalities to share challenges, strategic interventions and the management of challenges experienced by others in the international sphere.

In summary, according to Bartik (1991), Coetzee (2013), Giguere (2005), Hawes and Mohamed (2011), McGrawth and Paterson (2008), Meyer and Coetzer (2010), Radebe (2006), and Reddy (2014), the main goal of the MSDP would be realised once the following objectives have been achieved:

- An improvement in the quality of life, both of the informal traders and their respective communities within a common local municipal area. A quality of life is that type of livelihood that is enjoyed by people within communities which are not denied adequate and effective services such as education, health, water, electricity, sanitation, and so on. Also, a quality of life is achieved once communities within a specific society become satisfied in the areas of service delivery supplied by their respective local municipalities.
- Individuals and communities at large are provided with job opportunities so that unemployment can be reduced at especially local government level.

- Informal traders and communities at large are provided with adequate infrastructure aimed at the improvement of economic growth and development. Economic growth in successful and sustained community development programmes is closely associated with a high level of development in general. As economic development is one of the key drivers to growth and development, there cannot be sustainable development in local municipalities unless the local municipalities are able to raise economic growth within their jurisdictions.
- Local municipalities educate and train their employees so that service delivery to all stakeholders is improved. In this respect education and training is seen as the main strategic intervention to improve the low level of service delivery currently experienced in South African municipalities.
- Local economic development (LED) is promoted. LED is defined as the combination of a variety of programmes that are planned, implemented, monitored and evaluated by a particular local municipality in order to affect growth for an entire small economic region. LED is also defined as an integral part of local municipality and community development which is levelled towards job creation and poverty alleviation.

3.5.2 The District Municipality in the current study and its main economic activities

The DM which is the focus of the current study is situated in the Free State Province of South Africa and is comprised of five LMs with a population of 627 626 people, constituting 22,8% of the entire Free State population (Census, 2011). Currently the main economic activities in this DM are mining and agriculture (SALGA, 2010b). The economic development of the five LMs in the DM is dependent on the involvement of communities in developing quality improvements in their respective areas (Mathoho, 2015). According to Mathoho (2015), the last 10 years has seen an economic downturn within the gold mining industry in the applicable DM and most of the retrenched labourers, mainly unskilled, remained in the region, adding to the social problems associated with the declining economic conditions. This is supported by the DMs Integrated Development Plan [IDP] (2014), which stated that the DM is currently experiencing high level of unemployment due to retrenchments and restructuring in the mining industry.

3.5.3 Skills needed at the local municipalities within the DM

Local municipalities in South Africa, including those within the DM in this study, are measured according to the degree which they improve the livelihoods of communities and the level of service delivery that they provide (Clark, 2011). IDASA (2010) stated that local municipalities needed to discharge a high level of responsibility, which included effectiveness, efficiency, accountability and good governance. On the other hand, Mathoho (2015) contended that the performance of local municipalities is linked to skills, the reduction of corruption, limited political interference, and strong political will, augmented by the availability of resources to fulfil their goals. Mathoho (2015) maintained that local governments are the first door that people knock on when they need assistance from government, and that people need to be directly involved in planning, shaping, evaluating and improving their own livelihoods.

According to SALGA (2015), the MSDP needed to be provided to all occupational levels at local municipalities of the DM to increase the economic viability of the region, as well as to establish a stronger business presence in the previously disadvantaged areas to stimulate economic activity. This is supported by the DM's IDP (2014), which stated that the DM is committed to supporting the establishment and implementation of the MSDs and the provision of bursaries to indigent students so that they can attend tertiary institutions. In addition, deserving students in the DM will be provided with experiential training in pursuit of post-matric qualifications in the areas of mining and ICT.

The IDP (2014) also indicated that employees of the DM will be provided with financial assistance to upgrade their skills and further their qualifications. The DM's Workplace Skills Plan [WSP] (2013), in their submission to the LGSETA, further indicated that the following skills are required to increase service delivery to local communities:

- Finance skills, especially accounting and auditing skills.
- Environmental practice skills.
- Security services skills.
- ICT skills.
- Social service skills.
- Organisational risk management skills.
- HRM and organisational development skills.

- Community liaison skills.
- Civil engineering skills.

3.5.4 Level of service delivery at the DM

Although the level of service delivery at the DM which is the focus of this study is not evenly distributed in all its local municipalities, as some are more successful than others, Census (2011) provided the figures indicated in Table 3.1 below for the entire DM. According to Table 3.1, the DM is one of those in South Africa which is constantly improving its provision of basic services to its local communities.

This is supported by the DM Annual Report 2013/14 (2014) and by the IDP Review for 2016/2017 (2017), which indicated that service delivery performance in the water, waste water (sanitation), electricity, waste management and housing services improved during the 2013/2014, 2014/2015 and 2016/2017 financial years in the DM.

Table 3.1:

Service Delivery in the DM: Percentage of the Population Having Access to Basic Services over the Period 1996 - 2011 (Census, 2011)

Service	1996	2011	Improvement
Piped water	65.7%	86.7%	21%
Electricity usage	61.6%	91.4%	29.8%
Access to flush toilets	53.9%	79.2%	25.3%
Use of pit toilets	10.5%	9.9%	0.6%
Refuse removal	70.5%	81.8%	11.3%

A second measurement of the effectiveness of service delivery in South African municipalities is the number of community protests experienced every year, as these protests usually correlate with complaints regarding the lack of accountability of government officials, accusations of corruption, complaints regarding the absence of public participation and incidents of poor service delivery (Karamoko & Jain, 2011; Municipal IQ Hotspots Monitor, 2014). According to Karamoko and Jain (2011), due to the fact that certain LMs in the DM which is the focus of this study failed to provide their respective communities with adequate and quality service delivery, social action

campaigns such as community protests were experienced. However, according to SALGA (2015b), the Free State Province, in which the DM is situated, experienced the least number of service delivery protests during the financial years 2010-2013 compared to various other provinces in South Africa. This comparison is given in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2:

A Comparison of the Number of Service Delivery Protests in the Free State, Gauteng, Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Eastern Cape Provinces in South Africa over the Period 2010–2013 (SALGA, 2015)

Provinces	Year and the number of community protests as percentages of total protests in South Africa			
	2010	2011	2012	2013
Free State	10.5%	10.70%	10.5%	10.05%
Gauteng	20.20%	20.30%	15.70%	20.50%
Kwa- Zulu Natal	15.90%	20.20%	20.10%	20.10%
Eastern Cape	10.10%	10.10%	10.30%	10.70%

A third measurement of successful service delivery by municipalities towards their local communities is the attainment of clean audits (SALGA, 2015). Clean audits, or unqualified audit opinions, mean that financial statements presented a fair and accurate financial picture of an organisation and that the organisation complied with generally accepted accounting principles (Henderson, 2017). According to the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, No. 56 (2003), municipalities should improve financial oversight, obtain clean audits, and put in place functioning performance management systems. The Act (2003) states that problems related to adverse audit findings are a result of poor or non-existent administrative systems in municipalities, while Fear et al. (2014) argued that financial management systems in municipalities can only be improved if employees involved with finances are appropriately skilled to do their jobs effectively. Regarding clean audits, The Weekly Newspaper (Editorial, 2015) reported that only one of the five local municipalities within the DM in this study required the assistance of teams provided by the Free State Provincial Government to improve its clean audit status, and that there had also been an improvement in the financial statements of all five LMs.

3.5.5 The relationship between the MSDP and the current level of service delivery at the DM

From the previous discussion it is obvious that the DM which is the focus of this study has invested a considerable amount of time and money over the last 10 years in implementing the MSDP in its five LMs to improve service delivery. The DM experienced a minimal of service delivery protests compared to other provinces in South Africa over the last few years (SALGA, 2015), improved the quality of its financial reporting over the last 5 years (Editorial, 2015), and has been constantly improving its service delivery to local communities over the last seven years (Census, 2011; DM Annual Report 2013/14, 2014; IDP Review for 2016/2017, 2017). The question is: “Was the MSDP successful in improving service delivery in the DM and its five LMs?”. This question will be investigated by means of an empirical study which will be reported on in the chapters that follow.

3.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, skills development programmes (SDPs) were discussed. The chapter began by defining SDPs, after which the barriers to SDPs received attention. This was followed by a discussion of suggested strategies to address the barriers to SDPs. The chapter was concluded with an explanation of the Municipal Skills Development Programme (MSDP) that was evaluated as part of this study.

In the next chapter the research methodology and research design for the study will be discussed.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the research methodology will be discussed. The discussion will include the research design, the research approach, and the research method. As part of the research method, the research setting and procedure, the population and sample, data collection methods, and data analysis will be discussed. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of the quality of the qualitative and quantitative data and ethical considerations.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Gray (2014), a research design can be viewed as a detailed plan which researchers implement to pursue their research projects and includes all the necessary elements which are prerequisites for the successful implementation of a research project are. Kumar (2011) stated that a research design must be viewed as a strategic plan for a research project which sets out the broad structures and features of the research study. Like any plan, the research design is used for the purpose of outlining the elements and the execution of certain tasks and activities before they are actually made possible or implemented (Kumar, 2011). In support of the view, Kerlinger and Lee (2000), explained that a research design is the plan and structure of investigation, conceived to obtain answers to research questions. The plan is the overall scheme or programme of the research. It is obvious that researchers cannot adequately pursue their research projects without having firstly developed the plans, contained in their research design.

4.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

A mixed-methods research approach was utilised for this study, with both qualitative and quantitative methodologies being used (Creswell, 2014).

4.3.1 Qualitative research approach

Bowie and Bronte-Tinkew (2008) defined qualitative research as a method which is mostly applied in studies which investigate new phenomena in that it relies heavily upon what the research participants have to say about their experiences of such phenomena. This is supported by Creswell

(2014) who argued that qualitative methods refer to research in which information generally is collected in non-numerical form which may provide deeper understanding about how participants feel and generally focus more on what happened than on whether particular goals were achieved.

Nassar-McMillan and Borders (2002) were of the view that qualitative research is able to identify and describe the complexity of social problems, identify the anticipated outcomes of policies and programmes and identify how policies and programmes are impaired as they are implemented at various levels. Adding to this argument, Cohen et al. (2007) maintained that in qualitative research, researchers often need to apply innovative approaches to gather initial data, especially when little information on a specific topic of interest is known.

A qualitative research approach was necessary in this study because it provided the research participants with an opportunity to explain in detail how they experienced the Municipal Skills Development Programme (MSDP) and its influence on the improvement of service delivery within their District Municipality (DM).

4.3.2 Quantitative research approach

According to Cohen et al. (2007), quantitative research is when the study data are collected as numbers, percentages and scales that can easily be manipulated and analysed. Cohen et al. (2007) asserted that for quantitative data, a precise sample number can be calculated according to the level of accuracy and the level of probability that the researcher requires in their work. Researchers can then report in their study the rationale and the basis of their research decisions. Black (2002), contended that initially a researcher must organise raw data into some meaningful form, and this data often consists of a large collection of numbers, such as scores on a test or on a measuring instrument. Quantitative research thus gathers data in a numerical form which can be put into categories, or in rank order, or measured in units of measurement to describe the characteristics of the phenomenon under investigation. This type of data can be used to construct graphs and tables of raw data (McLeod, 2017).

A quantitative research approach was relevant in this study because it provided the research participants with an opportunity to rate the effectiveness of the MSDP in improving service delivery in the DM. These ratings could then be expressed as numbers, percentages and scales which could be presented in the form of tables and graphs, and these visual representations made it easier

to interpret and understand the ratings of managers regarding the effectiveness of the MSDP. This approach is supported by Creswell (2014) who advised that a researcher should use quantitative research if the research problem requires the measurement of variables to assess the impact of these variables on an outcome, tests theories or broad explanations and applies results to many people.

4.3.3 Mixed-methods research approach

Creswell (2014) defined mixed-methods research as both a method and a methodology that focuses on conducting research that involves collecting, analysing and integrating quantitative and qualitative research in a single study or a longitudinal program of inquiry. Wium and Louw (2018) argued that the purpose of this form of research is that both qualitative and quantitative research, in combination, provides a better understanding of a research problem or issue than either research approach alone.

Creswell (2014) stated that researchers mix both qualitative and quantitative data to integrate the two fundamental ways of thinking about social phenomena. According to Fielding (2012) research studies are classified as fully mixed-methods once their designs are found to be applying the restrictive requirements of both quantitative and qualitative research requirements.

For Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner (2007), mixed-methods research employs rigorous quantitative research assessing the magnitude and frequency of constructs and rigorous qualitative research exploring the meaning and understanding of constructs. Johnson et al. (2007) stated that it utilises multiple methods of collecting data, intentionally integrates or combines these methods to draw on the strengths of each and framing the investigation within philosophical and theoretical positions. In this respect Polit and Beck (2010) argued that mixed-methods research maximises the strengths and reduces the limitations of single methods. Researchers, therefore mix both the qualitative and quantitative data to integrate the two fundamental ways of thinking about social phenomena (Polit & Beck, 2010).

Creswell (2014) added that mixed-methods research is needed because while each main method gives a partial picture of the social phenomenon under investigation, mixed-methods provides in-depth information of the phenomenon from multiple sources, such as interviews and questionnaires. Dang (2015) noted that the researcher could apply a mixed-methods approach by

using individual interviews as well as a survey questionnaire. This is supported by Fielding (2012), who argued that mixed-methods research potentially offers an in-depth qualitative understanding of a social phenomenon which is augmented by some additional quantitative techniques. Thus, individual interviews may be utilised to gather the qualitative data while survey questionnaire can be utilised to gather quantitative data in a single study. This is supported by Dang (2015) who stated that the use of mixed-methods research is particularly aimed at overcoming the limitations each of the two data collection approaches on their own might have on the study.

The concurrent embedded mixed-method research strategy, one of six propagated by Creswell (2009), was considered most appropriate for this study, as it uses one data collection phase during which both qualitative and quantitative data are simultaneously but independently collected and treats both qualitative and quantitative research data gathered on an equal basis in order to obtain a complete picture of a phenomenon under investigation. Creswell (2009) noted this aspect of equality when he stated that the collected data within a concurrent embedded strategy may not be compared but reside side-by-side as two different pictures for the assessment of a single phenomenon of interest. In the current study the need was to investigate the subjective experiences of managers who had attended the MSDP as well as the objective, rated perceptions of managers who had attended the MSDP. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) of the MSDP and whether it was considered to be successful in improving service delivery in the DM. By adopting a mixed-methods approach the limitations of interviews could be augmented by the strengths of questionnaire results (Creswell, 2014), resulting in an overall assessment of the effectiveness of the MSDP. This strategy is depicted in Figure 4.1 below.

According to Creswell (2009), a concurrent embedded strategy provided social science researchers with a series of advantages. Some of these advantages include firstly, the possibility of researchers to conduct different research methods such as interviews and questionnaire in a single phase of the research project; secondly, the researchers can measure different variables at various levels simultaneously; and thirdly, researchers can collect a large amount of data within a very short space of time. Creswell (2009) maintained that a concurrent embedded strategy is more feasible where researchers lack sufficient resources such as needed to support their execution of the research projects, for example, transportation, time, office space, machinery, stationery and others. However, Creswell (2009) also noted a limitation of this strategy is that it prescribes a competition between the qualitative and quantitative data collection methodologies and could fail to prevent one method from dominating the other. In the current study this limitation will be mitigated by

ensuring that the data obtained from the interviews and survey will be given equal importance and attention and that the weight given to each set of data will be the same.

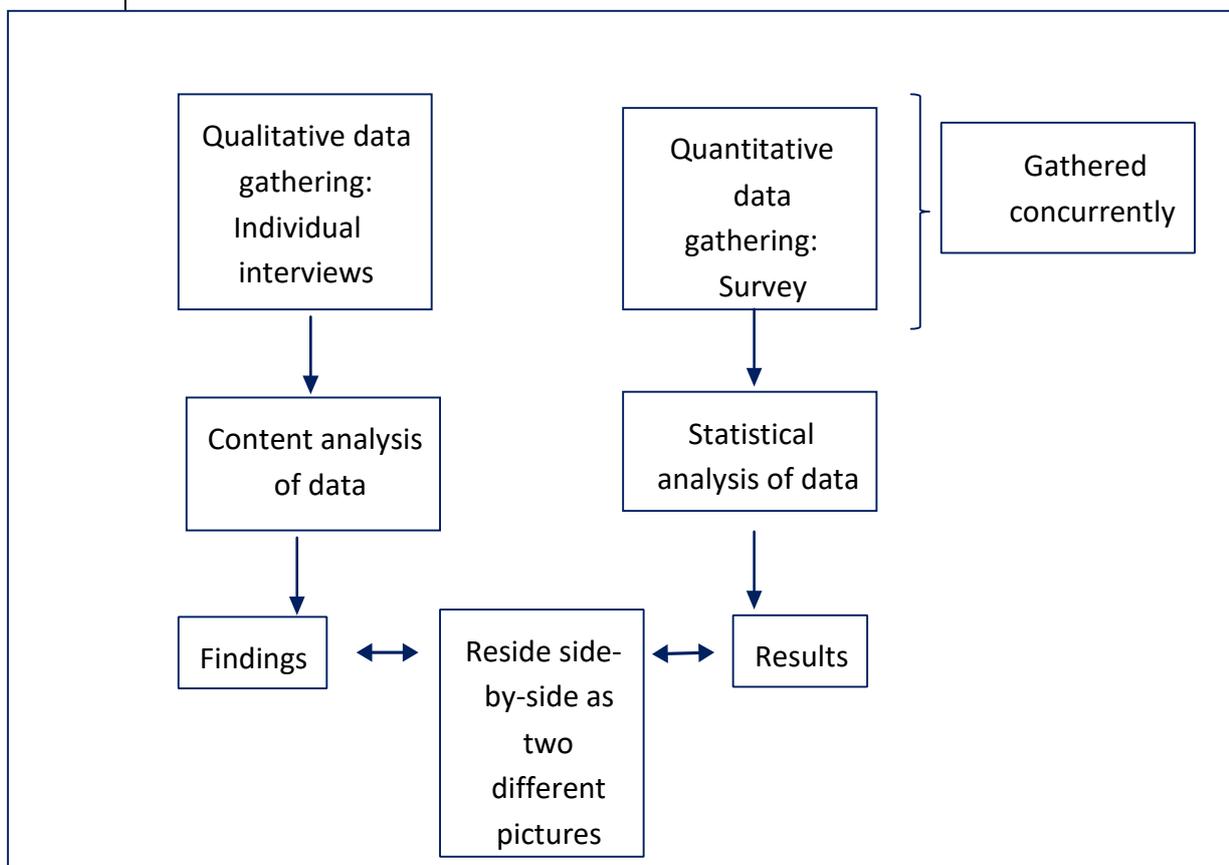


Figure 4.1: A visual exposition of the concurrent embedded mixed-methods strategy
(Compiled by the author and based on Creswell, 2009)

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4.4 RESEARCH METHOD

4.4.1 Research strategy

4.4.1.1 Qualitative research strategy

The qualitative strategy of inquiry that was used in this study was a case study, which Creswell (2014) explained is a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in depth a programme, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals. Creswell (2014) argued that a case study is conducted at an individualised site that features the characteristics representative of other members of the sample, and utilises the statements, remarks, beliefs and opinions suggested by the participants in order to generalise the research findings to the entire population. A case study approach was thus considered to be appropriate for the qualitative part of this study as it provided an in-depth exploration of the effectiveness of the MSDP and was used at a specific DM which was considered to be representative of other DMs throughout South Africa.

4.4.1.2 Quantitative research strategy

The quantitative part of this study utilised a survey, non-experimental research strategy of inquiry, which according to Partidar (2013) is needed when conducting studies that do not require experimental approaches and settings. Bonds-Raacke and Raacke (2014), argued that non-experimental research does not rely on manipulation of variables; rather, it makes observations about how variables are related to one another and describe the findings. Partidar (2013) further argued that non-experimental research such as surveys typically are used to measure phenomena that are difficult to observe directly and are also useful when the perceptions of a group are relevant, regardless of the accuracy of the perceptions. Survey research, in turn, is described by Bonds-Raacke and Raacke (2014) as a research methodology where questionnaires are designed to obtain information from a large number of respondents regarding behaviours, attitudes, perceptions, or opinions of respondents about a social phenomenon. A survey, non-experimental research design was considered appropriate for the quantitative part of the study as the perceptions and opinions of

a large number of managers regarding the effectiveness of the MSDP had to be assessed and analysed.

4.4.2 Research setting

South Africa is divided into 283 municipalities, based on three legal categories, namely 8 densely populated Metropolitan Municipalities, 44 DMs and 231 LMs (Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998). This research was conducted in one of the 44 DMs which has five LMs within its area of jurisdiction. The main function of the DM is to coordinate the delivery of municipal services to inhabitants between the five local municipalities.

According to Gray (2014), a research setting is a concept which addresses the three most important aspects within social science research as follows:

- Participants in the study should be researched in their natural settings. This is supported by Kumar (2011) who stated that when the data collection process is conducted in natural areas, participants are encouraged to provide research studies with a large amount of reliable and relevant information. Natural settings in which research is carried out in the form of interviews are perhaps the most utilised areas of research (Creswell, 2014), and included areas such as a workplace, service provision outlets and family households.
- Every research project should be beneficial to the organisation. Individuals who have the power or influence to grant or refuse access to a field or research setting, also referred to as gatekeepers, usually become interested in participating in research studies that would provide them and the communities within which they exist with development and the improvement of the livelihoods (Kumar, 2011). Most social science research is aimed at the effective development, improvement and maintenance of the people's lives, including adequate service delivery.
- The research setting should be established and developed in such a manner that it does not violate ethical considerations. The researchers must alleviate any adverse effects of the research, such as by reassuring participants whose self-

esteem may have been threatened by the research procedures (Kumar, 2011). On the other hand, Creswell (2014) contended that the central ethical issue surrounding data collection through interviews is that participants should not be harmed or damaged in any way by the research. This entails that researchers should immediately abandon their data collection processes if they find that the participants are becoming anxious or upset during interview sessions.

Boyce and Neale (2006) emphasised that a research setting should also ensure that participants are at ease during the interview sessions, which works better when researchers and interviewees are provided with an excluded area where they can quietly discuss an event or explore some aspects experienced by the latter. In a research setting such as this, both parties can concentrate on the matter at hand, communicate and respond to each other in a most profound manner (Boyce & Neale, 2006).

To comply with the above-mentioned requirements, the individual interviews in this study were conducted at the interviewees' work places at each of the five local municipalities in the DM, and participants were interviewed in excluded areas such as boardrooms provided by each local municipality. The structured self-administered questionnaires were distributed for completion by participants in the same five local municipalities in the DM.

4.4.3 Entrée and establishing researcher roles

The researcher is a public servant employed by National Department of Labour in the skills development unit based in a local office situated in the DM. The researcher's work responsibility entails working closely with other government departments, institutions and public entities including the 5 LM within the DM. As the researcher is well known to the management teams and employees of the DM and its five LMs, permission to conduct this research was easily obtained while the data-gathering process was facilitated by this positive working relationship.

4.4.4 Research procedure

In order to conduct the research, permission was firstly obtained from the Management Team of the DM and then from the Management Teams of the five LMs within the DM. After this was

granted, the researcher requested ethical clearance to conduct the study and it was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the University of South Africa, after which the study commenced.

4.4.4.1 Qualitative procedure: Conducting the interviews

Each of the five LMs was requested to identify two managers who had attended the MSDP, and who were willing to participate in the study. Dates and time slots for each interview and boardrooms in which to conduct the interviews were also requested. On the scheduled dates and times, the researcher visited the applicable local municipality and interviewed the identified participants individually in the pre-arranged boardrooms. At the start of each interview the researcher introduced the research study to the participant, clarified expectations, explained the need for audio-recording the interviews, sought the consent (voluntary participation) of participants, and requested participants to complete an informed consent form. An example of the individual Informed Consent Form is attached as *Appendix A* to this study. Once the participant was satisfied with all arrangements and had completed the Informed Consent Form, an hour-long interview was conducted with him/her, which was audio recorded. After the interview, the participants were thanked for their participation and confidentiality was again confirmed. The interviews at each of the five LMs (10 in total) took a period of 10 days to conduct, as the dates and times as scheduled by each of the five LMs in line with their work commitments had to be complied with.

4.4.4.2 Quantitative procedure: Administering the survey questionnaire

Each of the five LMs was requested to identify 10 managers who had attended the MSDP and who were willing to participate in the study but were not one of the managers interviewed. A coordinator at each of the LMs requested the 80 managers to complete a Survey Informed Consent Form (attached as *Appendix B* to this study) and a survey questionnaire in their own time, and the completed forms were collected by the coordinator and handed over to the researcher whenever she visited a LM. This process took a total of 14 days until all Informed Consent Forms and survey questionnaires had been completed and collected from the five LMs.

4.4.5 Population and samples

Creswell (2014) stated that when we design research, we want our results to apply to some target population of people. This target population can be as broad as everyone in the world or as narrow as the workers in a particular job in a particular factory. Kumar (2011) supported this view by stating that the totality of people, organisations, objects or occurrences from which a sample is drawn is a population, in which the concept of totality means everything or everyone. According to Creswell (2014), research populations are composed of all the individuals whom the researcher intends to study.

In this study, the population was all 80 managers of the DM and its five LMs who had attended a MSDP, and it included different race groups, genders, age groups, occupational categories and educational levels.

Data for this study was gathered from two samples of the population through qualitative and quantitative methods. According to Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007, p. 281), “Sampling decisions typically are more complicated in mixed-methods research because sampling schemes must be designed for both the qualitative and quantitative research components of these studies”. As the aim of this research was to obtain a greater insight into the MSDP and how participants experienced the programme (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007) rather than to generalize findings to the population from which the sample was drawn (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007), it was decided to use convenience sampling as one of the 19 possible nonprobability (purposeful) sampling schemes suggested by Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007) for mixed-methods research. Convenient sampling was deemed appropriate as the population in the DM and the five LMs were spread over a large geographical area, and it was thus convenient to choose individuals that were available and willing to participate in the study. The primary criteria for selecting participants was that they had attended a MSDP, were easy to reach and readily available (Neuman, 2014).

Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007) contended that the size of a sample should be based on various factors such as the research objectives, the research questions and the research design. As such Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007) provided minimum sample size recommendations for qualitative and quantitative research designs, as discussed below.

4.4.5.1 *Qualitative study sample*

Sample sizes in qualitative research should not be too small to make data saturation difficult, and not be too large to make a deep, case-oriented analysis difficult (Teddlie and Yu, 2007)., Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007) suggested that a number of at least 10 participants be interviewed for qualitative studies utilising a case study research design and individual interviews to collect data. In this respect the researcher requested each of the five LMs to identify two managers who had attended the MSDP, and who were willing to participate in the study. This provided 10 interviewees and the composition of this sample is summarised in Table 4.1 below

Table 4.1:

Composition of Research Sample 1: Qualitative study

Sample number and description	Sample size	Purpose	Sampling method used
1. Managers who had attended the MSDP	10 (Two from each of the five local municipalities)	Were interviewed to provide qualitative data	Convenient sampling

4.4.5.2 *Quantitative study sample*

Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007) suggested that a minimum sample size of 64 participants be used for statistical studies, as this would be sufficient to indicate statistically significant relationships between variables or differences with 0.80 power at the 5% level of significance. As the quantitative empirical aim of this study was not to calculate statistical relationship between variables, but only to analyse the quantitative data in terms of frequencies and means to determine how managers who had attended a MSDP rated it on improving service delivery in the DM, a sample of 50 managers was deemed adequate for this purpose. The size of this sample was according to the guidelines provided by Creswell (2014) regarding sample sizes for basic, descriptive statistical analyses. The researcher subsequently requested each of the five LMs to identify 10 managers who had attended the MSDP but who were not one of the two managers identified to be interviewed for qualitative data, and who were willing to participate in the study. This provided a second sample of 50 participants as indicated in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2:

Composition of Research Sample 2: Quantitative study

Sample number and description	Sample size	Purpose	Sampling method used
2. Managers who attended the MSDP and were not interviewed	50 (10 from each of the five local municipalities)	Completed survey questionnaire to provide quantitative data	Convenient Sampling

4.4.6 Data collection methods

Data collection is a process through which the participants in a research study are requested to share their respective experiences of the problem under review with the researchers, either through interviews or the completion of survey questionnaires (Neuman, 2014), or through the use of both as in mixed-methods research (Creswell, 2014) which was used in this study. In line with the mixed-methods research approach adopted in this study, both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods were used.

4.4.6.1 Qualitative data collection: Semi-structured individual interviews

Qualitative data collection was obtained from Sample 1 using semi-structured individual interviews, consisting of open-ended questions, probing, observation, the audio recording of information and field note taking.

According to Cohen and Crabtree (2006), semi-structured interviews are characterised by factors such as the interviewer and respondents engaging in a formal interview, with the interviewer developing and using an interview guide. This is a list of open-ended questions and topics that need to be covered during the conversation, usually in a particular order, but the interviewer is able to follow topical trajectories in the conversation that may stray from the guide when he or she feels this is appropriate (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006),

The importance of the interview guide is emphasised by Bernard (2006) who contended that semi-structured interviews has much of the freewheeling quality of unstructured interviewing, and

requires all the same set of skills to execute. However, Cohen and Crabtree (2006) stated that semi-structured interviewing differs from an unstructured interview in that it is based on the use of an interview guide consisting of open-ended questions. In this respect the interviewer maintained the discretion to follow leads, and the interview guide is a set of clear instructions for the interview process. It is also crucial in providing reliable and comparable qualitative data (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). Blandford (2013) added that semi-structured interviews fall between structured and unstructured interviews, in that the open-ended questions will be planned ahead of time, but lines of enquiry will be pursued within the interview, to follow up on interesting and unexpected avenues that emerge. Semi-structured interviews are therefore best suited for understanding people's perceptions, depth of meaning and understanding of the phenomenon while recognising the significance of context. As the qualitative empirical aim of this study was to explore how managers who had attended the MSDP describe the effectiveness of the programme to improve service delivery within a DM in South Africa, the use of semi structured interviews using open-ended questions to gather such data was deemed appropriate for this study.

The six open-ended questions asked during the individual interviews with Sample 1 are attached as *Appendix C*. The questions were compiled by the researcher based on the guidelines by Creswell (2014). This entailed analysing the specific qualitative empirical aim of the study, reading through relevant literature on the subject and using her knowledge of the MSDP. This ensured that six questions were formulated to elicit the views and opinions of managers who had attended a MSDP regarding the effectiveness of the programme. Examples of the questions asked are the following: What is a MSDP? What skills did you gain during the MSDP? Was the MSDP that you attended successful? During the semi structured individual interviews, the researcher used open-ended questions, probing and observation to obtain data.

(a) *Open-ended questions*

Gray (2014) contended that semi-structured interviews offer open-ended questions to the interviewee that is carefully designed to elicit the interviewee's ideas and opinions on the topic of interest, as opposed to leading the interviewee toward preconceived choices. They rely on the interviewer following up with probes to obtain information on the topic of interest. Gray (2014) provided two underlying principles to follow when conducting semi structured individual interviews, namely (1) strive to avoid leading the interview or imposing meanings by using open-ended questions, and (2) strive to create a relaxed and comfortable conversation.

(b) *Probing*

Probing means a follow-up question that requires the interviewee to clarify their responses and/or provide additional information to what they had already said to the interviewer (Yin, 2011). During the probing process, the interviewer can explore issues in the subject area by examining the concrete experience of people in that area and the meaning their experience had for them (Yin, 2011). Interviewers can use probing to ask for clarification by suggesting what they thought the interviewee meant and asking for confirmation, while it is also a process through which the interviewees are encouraged to answer the open-ended questions in more detail (Boyce & Neale, 2006).

In the semi-structured interviews, the researcher used probing to obtain clarity as to what a manager meant when answering the open-ended questions. If the manager answered a question very shortly and their exact response was not understood, follow-up probing questions were used to obtain such clarity.

(c) *Observation*

Direct observation entails that both the researcher and the researched are engaged in a process of interaction during interviews and increases the chances of obtaining a valid and credible picture of the phenomena being studied (Gali & Donaire, 2008). The main emphasis during the observation process is to record the interviewees' non-verbal responses to questions, which includes body language and facial expressions, as these signs could provide additional information regarding a response to a question (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2007).

During the semi-structured interviews, the researcher observed the body language and facial expressions of the managers when they answered the open-ended questions to obtain any additional information that could have added to the meaning of their answers. Such observed behaviour was explored and clarified during the interviews and were included in the data analysis phase of the research where appropriate.

According to Bowie and Bronte-Tinkew (2008), quantitative methods of data collection referred to research in which information is collected in numerical form, such as numbers, ratios of numbers and percentages, and that these methods have the advantage of being able to collect data from a large number of individuals within a very short space of time.

Gray (2014) noted that surveys are a form of quantitative data collection which utilises self-administered structured questionnaires and is intended for literate groups of people who can read and respond to the stated questions. Gray (2014) further maintained that such questionnaires should consist of the same set of questions that are asked in the same order and in the same way to ensure that the same information is obtained from each participant. Roller (2011) is of the view that close-ended and large-scale surveys provided respondents with an opportunity to select already supplied answers and scores, as all that is required is select the appropriate answer and scores relevant to their assessment of the aspect under investigation.

For this study, a cross-sectional survey was used to gather quantitative data at one point in time by means of a self-administered questionnaire (Creswell, 2014), which was developed specifically for the DM. The customised questionnaire consisted of 10 questions and was used to gather quantitative data from Sample 2, consisting of 50 managers who had attended the MSD. A questionnaire was decided on to gather quantitative data as it was relatively cheap and could be used to reach all identified respondents, (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2008), who were situated over the entire DM.

The steps followed to develop the questionnaire were the following, based on the guidelines for questionnaire development suggested by Borg and Mastrangelo (2008) and Wiley (2010):

Step 1: A study was made of the questions used in various questionnaires used to assess the effectiveness of a training programme.

Step 2: Ten questions were identified that could be used to gather relevant biographical information and assess the effectiveness of the MSDP. These 10 questions were based on an analysis of the specific quantitative empirical aims of the study and the DM's Workplace Skills Plan. These 10 questions were then converted to local government terminology based on the researcher's

knowledge of local government, and this resulted in a draft questionnaire consisting of five biographical and five survey questions.

Step 3: A pilot study was then conducted with the draft questionnaire to test its face validity, defined by Kumar (2011) as a logical link between the question and what it is measuring. The pilot study followed the guidelines provided by Collingridge (2014), which entailed requesting a group of two managers in the DM and two managers in each of the five local municipalities the DM who had attended the MSDP (a total of 12 managers) to complete the questionnaire and evaluate it in terms of the following:

- Did they understand the instructions for completing the questionnaire?
- Was the appropriate biographical information requested from respondents?
- Was the terminology used appropriate and understandable for the DM and its local municipalities?
- Did they understand the questions as formulated?

All managers in the pilot study were satisfied with the draft questionnaire and no changes were suggested. This questionnaire was then accepted as the final survey instrument and consisted of two sections, a Biographical Section with five questions such as gender, age, and race, and a Survey Section with five questions such as what the length of MSDP which respondents attended was and whether the MSDP improve service delivery or not, each with its own specific scoring scale. A copy of the final questionnaire is attached as *Appendix D*.

Step 4: The final questionnaire was then used to gather data from identified respondents in each of the five local governments.

Step 5: The data obtained from the survey were analysed statistically by calculating frequencies for all the scores obtained from participants for the survey questions.

4.4.7 Recording of data

4.4.7.1 Recording of qualitative data

During the individual interviews, audio recording and field note taking were used to capture each participant's responses to the six questions posed to them individually. Jebreen (2012) insisted that all interviews should be adequately audiotape recorded for further analysis, stating that audiotape recording has an advantage of enabling researchers to capture large amounts of data over a very short space of time. This is supported by Boyce and Neale (2006), who stated that recording interviews on audiotape helps get the material down in an accurate and retrievable form while researchers can keep audiotapes until they get a chance to transcribe them. A limitation of audiotape recording mentioned by Boyce and Neale (2006) is that the mechanics of recording require special attention and skills, and researchers need to ensure that they are acquainted with the operation of the tape recorder and that the batteries that they use are new or fresh. Gray (2014) offered the following guidelines when using an audio-tape recorder: Becoming accustomed with the use of the machine and its accessories; pre-test the recording machine before the actual recordings take place; ensure that the audio recording process is accepted and approved by participants; and ensure that the recording does not disrupt the interview session in any way. For the semi-structured interviews, permission to record the interview was requested from each individual manager at the beginning of the interview, which all 10 managers consented to. The interviews were then recorded for later transcription and analysis.

According to Gali and Donaire (2008), field note taking is a necessity in that it enables researchers to capture every aspect of the process during their interaction with the participants during the interview sessions. This is supported by Kerlinger and Lee (2000), who argued that field notes provide researchers with additional information that is not covered by the interview process, as it augments and enriches data collection. In this context, the researcher could tap into the audio to get proper interpretation and clarity on certain concepts. During the semi-structured interviews, the researcher made notes while managers were answering the open-ended questions in order to capture details and behaviour that was not articulated verbally.

4.4.7.2 *Recording of quantitative data*

The quantitative data obtained from the survey questionnaires were recorded by capturing the scores allocated by each respondent to each of the 10 questions on spreadsheets for further statistical analysis.

4.4.8 **Data analysis**

4.4.8.1 *Qualitative data analysis*

As a case study was used as the strategy of inquiry in this study (Creswell, 2014), in which the researcher explored how managers who had attended the MSDP describe the effectiveness of the programme to improve service delivery, the qualitative data obtained from the individual interviews were analysed by means of content analysis, using six steps which are based on and adapted from the six steps propagated by Creswell (2014, pp. 247 – 249). These steps were (1) Transcribe and prepare the data for analysis, (2) Study the complete data obtained to form an overall impression, (3) Group the verbatim responses of interviewees under each appropriate question asked, which become the themes, (4) Identify sub-themes from the themes (questions), (5) Discuss the findings and (6) Draw conclusions from the findings.

This process is illustrated in Figure 4.2 below. This content analysis process was deemed appropriate as, according to Creswell (2014, p. 246), “It looks at qualitative data analysis as following steps from the specific to the general and as involving multiple levels of analysis”.

The explication of the steps, which form part of the qualitative data analysis process in Figure 4.2 is as follows:

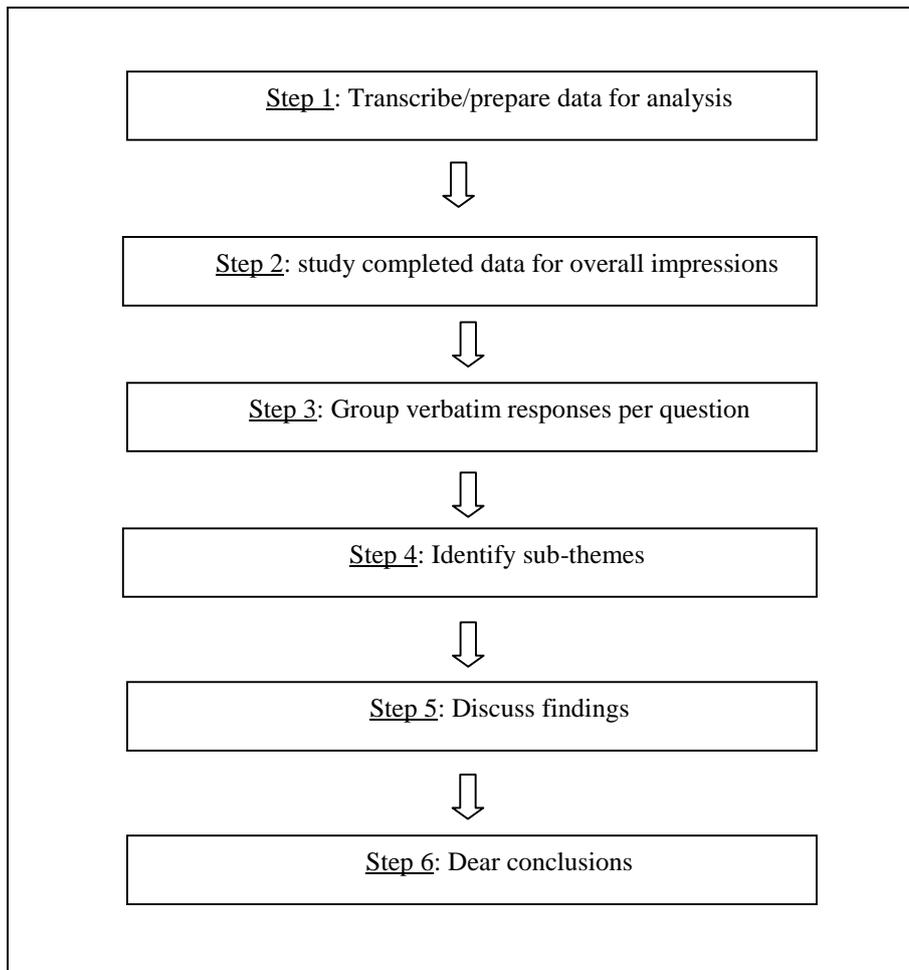


Figure 4.2: The qualitative data analysis process (Compiled by the author and based on Creswell, 2014)

Step 1: Transcribe and prepare the data for analysis. This involves transcribing interviews, typing up field notes, sorting, and arranging the data into different types depending on the sources of information. For this study, a contracted transcriber transcribed the audiotape recordings of the interviews verbatim and the written responses of each of the 10 interviewees were provided to the researcher as text or narrative data. The researcher also typed up all her field notes as additional qualitative data.

Step 2: Study the complete data obtained to form an overall impression. The second step in the process propagated by Creswell (2014) provides a general sense of the information and an opportunity to reflect on its overall meaning, such as what general ideas are participants giving, and what is the tone of the ideas? During this step, the researcher thoroughly acquainted herself with the data by studying the consolidated responses to obtain a general feel for what the participants were saying.

Step 3: Group all the verbatim responses of interviewees under the appropriate question headings, which become the data themes. The verbatim responses given by each interviewee is now placed under a heading which is the name/formulation of the question asked during the interview. The question headings become the themes extracted from the interviews. During this step the researcher consolidated all the answers from the 10 interviewees and placed the appropriate responses under the appropriate question heading. This ensured that each question contained a list of statements and sentences related to the question under one heading (theme).

Step 4: Identify sub-themes from the themes (questions). During this step the themes are analysed and appropriate sub-themes are identified and placed under a sub-theme heading. The researcher made use of different coloured highlighters to select statements and sentences from the themes that belonged together and grouped them under appropriate sub-theme headings.

Step 5: Discuss the findings. During this step the findings are analysed and discussed per question/theme, and possible reasons for the findings are given.

Step 6: Draw conclusions. This step entailed drawing conclusions from the findings which are related to the qualitative empirical aims of the study.

4.4.8.2 *Quantitative data analysis*

According to Murtonen (2005), quantitative data can be analysed through tables and graphs which allows researchers to present their research findings in numerical nature that is also accurate. This is supported by Babbie (2010), who stated that quantitative data analysis is the numerical representation and manipulation of observations for describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations reflect, while Siniscalco and Auriat (2005) are of the view that appropriate tables and figures are useful as they can be read quickly and are particularly helpful when presenting information to an audience.

In this study descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies were calculated for Sample 2 using Excel spreadsheets and presented in the form of tables and graphs to illustrate how managers rated the MSDP on various questions. According to Field (2005), frequency distributions show the number of observations or scores obtained for each question in a survey instrument. This approach

was followed as the quantitative empirical aim of the study was to determine how managers who had attended a MSDP rated the effectiveness of the programme, and not to determine the relationship between variables.

4.4.8.3 Overall assessment of the qualitative and quantitative data

As a concurrent embedded mixed-methods research strategy was used in this study (Creswell, 2009), the qualitative and quantitative data were analysed separately and not compared but considered side-by-side to give an overall composite assessment of two different pictures of the MSDP. As the mixed-methods empirical aim of the study was to provide an overall assessment by managers who have attended a MSDP regarding the effectiveness of the MSDP in improving service delivery in the DM, both types of data were treated on an equal basis. The qualitative data were utilised for the purpose of exploring the perceptions of managers regarding the effectiveness of the MSDP, whereas the quantitative data were used to statistically represent how managers rated various aspects of the MSDP. The quantitative data was also able to identify aspects that the interviews did not, such as the biographical information of respondents and ratings related to attitudes towards the MSDP.

4.5 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE QUALITATIVE DATA

The criteria for the trustworthiness of qualitative data are, according to Guba (1981), credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. Pitney (2004) stressed that because of the differences between qualitative and quantitative research methods, the traditional quality criteria of reliability and validity used with quantitative methods might be inappropriate to use with qualitative methods. The four criteria for trustworthiness of qualitative data proposed by Guba (1981) are discussed below.

4.5.1 Credibility

Tobin and Begley (2004) maintained that credibility addresses the “fit” between respondents’ views and the researcher’s representation of them. According to Shenton (2004, p. 64), credibility dealt with the question “How congruent are the findings with reality?”, while Lincoln and Guba (1985) argued that ensuring credibility is one of the most important factors in ensuring

trustworthiness. To ensure the credibility of the qualitative data in this study, the following as proposed by Shenton (2004) were implemented:

4.5.1.1 The adoption of well-established research methods

This was ensured by using well-established data collection methods such as semi-structured individual interviews that were audio recorded, observations and field notes, and a well-established data analysis process as propagated by Creswell (2014).

4.5.1.2 The development of an early familiarity with the culture of the participating organisation before the first data collection dialogue takes place

This was possible as the researcher had a seven-year day-to-day engagement with the DM and the five LMs due to the nature of her training and development role as a member of the National Department of Labour and was also able to study various appropriate documents prior to the data gathering such as the DM and LMs' Integrated Development Plan (IDP), Workplace Skills Plan (WSP), Annual Reports and Workplace Skills Reports.

4.5.1.3 Tactics to help ensure honesty in informants when contributing data

This was ensured by allowing participants an opportunity to refuse to participate in the project after it was explained in detail to them.

4.5.1.4 Background, qualifications and experience of the researcher

The researcher has been involved in the skills development section within the National Department of Labour for a period of 7 years, while prior to this she worked for the local Further Education and Training (FET) College and was a part-time lecturer in Industrial and Organisational Psychology at the Central University of Technology (CUT). She is also proficient in interviewing skills and survey techniques.

4.5.2 Transferability

According to Guba (1981) and Shenton (2004), transferability, also called generalisability, is the extent to which the findings of a study can be applied to other situations and implies that the researcher can demonstrate that the results of the work at hand can be applied to a wider population. One way of ensuring this is to provide the reader of the research report sufficient contextual information about the study to enable the reader to decide whether the findings could be transferred to similar situations (Shenton, 2004). In this study transferability was pursued by providing the reader of the research report with information regarding the number of organisations taking part in the study and where they are based (a DM in South Africa and its five LMs), the size of the DM and the number of participants (total population and the two samples used), the data collection methods (interviews, observations, field notes and survey questionnaire), the number and duration of interviews (10 interviews of one one-hour each), the contents of the survey questionnaire (attached as **Appendix D**), and the time period over which data were collected (14 days).

4.5.3 Dependability

Guba (1981) and Shenton (2014) maintained that dependability seeks to address the issue of reliability, which shows that if the work were repeated, in the same context, with the same methods and with the same participants, similar results would be obtained. Shenton (2014) reported that to address the dependability issue more directly, the processes within the study should be reported in detail, thereby enabling a future researcher to repeat the work to produce results that are similar. For Tobin and Begley (2004), dependability can be achieved by ensuring that the research process is logical, traceable, and clearly documented. In this study dependability was addressed by thorough scientific planning and execution of the study and by an in-depth description of the research design and procedure that was followed. This will ensure that similar results should be obtained by a researcher who repeats the study in future, if it is conducted to determine the effectiveness of the MSDP in a DM and its LMs, and mixed-methods research involving semi-structured individual interviews, observation, fields notes and a survey questionnaire is used, involving managers who attended a MSDP.

4.5.4 Conformability

Tobin and Begley (2004) argued that confirmability is concerned with establishing that the researcher's interpretations and findings are clearly derived from the data, requiring the researcher to demonstrate how conclusions and interpretations have been reached. This is supported by Shenton (2014), who stated that conformability involves objectivity, which is difficult to achieve as it is dependent on human skill and perception, which are inherently biased. Shenton (2004) noted that to ensure conformability, steps must be taken to ensure that the findings of the research are the experiences and ideas of the participants, and not the preferences of the researcher. In this study conformability was firstly addressed by the researcher declaring her engagement and involvement with the DM and its five LMs used in this study. Secondly, well-established data-gathering techniques such as semi-structured interviews and a survey instrument were used, and well-established data analysis methods were used to eliminate researcher bias.

4.6 QUALITY OF THE QUANTITATIVE DATA

According to Creswell (2014), from a positivists perspective, reliability and validity are considered the most important and effective concepts which determine the quality of quantitative data. Gray (2014) argued that a research instrument is said to be reliable once it produces similar results when it is used over time and conditions for reliability are met if the results and conclusions of one researcher can be replicated by another researcher using the same instrument on another occasion. In this sense, reliability is essentially a synonym for consistency and replicability (Kumar, 2011). Regarding validity, Gray (2014) mentioned that it can be summarised by a question: How do researchers know that what the participants are telling them is true? To ensure validity, researchers need to develop their research instruments in a manner that allows the participants to report exactly what is needed and nothing else (Gray, 2014). This is supported by Cohen et al. (2007) who stated that an instrument is valid if it in fact measures what it purports to measure.

The first strategy employed to ensure the quality of the quantitative data was to use a sample of 50 participants for the survey, which was deemed adequate for calculating frequencies and means to determine how managers who had attended a MSDP rated it on improving service delivery in the DM. The size of this sample was according to the guidelines provided by Creswell (2014) regarding sample sizes for basic, descriptive statistical analyses. The second strategy employed to ensure the quality of the quantitative data was to develop the survey questionnaire using the steps propagated

by Borg and Mastrangelo (2008) and Wiley (2010), namely (1) study questions used in similar questionnaires, (2) compile a draft questionnaire with appropriate questions, (3) conduct a pilot study to test its face validity, and (4) compile the final questionnaire. The final survey questionnaire used in the study could thus be considered to be a reliable and valid instrument which was able to accurately and reliably assess the responses of participants regarding the effectiveness of the MSDP in ensuring service delivery in a DM in South Africa, resulting in the gathering of quality quantitative data.

4.7 QUALITY OF THE MIXED-METHODS DATA

The quality of mixed-method data is generally concerned with ensuring that quality is adequately and independently addressed in both qualitative and quantitative approaches. O’Cathain (2010) developed a comprehensive framework which outlines important domains of quality in mixed-method research starting from planning quality to design quality, then data quality, followed by interpretive rigour, inference transferability, reporting quality, synthesisability and utility. Data quality according to O’Cathain (2010) entailed transparency of data in which methods of collecting data are described in detail, data rigour meaning that data collection methods are implemented well, analytic adequacy relates to data analysis being undertaken properly and with necessary sophistication, and analytic integration rigour is a step that ensures that data integration at analysis stage is executed properly with conversion quality (O’Cathain, 2010).

Mixed-methods validity, also called *data legitimation* (Onwuegbuzie and Johnson, 2006), was addressed by ensuring that four of the nine legitimation types propagated by Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2006) were adhered to. *Sample integration legitimation* was ensured by using an adequate sample size as prescribed by research for both the individual interviews and the survey, which enabled two comprehensive but different pictures to be formed regarding the MSDP. *Inside-outside legitimation* was ensured by the researcher accurately presenting the scores of the survey respondents in the form of descriptive statistics as prescribed by Babbie (2010), and accurately presenting the opinions and views of the interviewees in terms of the finding obtained from the analysis of the qualitative data as prescribed by Creswell (2014). *Weakness minimisation legitimation* was ensured by compensating for the weakness in the quantitative approach (respondents not fully understanding the questions in the instruments) by the strength of the qualitative approach (the researcher could probe responses to ensure clarity and comprehension of

questions asked). *Multiple validities legitimation* was achieved by utilising appropriate strategies to ensure qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods data quality as described above.

4.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Seidman (2006), ethical considerations can be understood to mean guidelines and rules which the social sciences profession have developed to protect the participants in research from being physically, psychologically and emotionally harmed by the researchers and research projects. This is supported by Whitley (2002), who stated that researchers are responsible for alleviating any adverse effects of the research, such as reassuring participants whose self-esteem may have been threatened by the research procedures. Seidman (2006) mentioned a number of ethical considerations which must be addressed in research, such as informing participants of their rights and how much time is being asked of them as well as treating them equally with the researcher, because the research processes cannot be adequately achieved without their active participation. For this study, the following elements were addressed as part of ethical considerations.

4.8.1 Obtaining permission

Obtaining permission to conduct research from the custodians of programmes before involving the participants is an important ethical consideration for researchers (Cohen et al., 2007). For this study permission to conduct the research was firstly obtained from the Management Team of the DM and then from the Management Teams of the five LMs within the DM. After this was granted, ethical clearance to conduct the study was requested and obtained from the Ethics Committee of the University of South Africa, after which the study commenced.

4.8.2 Harm to subjects

Harm to subjects is an ethical consideration which maintains that data must not be gathered from research participants under adverse conditions, which includes placing them under pressure to complete a questionnaire or interview (Fisher & Foreit, 2002). These aspects were addressed in this study by not placing participants under pressure during the individual interviews or while completing the survey questionnaire and allowing them to withdraw at any stage without having to explain the reasons for this.

4.8.3 Informed consent

Informed consent requires that all the research participants must be informed of the procedures and aims of the research so that their participation is voluntary (Gray, 2014). In this study participants were briefed on the aims of the research and why they were chosen as part of the sample before interviews were conducted and received background on the research before they were requested to complete a survey instrument. Only once they had completed an Informed Consent Form were they involved in the data-gathering process. A copy of the Informed Consent Forms which participants were requested to complete for the individual interviews and survey questionnaire are attached as *Appendices A* and *B* to this study.

4.8.4 Deception

Roberts (2003) argued that when research participants are provided with half-truths or lies in order to induce them to take part in the research study, and if they would have not chosen not to participate had they known the full reality, this is deception and is considered as unethical within social sciences research. In this study, this aspect was addressed by presentations by the researcher to the Management Teams of the DM and the five LMs as to exactly what the research entailed. For participants, the Informed Consent Forms set out clearly what the research was about.

4.8.5 Anonymity

Anonymity entails that research participants must not be identifiable to the researcher and other people (Kumar, 2011). In this study anonymity of participants was ensured by using various codes, and not actual names, to identify which interviewees and survey participants belonged to which research sample. Research results were also reported in general terms so that no participant could be individually identified.

4.8.6 Confidentiality

Confidentiality addresses the requirement that all information shared with the researcher by the participants be kept away from unlawful individuals (Gray, 2014). In this study, confidentiality was maintained by using codes to identify participants, and not actual names. The researcher also

kept all data obtained in a locked office and in documents on a password protected computer. The interviews transcriber was also requested to sign a confidentiality agreement before the interview notes were handed to her to be typed up. When reporting on the research results, no information were given that could identify any participant. No data gathered was shared with any person or institution except for the final report for which written consent was obtained from the applicable Management Teams and participants.

4.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the research methodology was discussed. The discussion included the research design, the research approach, and the research method. As part of the research method, the research setting and procedure, the population and sample, data collection methods, and data analysis were discussed as well. The chapter was concluded with a discussion of the quality of the qualitative and quantitative data and ethical considerations.

In the following chapter the research findings and results of the study will be presented.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the findings of the qualitative study and results of the quantitative study will be reported and discussed. The chapter starts with a recap of how the qualitative data was gathered and analysed after which the findings of the individual interviews are reported. This is followed by a recap of how the quantitative data was gathered and analysed after which the results of the survey questionnaire are reported. The chapter is then concluded with a discussion of the qualitative findings and quantitative results.

5.2 FINDINGS OF THE QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

5.2.1 How the qualitative data were gathered and analysed from Sample 1: A recapitulation

Qualitative data was obtained from Sample 1 (10 managers who had attended the MSDP) through semi-structured individual interviews, and the six questions asked are attached as *Appendix C* to this study. The individual interview questions were compiled by the researcher after analysing the specific qualitative empirical aims of the study and ensuring that the questions would elicit the views and opinions of managers regarding the MSDP. The data obtained from the semi-structured interviews were analysed using content analysis and the analysed findings are reported under the six headings of the questions asked with supporting interviewee statement where applicable.

5.2.2 Findings per interview question (themes)

The responses of the interviewees per interview question, which according to the qualitative data analysis process followed are accepted as the themes of the data (See Section 4.4.8.1), are given below under the identified sub-theme headings.

5.2.2.1 *Question/Theme 1: Understanding the MSDP*

The following sub-theme were identified from the answers to question/theme 1:

(a) Sub-theme: Training

Interviewees mentioned the three most important aspects related to the MSDP, namely, knowledge, skills, training and competency. Participants in their responses used the mentioned concepts interchangeably to describe MSDP. The following four responses are examples of this:

Is when the employees are being taken to the training so that they can do their work properly - response by participants "A".

It's all about equipping employees with knowledge, skills and competency to work effectively - response by participants "C".

Is for developing and improving its employees' knowledge and skills in order to be effective in whatever they are doing - response by participants "F"; and

Is to empower the employees of the municipality with the necessary skills – response by participant "J".

(b) Sub-theme: Equipping employees, improving ability and capabilities of employees

Some of the participants defined the MSDP in relation to the improvement of operations and service delivery as follows:

'Is to get your employees equipped with the right knowledge and abilities to do the job to the best of their capabilities', answered by participant "B".

'Is where the municipality is training its employees so that they can be effective in terms of their jobs, in terms of the execution of their jobs', participant "E".

'It's where we are given opportunity to improve ourselves concerning the work that we do', participant "G".

'It is where they teach their employees about their work', participant "I".

'If we get training we get more skills that we can use to serve the municipality and community', contributed by participants "D".

'Is to improve in terms of productivity in work place and understanding of the work place', participant "D" elaborated.

'Skills development forms a very integral part of attaining the key performance responded participant "H".

indicator of making sure that it delivers efficient services', participant H added when asked to elaborate.

'Municipal officials in order for them to execute their job functions diligently', explained participant "B".

'Is about empowering staff compliments of the municipality to give them skills that will be sufficient for them to execute the tasks given to them', clarified by participant "I".

'Employees to understanding the rules and responsibility of the institution and in providing service delivery to the community', provided participant "E" in addition to the first explanation; and

'It provide people with the knowledge with the municipality jobs or services delivery', added participants "D" when probed.

(c) Sub-theme: Personal development

Some of the participants defined the concept of the MSDP in relation to the personal development of employees. They mentioned the following:

'To develop them personally and also to develop them so that they can take the institution forward or the municipality forward', participant "A".

‘Training to be an enhancement of the personnel in the performance of their duty so that they can perform their duty with a standard required.’ explained participant “F”.

5.2.2.2 Question/Theme 2: Skills gained during the MSDP

The following sub-theme was identified from the answers to question/theme 2:

(a) Theme: Service delivery related skills

The interviewees who answered the above question mentioned that the following skills were gained:

‘To make sure that community receive water, electricity and sanitation, housing, roads and waste management’, participant “G”.

Participant “G” added that ‘knowledge to apply when developing houses for the community was gained during the training, a lot of things were done without proper training’.

‘Accounting standard and preparing reconciliations to support good financial management of the municipality’, responded participant “D”.

‘My skills in doing maps and locality plans improved a lot after attending the training, this will assist in speedy allocation of housing development for the community’, reported participant “F”.

Dealing with health and safety at work place and regulations, rules, and safety of employees and other people’, participant “C” responded.

‘Improvement in monitoring and evaluating the municipal projects to ensure that they benefit the people’, added by participant “C”.

'To address issue of management development at the work place which seeks to empower manager to discharge their responsibilities effectively and efficiently', participant "E" responded.

'I am dealing with the development of the IDP, SDBIP as well as the performance management of the institution', answered participant "B"; and

'I gained understanding of and management and implementation of policies such as the housing policy', responded by participant "A".

5.2.2.3 *Question/Theme 3: Which aspects of service delivery were you exposed to during the MSDP?*

Interviewees were exposed to the aspects of service delivery as indicated in Table 5.1 below:

5.2.2.4 *Question/Theme 4: Barriers to effective delivery of MSDP*

The following sub-themes were identified from the answers to question/theme 4:

(a) Sub-theme: Financial resources

The following financial resources barriers were reported by the participant "E" in the study:

'From the lack of funds from our municipality'.

'It's not necessarily financial support in most cases at times we will be having problems making financial payments towards the training institutions'.

'More of our budget allocation for training because there are no financial assistance'.

'The budget has problem. We don't reach all the things we need. We are using old cars'.

Table 5.1:

Aspects of Service Delivery Exposed to During the MSDP

Aspect	Examples of supporting statements
New ways of doing things	<i>'Changing circumstances programmes assist in acquainting yourself with the new ways of doing things in order to give good service such as new management strategies and exploiting ITC for better results', answered by participant "A".</i>
Monitoring	<i>'In service delivery, monitoring is crucial as it and evaluation is to track implementation and outputs systematically, and measure the effectiveness of municipal programmes to help in determining exactly when and where progress is at and what alternatives are needed', 'responded participant "H".</i>
Quality and rate of service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>'It helps in terms of service delivery so that our people can get quality services'.</i> <i>'If we go to the training the rate of service delivery will increase because we will be having adequate skills', said participant "F".</i>

'We were supposed to attend training in Pretoria. They (municipal employees) failed to attend because the accommodation was too expensive and they cannot afford it even though the transport was provided', so we failed because of the budget constrains'.

'Another barrier it will be the issue of under budgeting because we don't budget properly'.

'Financial recourses were shot, at times you will be summoned to a training whilst you know your programme has not being paid because the trainers did not consult with you'.

'The municipality assist them with the registration money which is very limited'.

(b) Sub-theme: Service provider

The following service provider barriers were mentioned by participant “B”:

‘Most of the trainings that they offered last year are trainings that I obtained already, so it was a waste of time’,

‘The facilitator was not that well conversant with the subject matter’,

‘The trainers should also do their check, you attend these training these regarding these and you attended again the following year again you can see that they have not changed their training contents’.

‘Sometimes the service provider appointed to offer skills development you find some of them of low quality, they do not give that quality in terms of knowledge in terms of content and you end up losing interest’.

(c) Sub-theme: HRDM incompetency

The following barriers were mentioned by participant “H” which referred to the incompetence of the unit responsible for education and training in the local municipalities, namely Human Resources Development Management (HRDM):

‘The skills development, in most municipalities this unit is not empowered sufficiently’.

‘Skills development programme, you find that process is associated with so many flaws’.

‘You get the sense that people are not satisfied somewhere down the line, namely the employees rather than managers’.

‘Other problems with regard to unit standards that they (HRDM) were using there’.

were lot of confusing things in the unit standards’.

(d) Sub-theme: Shortage of tools and equipment

Participant “I” reported barriers regarding the shortage of tools and equipment needed to apply the skills gained during the MSDP:

‘Unfortunately we do not have scales to measure’.

‘We require tools or equipment because we cannot work without them; even here in our municipality we still have shortage of tools’.

(e) Sub-theme: Lack of knowledge of MSDP by politicians

The following barriers regarding lack of knowledge of the MSDP by politicians (local government councillors) were reported by participant “B”:

The councillors, because sometimes we misunderstand each other, the councillors use their own power without the knowledge of what had been learnt during the MSDP’.

‘Then you get the sense that there is these line of communication between the councillors and the people and at the very same time if they didn’t go out to the people how will they know the contents of the MSDP?.’

(f) Sub-theme: Provision of MSDP to both managers and their managers (superiors)

One participant mentioned that it was a barrier that the MSDP was not provided to both managers and their managers (superiors) so that they could gain similar knowledge, skills and attitudes. This is reflected in the statement below by participant “H”:

'Sometimes if you go for a training or workshop you have that feeling that if my boss was here, both of you will be taught the things that you are to do when you arrive at the institution'.

(g) Sub-theme: Lack of interest and commitment

Participant "E", as elaborated below, also mentioned a barrier regarding the lack of interest to attend the MSDP:

'Is the commitment and the availability because again you can send a person to training but if a person is not willing to learn then that is a problem'.

'Some people tend not to go to training because of period time, and another barrier is especially for people who have been here for a long time they are not interested to go to trainings'.

'The challenge is that the employees do not attend the trainings even though they are told that there are bursaries you will only find few employees attending'.

The barriers that I have noticed are they (employees) don't come to the classes, but we do make follow up whether they attended their classes or not'.

(h) Sub-theme: Lack of application of gained knowledge at work

A barrier was mentioned by participant "B" that some employees just wanted to attend the MSDP but had no interest in actually improving their knowledge, skills and attitudes:

'You find people choosing to do a skill programme course which is not related to their day to day activities'.

'They employees don't understand how training works; they just want to be trained.

They are regarded as a misplaced work force'.

(i) Sub-theme: Failure to improve service delivery after MSDP

A barrier was identified that even after having attended the MSDP, some managers in the municipality failed to gain any knowledge, skills and attitudes related to the improvement of service delivery, as reported by participant “H”:

‘The managers that do not have the necessary skills even after having attended the MSDP’.

‘We were having complains from the community about the problem of failing to collect the refuse’.

Participants A, C, D, F, G and J insisted that they did not experience any form of limitation or barrier during their attendance of the MSDP, as indicated by the following statements:

‘During the course there was no barriers, everything was organised’.

‘The facilitator now knows the subject matter and the modules are correct or in line with what we are doing and we have the stationery’.

‘There are no barriers that we encountered’.

‘I want to be honest with you there was no barriers’.

‘I don’t think there was an obstacle because we prepared the submission and the municipal manager signed it and his office make bookings for us, so went with the vehicle that we hired from Avis and we found a venue’.

5.2.2.5 Question/Theme 5: Improvement of the MSDP

The following sub-themes were identified from the answers to question/theme 5:

- (a) Sub-theme: Reduction of barriers, sharing of information and continuously rolling out of the MSDP

Participants “E”, “B”, “H” were of the opinion that the MSDP could be improved by reducing the barriers experienced by employees during their participation in the MSDP, which is supported by the following statements:

‘If the provincial government can give us more money’, participant “E”.

‘If our municipality will develop stuff so that we can be better people or improve our skills or education’, participant “E”.

‘They local municipalities should provide employees with the information so that each and every employee of the municipality must be given the opportunity to attend the courses’, participant “E”.

‘We must constantly inform them, educate them’, participant “B”.

‘They (local municipalities) should provide enough skills development programme that will accommodate all people’, participant “B”.

‘Being empowered is being equipped given knowledge that will enable you to successfully doing your work’, participant “B”.

*‘I believe we need to adhere to the changing of things, training is a continuous thing,
every year we should check and empower people. We must acclimatise technologically’, participant “H”.*

‘I think it can be improved if people could be placed correctly’, participant “H”.

‘Taking us to training more often’, participant “H”.

‘Each year we should be given opportunity to attend workshops that are important’, participant “H”.

'For training they (employees) should have transport that takes them there', participant "E".

'Proper transportation by making sure training and workshops that are important are attended so that we can gain knowledge', participant "E".

'Money, the more there is money people are here, people can be taken to any course', participant "E".

(b) Sub-theme: Improvement of HRDM

Other interviewees expressed the view that MSDP could be improved if the department responsible for it (HRDM) could be revised and improved, as supported by the following statements:

'The department itself that is dealing with skills development (HRDM) must have maybe road shows or presentations', participant "E".

'If it can happen that they (HRDM) make presentations in the different departments then our skills development and training can improve', participant "E".

'We have a unit that is responsible for skills development (HRDM); I think it will be of great importance if this unit work hand in hand with the department', participant "C".

We (HRDM) must make sure that we use municipal money wisely and the municipal manager must give us support', participant "C".

'They (units) must also get sufficient support from other departments', participant "F".

They go for trainings but there is no follow up (by HRDM) when they come back to check whether they have attended the training or not’, participant “F”.

‘They (HRDM) should take us to workshops and trainings, maybe we will be able to obtain something like getting certificates’, participant “F” continued when asked to clarify.

(c) Sub-theme: Improvement of service provided by training providers

Some of the participants felt that the MSDP could be improved if the service providers improved their learning materials and presentations, as supported by the following statements:

‘The FET has to provide [education and training] because we have people who work with water sanitation’, participant “G”.

‘Appoint accredited service providers’, added participant “G”.

(d) Sub-theme: Monitoring of attendance

Some of the participants were of the opinion that the MSDP could be improved if attendance was monitored, as supported by the following statements:

‘If I can go to the manager and ask them to have the attendance register so that we can see who were in the class’, participant “A”.

‘If they are absent from the class is the same as they were absent from work’, participant “J”.

‘There are employees who were provided with the MSDP but failed to attend the classes’, participant “J” continued.

(e) Sub-theme: Introduction of Learnership Programmes

Some of the interviewees felt that the MSDP could be improved by the introduction of a learnership programme at the local municipalities, which is supported by the following statements:

'On issues of learnership the LGSETA must come on board and that they must increase the grant ... what they are giving the municipality is not sufficient.... it does not even cover the idea of learnership programme', participant "D".

'If you end up adding more in learnership unlike budgeting more in issues of service delivery this can improve the MSDP', participant "D".

(f) Sub-theme: Continuous provision of the MSDP

Some of the interviewees were of the opinion that the MSDP could be improved if it was continuous in nature, supported by the following statements:

'Skills development programme should not be done once, it should be continuous'.

'I believe learning is not limited or you cannot stop learning, learning is continuous'.

(g) Sub-theme: Provision of relevant tools and equipment

One interviewee was of the view that the MSDP could be improved if employees were provided with the necessary and relevant equipment and tools after having attended the training, as supported by the following statement:

'There should be enough equipment for any studies or development that needs to be done, the people who will be training must be enough and the communities

must be well informed of the trainings because they do not get enough information [about the programme], participant "I".

5.2.2.6 *Question/Theme 6: Was the MSDP that you attended successful?*

Nine of the 10 interviewees answered "Yes" to this question while only one answered "No".

5.2.2.7 *If no, why was it not successful?*

The reasons given by the one interviewee as to why the MSDP that was attended was not successful in terms of how the training was organised to the knowledge of trainers and content of the course were the following: (1) Improper skills audits, (2) Irregularities during the tender process, and (3) Incompetent facilitators.

For those who answered YES, a wide range of responses were given which reflected on the following themes: Conduciveness of the training environment management of training, knowledge of the trainer, and usefulness and relevance of the contents:

(a) Sub-theme: Conduciveness of the training environment

'I think the environment generally was okay for learning, we did not struggle with a lot of issues, transport was provided, catering was available, the hall was good', responded participant "A.

(b) Sub-theme: Management of training

'It was good, in our unit everybody was given the opportunity to go for training, they did not push us too much, they allowed us to go at our own pace; I was able to follow without pressure, we were allowed to do our training work and our office work', response provided by participant "C".

c) Sub-theme: Knowledge of the trainer

'The trainer who taught us skills covered many interesting aspect and explained everything clearly, it is helping me since was never trained on computers before it was a struggle for me to do reports on computers', participant "D".

'They explained everything very well, slowly with examples for us to understand, I will apply the knowledge at my work in housing', participant "F".

(d) Sub-theme: Usefulness and relevance of the contents

Participant G provided the first three responses, participant "I" contributed the second two remarks and participant "J" mentioned the last two comments:

'That training was important because everything was clear, it was a success, they organised it very well, we want training to happen on a regular basis'.

'Information received during the training is useful to the work of municipality, indeed all municipal workers must get an opportunity to be trained, it is empowering'.

'The trainer was good, information and content was relevant to my area of work, it will indeed help in application of our work'.

'I learned many new things that I did not know before, they were not rushing us, we wrote tests, we also worked as groups, it was successful'.

'It was a success because my skills and knowledge of the job has improved, I know a lot about the municipality work now, I am in sanitation department'.

'The trainer explained all the relevant Acts of the municipality so well, it now makes sense to me, HRM must do this often, budget properly for many people to be exposed and improve their skills'.

‘Many benefits were received from attending this training, our jobs and skills have improved, attitude towards work has also improved, it has a positive impact’.

5.3 RESULTS OF THE QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

5.3.1 How the quantitative data were gathered and analysed for Sample 2: A recapitulation

In this study, quantitative data was gathered from Sample 2 (50 managers who attended the MSDP but were not interviewed) by means of a structured self-administered questionnaire which was developed by the researcher for this purpose. Descriptive statistics in the form of frequency distributions were computed to present the responses received from respondents regarding each of the survey questions.

5.3.2 Frequency distributions for the biographical questions

The frequency distributions for the five biographical questions are indicated in Figures 5.1 to 5.4 and Tables 5.2 and 5.3 below.

Figure 5.1 indicates that the majority of the sample (55%) were female while Table 5.2 indicates that the largest group of the sample (67%) was between the ages of 36 and 55 years old, while the smallest portion of the sample (33%) was 35 years or younger. No member of the sample was 56 years or older.

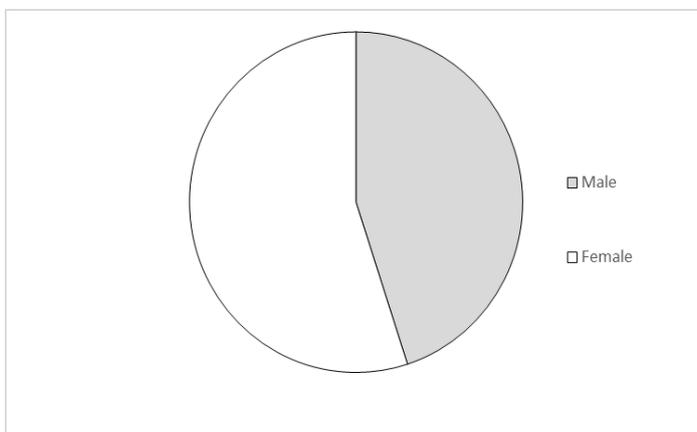


Figure 5.1: Frequency Distribution of Gender of Respondents (n = 50)

Table 5.2:

Frequency Distribution of Age of Respondents (n = 50)

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
0 - 35 Years	16	32
36 - 55 Years	34	68
56 Years and above	0	0

Figure 5.2 indicates that the majority of the sample (94 %) were Black while only (6%) were White.

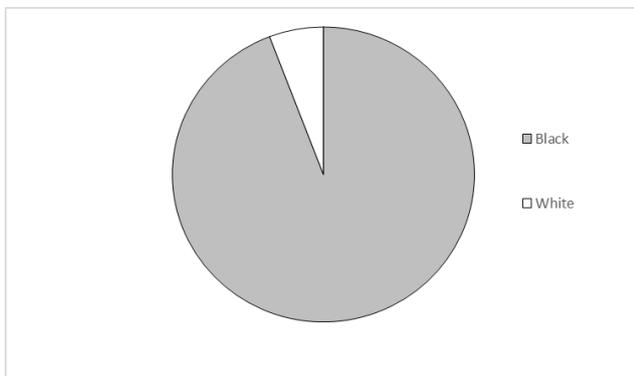


Figure 5.2: Frequency Distribution of Race of Respondents (n = 50)

Table 5.3 indicates that the majority of the samples (61%) were married while the smallest portions of the sample (2%) were widowed.

Table 5.3:

Frequency Distribution of Marital Status (n = 50)

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	14	28
Married	30	60
Divorced	5	10
Widowed	1	2

Figure 5.3 indicates that the majority of the samples (72.5%) were employed for 10 years or less in the DM, while 26.7% were employed between 11 and 20 years. Only 1 respondent (0.8%) was employed for a period of more than 21 years in the DM.

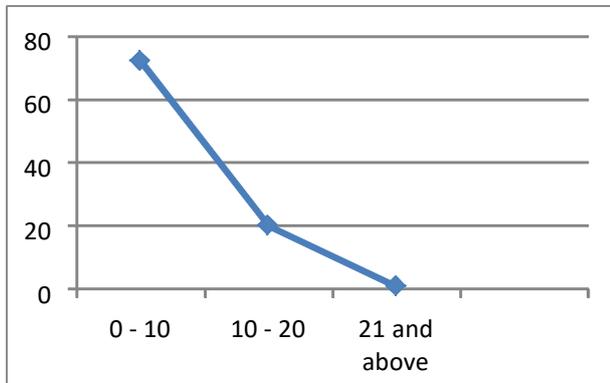


Figure 5.3: Frequency Distribution of Years of Employment in the DM (n = 50)

5.3.3 Frequency distributions for the survey questions

The frequency distributions for the 5 survey questions are indicated in Figure 5.4 and Tables 5.4 to 5.6 below.

5.3.3.1 Length of the MSDP attended?

Figure 5.4 indicates that the sample that attended MSDP was roughly equally divided between the four question choices regarding the length that the MSDP which they attended. A total of 8% indicated that their MSDP was conducted over a period of 1 – 3 weeks, a total of 36% said theirs was conducted over a period of 1 – 3 months, a total of 36% theirs was conducted over a period of 4 – 6 months, and a total of 20% indicated that theirs was conducted over a period of one year or above.

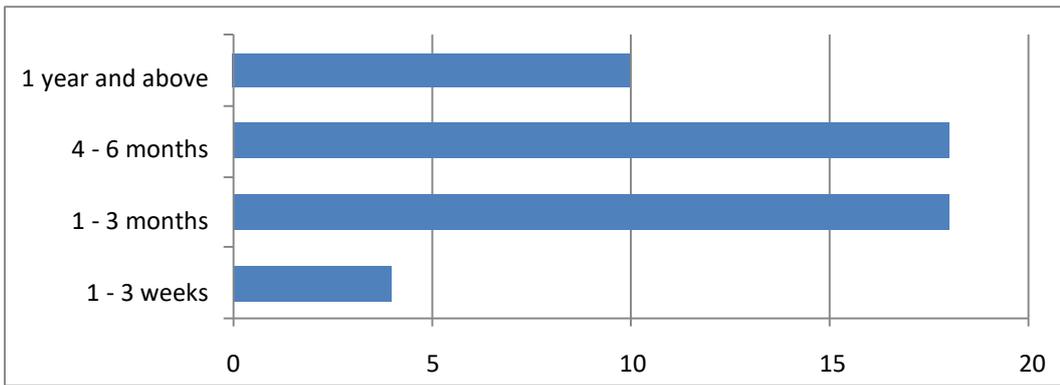


Figure 5.4: Frequency Distribution of Length of the MSDP attended (n = 50)

5.3.3.2 Was promotion obtained after attending the MSDP?

Table 5.4 indicates that the majority of the sample who answered this question (64%) indicated that they were promoted after attending the MSDP. The rest of the sample (26%) indicated that they did not receive promotion after attending the MSDP, while a total of five managers did not respond to this question.

Table 5.4:

Frequency Distribution of Promotion Obtained after Attending the MSDP (n = 50)

Promotion obtained?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	32	64
No	13	26
Did not respond	5	10

5.3.3.3 What is your attitude towards the MSDP?

Table 5.5 indicates that the majority of the sample (94%) indicated a positive (Good) attitude towards the MSDP, while none of the respondents had a negative (Bad) attitude towards it.

Table 5.5:

Frequency Distribution of Attitude towards the MSDP (n = 50)

Attitude	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Good	47	94
Average	3	6
Bad	0	0

5.3.3.4 Level of support by management for the MSDP?

Table 5.6 indicates that the majority of the sample (90%) reported that the level of support for the MSDP by management was Good, 10% reported that the level of support was Average, while none of the respondents reported a Bad level of support.

Table 5.6:

Frequency Distribution of Level of Support by Management for the MSDP (n = 50)

Level of support	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Good	45	90
Average	5	10
Bad	0	0

5.3.3.5 Does the MSDP improve service delivery?

The total sample of 50 indicated that they were of the opinion that the MSDP improved service delivery.

5.4 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS AND RESULTS OF THE STUDY

5.4.1 Discussion of the qualitative findings (interviews)

5.4.1.1 What is a MSDP?

Most participants who were interviewed reported that they were aware of the introduction of the MSDP in their workplace and that they understand the reason as to why the MSDP was introduced

in their workspace. Managers admitted that the MSPD was introduced to provide them with the knowledge, skills, competencies and attitudes needed to improve service delivery towards the needy communities that they served. This is because the municipality lacks many competencies to enable them to provide effective services. The definition of the MSDP by interviewees centred around the development and improvement of skills, competencies, knowledge and abilities acquired by municipal employees in order to improve service delivery to their communities. The definition understandably converged towards the definition of SDPs propagated in the literature by authors such as Erasmus et al. (2010) and Fear et al. (2014) who placed emphasis on fundamental or all-encompassing aspects such as education and skills provision. In support of this view, Mc Garth et al. (2008) argued that the MSDP is a type of SDP aimed at capacitating communities and other consumers of municipal services with education and skills they can apply in their daily living and operation. For participants, the MSDP means improving managers' and employees' competencies, skills, and knowledge, and equipping them with the appropriate skills and abilities to work effectively and improve their productivity. Some interviewees highlighted that the MSDP has to do with managers and employees attaining key performance indicators, which ensured that they delivered services effectively. These findings indicate that the MSDP is a familiar concept in the DM and that there is awareness as to the purpose of the programme, which is to capacitate managers and employees through training in order to improve service delivery to the local communities.

5.4.1.2 What skills did you gain during the MSDP?

Participants mentioned several skills that were gained during the MSDP, and that these skills were critical in their day to day scope of operation. Participants mentioned specific skills that form the basic service delivery requirements of the DM, such as skills regarding the provision of water, electricity, sanitation and housing, roads and waste management. The findings reveal that service delivery related skills are the main focus of the MSDP within the DM which could be interpreted to mean that MSDP was achieving its main objective, namely to address service delivery challenges in the DM. These findings are supported by Clark (2011) who argued that municipalities are the sphere of government with the biggest responsibility of providing basic services to local communities such as water, electricity, sanitation and roads.

5.4.1.3 *Which aspects of service delivery were you exposed to during the MSDP?*

Interviewees mentioned that they were exposed to aspects of service delivery such as new ways of doing things, the importance of monitoring service delivery, and how to ensure the quality and rate of service delivery. Interviewees expressed the view that previously, skills such as problem solving, innovation, monitoring, rating the quality of services were under estimated, but they have now realised the value of having those skills in their day-to-day operations. This finding supports the view of Houldsworth and Jirasinghe (2006) that service delivery concerned the nature and extent to which organisations, including local municipalities, are capable of enhancing the performance of their employees by training them to provide clients with the quality services they demand.

5.4.1.4 *What barriers to the MSDP did you encounter in your local municipality?*

Participants “E”, “B”, “H”, and “ I”; expressed diverse views regarding the barriers that they encountered in their local municipalities regarding the MSDP. They reported that they encountered barriers such as lack of financial support, lack of interest by attendees in attending the MSDP, a shortage of tools and equipment, incompetence of HRM&D personnel and the selection of the wrong attendees. Managers were particularly concerned by the fact that attendees were not selected on merit and that there was a trend where employees would fail the MSDP completely but still be given more chances to pass it while more deserving employees were waiting in the queue to attend a MSDP. Some employees would simply not attend classes and there was no proper monitoring system to curb absenteeism. According to the managers interviewed, poor planning and a lack of monitoring and coordination were the main contributors towards barriers being experienced. The main blame for this is attributed to leadership and HRM&D official for not planning and coordinating the programme properly. Interviewees expressed their serious concerns towards the issue of barriers as they were seen to have the potential to negatively affect the successful execution of the MSDP. Despite the fact that certain barriers were encountered by some of the participants, MSDP training was not derailed by the mentioned barriers, as the programme was rolled out and continued successfully according to the interviewees. These findings demonstrate that when providing programmes such as a MSDP, care must be taken to eliminate barriers in order to ensure that the intervention attains its intended objectives. Landsberg et al. (2011) warned that barriers must be carefully managed to ensure the successful implementation of the MSDP.

5.4.1.5 *How could the MSDP be improved?*

Interviewees expressed the view that various interventions were needed in order to improve the implementation of the MSDP. Interventions suggested were an increase in the provision of funding for the programme, implementation of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, regular communication in the form of roadshows and motivation to enrol in the MSDP, proper and transparent selection of attendees, and the provision of resources and tools required during training. Additional interventions mentioned were that the provincial government and other relevant stakeholders such as TVET, LGSETA and SALGA should take leadership and provide the necessary support, while HRM&D officials should advocate the programme on a regular basis and monitor all aspects of the programme. Appointment of accredited training providers was also reported as a crucial aspect towards the improvement of the MSDP. These findings highlight the fact that programmes such as the MSDP should be one of a municipality's critical strategic management focuses as it requires proper leadership which will then ensure the achievement of the objectives of the Skills Development Act. These objectives are among others to improve productivity in the workplace and the competitiveness of employers; to improve the delivery of social services to communities; to increase the levels of investment in education and training in the labour market; and to improve the return on investment of training funds spent [Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act no 97 of 1998)].

5.4.1.6 *Was the MSDP that you attended successful?*

Interviewees reported that according to their perceptions the MSDP within the DM was successful and led to improved service delivery. The success of the intervention was attributed to management of training, conduciveness of the training environment, knowledge of the trainer usefulness and relevance of the content, which many of them rated as positive. Participant reported that the MSDP assisted them to gain and improve valuable competencies and skills which contribute to the primary goal of MSDP such as improvement of quality of life, reduced unemployment rate in the community and providing communities with adequate infrastructure and services. This finding is in line with the view that SDPs lead to the application of good organisational practices, resulting in the satisfaction of clients' needs (WPPSTE, 1997).

5.4.1.7 *If No, why was it not successful?*

In this respected only two interviewees pointed out that the programme they attended was not successful and provided the following reasons: improper skills audit, irregularities during the tender process and incompetent service providers. This demonstrates the fact that proper management of processes should be employed, and that all stakeholders should play their part in order to ensure that the DM runs a successful MSDP

5.4.2 **Discussion of the quantitative results (survey questionnaire)**

5.4.2.1 *Discussion of the biographical information obtained*

a Gender

More female municipal employees (55%) than male was involved in the MSDP. This is in line with South African government legislation which encouraged the employment of females in management positions within municipalities and other sectors. [Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act No 55 of 1988)].

b Age

The majority of respondents (67%) fell under the age category of 36-55 years. This is an indication that the DM's management and workforce has embraced a life-long learning philosophy. Such a philosophy will ensure that employees are empowered with knowledge, skills and attitudes which they can use to contribute positively to the economic growth of the region and achieve the purpose of government legislation [Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act no 97 of 1998)].

c Race

The fact that the majority of the sample (94%) was Black while only 6% were White is in line with South African government legislation which compelled the employment of previously disadvantaged groups in municipalities [Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act No 55 of 1988)].

c

Attitude towards the MSDP

The fact that the majority of the sample (94%) responded with a positive (good) attitude towards the MSDP should be seen in a positive light, as it indicated that most employees see the value of the MSDP. This overwhelming positive attitude towards the programme could be attributed to the gains employees experienced after they completed their MSDP, such as incentives, higher salary progressions and promotions (Martinez-Fernandez & Sharpe, 2013).

d

Level of support by management for the MSDP

The majority of respondents (90%) reported that the level of support for the MSDP was Good. This could be attributed to the involvement of different stakeholders who provided different kinds of support and resources that can be categorised under social, financial, cultural and political. The HSRC (2013) of South Africa stressed that such involvement is essential for the successful implementation of vocational education and training in South Africa.

e

Whether the MSDP improves service delivery

The total quantitative sample of 50 managers indicated that they believed that the MSDP implemented in their DM and local municipalities improved service delivery. This indicates that according to the managers sampled the MSDP does in fact achieve its proposed objective of improving service delivery in local governments. This is supported by research by Jagannathan (2013) who maintains that SDPs, including the MSDP, have the potential of improving service delivery. This is further supported by Ngcwangu (2014), who argued that SDPs such as the MSDP are aimed at capacitating personnel who in turn are able to improve service delivery to customers and clients.

5.4.3 Discussion of the mixed-methods findings

As discussed under *Section 4.3.3: Mixed-methods research approach*, the concurrent embedded mixed-method research strategy, one of six propagated by Creswell (2009), was considered most appropriate for this study. This approach treats both qualitative and quantitative research data gathered on an equal basis in order to obtain a complete picture of the phenomenon under investigation. Creswell (2009) noted this aspect of equality when he stated that the collected data

within a concurrent embedded strategy is not compared but reside side-by-side as two different pictures for the assessment of a single phenomenon of interest. In the current study the need was to investigate the subjective experiences of managers who had attended the MSDP as well as the objective, rated perceptions of managers who had attended the MSDP. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) of the MSDP and whether it was considered to be successful in improving service delivery in the DM or not. The aim of data analysis and the subsequent discussion of results in the current study was thus not to integrate nor triangulate the qualitative and quantitative data. As such, the two sets of data were kept separate but equal (Creswell, 2009), and the overall assessment of the effectiveness of the MSDP was derived from the separate discussion of the results of the qualitative and quantitative data, as done in Section 5.4.1 and 5.4.2 above. This overall mixed-methods assessment indicated that the MSDP was considered to be effective in improving service delivery in a DM in South Africa.

This mixed-methods empirical study finding supports the statistics for the DM and its five LMs contained in various reports and documents. The DM experienced a minimal of service delivery protests compared to other provinces in South Africa over the last 10 years (SALGA, 2015), improved the quality of its financial reporting over the last 5 years (Editorial, 2015), and has been constantly improving its service delivery to local communities over the last seven years (Census, 2011; DM Annual Report 2013/14, 2014; IDP Review for 2016/2017, 2017). From the mixed-methods empirical study findings and the statistics given above, it can be concluded that the perception amongst managers in the DM, which was the focus of this study, is that the MSDP can be considered successful in improving the service delivery in the applicable DM and its five LMs.

5.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter the findings of the qualitative study and results of the quantitative study were reported and discussed. The chapter started with a recap of how the qualitative data was gathered and analysed after which the findings of the individual interviews were reported. This was followed by a recap of how the quantitative data was gathered and analysed after which the results of the survey questionnaire were reported. The chapter was then concluded with a discussion of the qualitative findings and quantitative results. In the next chapter the conclusions, limitations and recommendations will be discussed.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the conclusions, limitations and recommendations of the study are discussed. The chapter starts with conclusions regarding the specific literature aims, the specific empirical aims and the general aim of the study. Thereafter the limitations of the literature review and empirical study are discussed, and the chapter is concluded with recommendations for future research, for the participating District municipality as well as for the field of Industrial and Organisational Psychology.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS REGARDING THE AIMS OF THE STUDY

6.2.1 Conclusions regarding the specific theoretical aims of the study

The study had five specific theoretical aims:

- To investigate the concept of skills development.
- To investigate the concept of service delivery.
- To investigate the concept of service delivery at local government level in South Africa.
- To investigate the concept of skills development programmes (SDPs) at local government level in South Africa.
- To investigate the theoretical relationship between SDPs and service delivery.

6.2.1.1 The 1st specific theoretical aim: To investigate the concept of skills development

This aim was achieved in Chapter 2 of this study. From the literature review, the following conclusions can be made:

- Skills development (SD) entails some form of government-led and private sector initiatives for raising skills levels in the working population and those entering work within a particular society (Houldsworth & Jirasinghe, 2006).

- SD is an employment programme that provide financial assistance to eligible individuals to help them obtain the skills training they need to obtain employment, the most important financial support being in the form of bursaries (OECD, 2013).
- The concepts of education, training and skills are important concepts that are closely associated with SD, which is provided to individuals through education and training (Kruss, 2004).
- SD can be explained using different components and purposes such as addressing inequality within society, a lifelong learning approach, addressing the shortage of skills, a form of human resources development and a cornerstone for leadership development, all of which is aimed at the improvement of the economy as a democratic obligation (Coetzee, 2013).

6.2.1.2 *The 2nd specific theoretical aim: To investigate the concept of service delivery*

- This aim was also achieved in Chapter 2 of this study and the following conclusions were drawn from the literature review:
- Service delivery is recognised as a major contributor to customer satisfaction (Fear et al., 2014).
- Service delivery is viewed as a concept that concerns the nature and extent to which organisations, including local municipalities, are capable of enhancing the performance of their respective employees, which is determined by the manner in which they were trained and skilled for the purpose of providing clients with the most quality services they initially demanded (Houldsworth & Jirasinghe, 2006).

6.2.1.3 *The 3rd specific theoretical aim: To investigate the concept of service delivery at local government level in South Africa*

This aim was also achieved in Chapter 2 of this study and the following conclusions were drawn from the literature review:

- Service delivery is a critical performance indicator for local government as they make up the sphere of government mandated by the constitution to provide basic services such as water, electricity, roads, education and health to the communities falling within their jurisdiction (Clark, 2011).
- Service delivery at local government level in South Africa (SA) is currently closely associated with skills development, which is contained in legislation specifically promulgated to promote lifelong learning on the part of employees and those individuals who have not yet been absorbed into the labour system (Coetzee, 2013).
- Service delivery at local government level in South Africa (SA) is considered ineffective at present (Coetzee, 2013).
- Service delivery at local government level in SA is marked by protests, indicating that several local municipalities are failing to provide their respective communities with public services which had been promised during election campaigns, such as water, electricity, housing, sanitation and health services (Reddy, 2014).
- Service delivery at local government level in SA is considered to have failed and as a result the reputation of municipalities has been tarnished by a series of challenges, which are believed to be a direct consequence or manifestation of municipal capacity constraints, financial viability problems, service delivery protests, convoluted political process, corruption and poor planning as well as monitoring and evaluation challenges (Kanyane, 2014).

6.2.1.4 *The 4th specific theoretical aim: To investigate the concept of skills development programmes at local government level in South Africa*

This aim was achieved in Chapter 3 of this study. From the literature review the following conclusions were made:

- Skills development programmes (SDPs) at local government level in SA means that all levels of government organisations, including local municipalities, are expected to educate and train individuals who were previously excluded from occupying high skilled positions at the management, leadership and operational levels (McGrath & Paterson, 2008).
- SDPs at local government level in SA are aimed at capacitating communities and other consumers of municipal services with education and skills they can apply in their daily living and operations (McGrath & Paterson, 2008).
- SDPs at local government level in SA purport to educate and train the unemployed and retrenched graduates as well as municipal managers with the ICT skills required to support local government in services and infrastructure delivery (Mathis & Jackson, 2011).
- SDPs at local government level in SA are an approach aimed at redressing the past inequalities within the South African dispensation (Kruss, 2004).
- SDPs at local government level in SA include intervention such as the student-to-government (S2G) approach which is aimed at addressing the skills shortage of local municipality employees. This is achieved through learnerships and mentoring programme provided to students at recognised South African colleges and universities who are supervised and mentored in the management, processes and operations of local government functionalities (Landsberg et al., 2011).

6.2.1.5 *The 5th specific theoretical aim: To investigate the theoretical relationship between skills development programmes and service delivery*

This aim was also achieved in Chapter 3 and the following conclusions were drawn from the literature review:

- A lack of SDPs has been closely associated with poor service delivery in South African municipalities (DPLG, 2005).

- Poor service delivery at local government level has been attributed to a lack of training and development of municipal officials (Patterson, 2008).
- SDPs lead to good business practices, as quality products are delivered, service delivery improves, and client satisfaction increases (Houldworth & Jirasinghe, 2006).
- SDPs have been associated with effective and adequate provision of good services and products (Giguere, 2005).

6.2.2 Conclusion regarding the specific qualitative empirical aims of the study

The study had one specific qualitative empirical aim:

6.2.2.1 To explore how managers who have attended the MSDP describe the effectiveness of the programme to improve service delivery within a DM in South Africa

This aim was achieved by conducting individual semi-structured interviews with 10 managers who had attended a MSDP, and the following conclusions were drawn from these interviews, which were based on the perceptions of those managers who attended MSDP:

- The MSDP is perceived to be successful in contributing to the improvement of service delivery within a DM in South Africa.
- The MSDP ensures exposure to new ways of doing things, which contributes towards an improvement in service delivery in a DM in South Africa.
- The MSDP equips employees with the appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes to increase job performance, and thus service delivery at local government level.

- The MSDP ensures that employees gain relevant skills to deliver municipality basic services such as water, electricity, sanitation and housing.

6.2.3 Conclusion regarding the specific quantitative empirical aims of the study

The study had one specific quantitative empirical aim:

6.2.3.1 To determine how managers who have attended the MSDP rate the programme in improving service delivery in the DM

This aim was achieved by requesting 50 managers who had attended a MSDP to complete a survey questionnaire, and the following conclusions were drawn from the ratings to this questionnaire:

- The MSDP enhances improvement of service delivery in a DM in South Africa.
- The MSDP increases the appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes of employees needed to improve service delivery at local government level.
- The MSDP forms a significant part of the strategic focus of the DM in the study.

6.2.4 Specific mixed-methods empirical aims

The study had three specific mixed-methods empirical aims:

6.2.4.1 The 1st specific mixed-methods empirical aim: To provide an overall assessment regarding the effectiveness of the MSDP in improving service delivery in the DM

This aim was achieved by considering the information obtained from the individual interviews and the survey questionnaire side-by-side on an equal basis, and without integrating or triangulating the information. The following conclusions were drawn from this information:

- The MSDP is perceived to be an effective intervention to improve service delivery in a DM in South Africa.

- The MSDP equips managers in the DM with relevant competencies to enable them to provide quality service to the DM and its local communities.
- The MSDP should form an integral part of the DM's strategic focus.
- Various barriers to the MSDP exist which must be eliminated by local government management.
- The MSDP equips the employees of the DM with relevant competencies to enable them to provide quality services to the DM and its local communities.
- The majority of managers in the DM have a positive attitude towards the MSDP.
- There is good support by management in the DM for the MSDP.
- Attendance of the MSDP by managers and employees is essential for improving the service delivery of local governments in South Africa.

6.2.4.2 *The 2nd specific mixed-methods empirical aim: To make recommendations for further research regarding skills development and service delivery. This aim will be addressed below under 6.4: RECOMMENDATIONS.*

6.2.4.3 *The 3rd specific mixed-methods empirical aim: To make recommendations regarding the contribution of this study to the field of Industrial and Organisational Psychology (IOP). This aim will be addressed below under 6.4: RECOMMENDATIONS.*

6.2.5 General aim of the study

The general aim of this study was to explore the effectiveness of a MSDP in the improvement of service delivery within a DM in South Africa. To achieve this aim, a two phased research design was followed consisting of a literature review phase and an empirical phase. The empirical phase followed a concurrent embedded mixed-method research strategy which was considered most

appropriate for this study, as it uses one data collection phase during which both qualitative and quantitative data are simultaneously collected and treats both qualitative and quantitative research data gathered on an equal basis, The collected data were not compared but resided side-by-side as two different pictures for the assessment of the MSDP, without integrating or triangulating the data. This mixed-methods research strategy enabled the researcher to determine the effectiveness of a MSDP in the improvement of service delivery within a DM in South Africa from a qualitative and quantitative perspective. The conclusion can thus be made that the general aim of the research was achieved.

6.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

6.3.1 Limitations of the literature review

The following limitations of the literature review were identified:

- There are limited studies in the literature regarding the relationship between SDPs and service delivery.
- There are limited studies in the literature regarding the effectiveness of SDPs in South Africa.
- There is limited literature regarding the effectiveness of the MSDP in local government in South Africa.

6.3.2 Limitation of the qualitative empirical study

The following limitation of the qualitative empirical study was identified:

- Interviewees were only asked six open-ended questions. Although these were identified as appropriate and sufficient to capture the essence of the qualitative empirical research aim, additional questions could have provided a deeper understanding of the experience of managers regarding the MSDP.

6.3.3 Limitations of the quantitative empirical study

The following limitations of the quantitative empirical study were identified:

- The sample used in this study was one of convenience, which limited the randomness of participants chosen thereby affecting representativity.
- Statistically the responses of the participants were only analysed in terms of the frequency of scores rated, and no statistical relationships between the biographical information and the survey questions, or between the survey questions themselves were calculated. This could have added valuable correlational data to the results of the study.
- Respondents were only asked five survey questions. Although these were identified as appropriate and sufficient to capture the essence of the quantitative empirical research aim, additional questions could have provided an assessment of additional aspects which managers considered important regarding the MSDP.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.4.1 Recommendations for future research

The following recommendations for further research are made based on the conclusions and limitations of the study:

- The study has shown that the MSDP is effective in improving service delivery in local government. As such the MSDP should be studied further to determine its relationship to other organisational variables such as biographical information, productivity, efficiency and effectiveness.
- The relationship between SDPs and service delivery needs to be further explored in other contexts such as provincial and national government levels, and private sector organisations, in order to allow the results to be generalisable.

- Other research methods such as a longitudinal study should be conducted in order to explore the effectiveness of the MSDP to improve service delivery over a longer period of time.
- The quantitative survey regarding the effectiveness of the MSDP should be repeated with a larger sample so that results can be generalised to other DMs.

6.4.2 Recommendations for the participating District Municipality

The following recommendations are made for the participating District Municipality:

- The results of this study should be communicated to all employees in the DM to create awareness of the importance and effectiveness of the MSDP in improving service delivery, and to encourage employees who have not yet attended it to do so.
- The DM should be encouraged to adopt a lifelong approach to learning which will ensure that employees of all genders, age groups, race, marital status and years of employment enjoy equal access to the MSDP on a continual basis.
- The DM should increase its cooperation with stakeholders such as the LGSETA, institutions of Higher Learning, private training providers, community-based organisations and labour to ensure the participation in the MSDP by as many employees as possible.
- The DM should only use accredited training providers and facilitators who are subject matter specialist to present the MSDP.
- The DM should make a concerted effort to remove as many of the identified barriers to the MSDP as possible.
- The MSDP should be presented over a minimum of 12 months to ensure proper acquisition of the relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes.

- The DM should establish and capacitate a dedicated MSDP unit to deal with all aspects of the MSDP.

6.4.3 Recommendations regarding the contribution of this study to the field of Industrial and Organisational Psychology

The following recommendations are made for the field of Industrial and Organisational Psychology (IOP):

- As Industrial and Organisational Psychologists (OIPs) play an important role in skills development, the results of this study can be utilised by them to assist local governments to improve their service delivery to communities by capacitating employees with the required knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- As the role that local government plays in South Africa is crucial to the upliftment of local communities, the results of this study can be used by IOPs to assist municipalities in developing their human resources to improve their overall functioning.

6.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter the conclusions, limitations and recommendations of the study were discussed. The chapter started with conclusions regarding the specific literature aims, the specific empirical aims and the general aim of the study. Thereafter the limitations of the literature review and empirical study were discussed, and the chapter was concluded with recommendations for future research, for the participating DM as well as for the field of IOP.

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INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Research project: The effectiveness of a skills development programme in the improvement of service delivery within the District Municipality

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY: INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

I, _____ (participant Initials and Surname), confirm that I have been informed about the nature of, procedures involved in, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation in this research project. I am prepared to voluntarily participate in this study and understand that I can withdraw at any time without giving reasons for this withdrawal. I also understand that all information arising from the study will be treated as confidential and that at no time will I be individually identified.

I consent to having an individual interview conducted with me and that the interview may be audio-tape recorded and that only the researcher and transcriber will have access to this audio recording. I am also aware that the findings of this study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings. I agree not to disclose the identity of other participants that will be interviewed to any other person.

Participant Initials and Surname _____ (Please print)

Participant signature _____ Date _____

SURVEY INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Background to the research project

A research project is being conducted by Ms Mapula Mamburu from the National Department of Labour in the District Municipality (DM) and its five local municipalities with the title “*The effectiveness of a skills development programme in the improvement of service delivery within the District Municipality*”. Permission to conduct the research was firstly obtained from the Management Team of the DM and then from the Management Teams of the five local municipalities within the DM. After this was granted, ethical clearance to conduct the study was requested and obtained from the Ethics Committee of the University of South Africa where the researcher is currently busy with her Master’s degree in Industrial and Organisational Psychology. The information received from this study will be used to write her Master’s dissertation.

This project will benefit the DM and its local municipality by providing information to them regarding the Municipal Skills Development Programme (MSDP) and to what extent it is seen to improve service delivery. This information can then be used to adapt or refine the MSDP if necessary. In order to achieve the aim of the project, 10 participants need to be interviewed and 50 participants are needed to complete a survey questionnaire regarding various aspects of the MSDP and service delivery in the DM and its local municipalities. As one of the 50 participants who were identified to provide information by means of a survey, you are requested to please complete such a questionnaire. Each of the five local municipalities were requested to identify 10 managers who had attended the MSDP, and who were willing to participate in the study. You have thus been identified as one of these managers who are willing to complete a survey questionnaire regarding the MSDP.

A coordinator at your local municipalities will hand you this Informed Consent Form as well as a survey questionnaire to complete in your own time. If you are willing to take part in this study, please complete and sign the Informed Consent Form below. Once you have completed the questionnaire, please return it together with this signed Informed Consent Form to the coordinator, who will give all the completed forms to the researcher.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

I, _____ (participant Initials and Surname), confirm that I have read the background to the project and understand the nature of, procedures involved in, and potential benefits of participation in this research project. I am prepared to voluntarily participate in this study and understand that I can withdraw at any time without giving reasons for this withdrawal. I also understand that all information arising from the study will be treated as confidential and that at no time will I be individually identified.

I consent to anonymously complete a survey questionnaire regarding the MSDP and service delivery in the DM and the local municipalities. I am also aware that the findings of this study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings. I agree not to disclose the identity of other participants that will complete a questionnaire to any other person.

Participant Initials and Surname _____ (Please print)

Participant signature _____ Date _____

QUESTIONS ASKED DURING INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

Question No	Question
1	What is a municipal skills development programme (MSDP)?
2	What skills did you gain during the MSDP?
3	Which aspect of service delivery were you exposed to during the MSDP?
4	What barriers to the MSDP did you encounter in your local municipality?
5	How could the MSDP be improved?
6	Was the MSDP that you attended successful?

COPY OF SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

BACKGROUND

The *aim of this questionnaire* is to collect, analyse and interpret data regarding your attendance of the MSDP. This data will be used to review the MSDP and identify any aspects that need to receive attention in order to improve the MSDP. As such, it will become an important tool for managers.

As a manager who has attended a MSDP in the past, you are invited to express your views on the MSDP that you attended. To this end you are asked to answer ALL the following questions honestly and openly. Your opinion is very important as it will assist managers at all levels in improving the MSDP.

Your views, concerns and opinions will be treated with the *utmost confidentiality*. For this reason, you need not identify yourself by name on this questionnaire.

Thank you for your participation and cooperation in this study!

Please read the instructions carefully and remember to answer each question as honestly as you can.

INSTRUCTIONS

This questionnaire consists of two sections, namely *Section A: Biographical Information and Section B: Survey Questions about the MSDP*.

Section A: Biographical Information

Under this section each item must be answered on the questionnaire itself in the blocks provided. Please indicate your choice by making a cross (X) over the appropriate block for each of the 5 items. Please mark all the 5 items.

Section B: Survey Questions about the MSDP

Under this section each question must also be answered on the questionnaire itself in the blocks provided. Please indicate your choice by making a cross (X) over the appropriate block for each of the 5 items. Please mark all the 5 items.

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. What is your gender?

Male	Female
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2. How old are you?

0-35 Years	36-55 Years	56 years and Above
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3. What is your race?

Black	White	Coloured	Indian
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4. What is your marital status?

Single	Married	Divorced	Widowed
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5. For how many years have you been employed in the DM?

0-10	11-20	21 and Above
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SECTION B: SURVEY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE MSDP

6. What was the length of the MSDP that you attended?

1-3 Weeks	1-3 Months	4-6 Months	1 year and above
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7. Did you obtain promotion after having attended the MSDP?

No	Yes
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8. What is your attitude towards the MSDP?

Good	Average	Bad
------	---------	-----

9. Level of support by management for the MSDP?

Good	Average	Bad
------	---------	-----

10. In your opinion, does the MSDP improve service delivery?

No	Yes
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