

The Need for Training and Development in Provincial Government Departments: A Case of a Government Communication & Information System

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Many training and development programmes in the public sector are not informed by the training needs of the employees. This paper explores how training needs analysis is conducted in South Africa drawing on a case study of the Department of Government Communication and Information Systems (GCIS). Data for this study were collected through a mixed method approach. The quantitative part used a questionnaire survey with purposively selected participants (N=108) from the GCIS and 13 in-depth interviews. The findings revealed that despite the existence of Personal Development Plans (PDPs) in the GCIS, there is an absence of diversity and particularity in the training programmes provided in the GCIS. Furthermore, the findings revealed that the advent of the fourth industrial revolution, which requires GCIS employees, particularly the communicators, to use various constantly evolving items of technological equipment means that individual training needs must be considered. These findings have profound implications for human resource development practitioners in the public sector as they provide important insights into the reason for the ineffectiveness of training and development.

Key words: *Training, development, state, skills, performance, knowledge, human resource, learning, needs, planning and implementation*

1. INTRODUCTION

Training and Development (T&D) has turned out to be a key issue for organisations globally, an issue which continues to inhabit centre-stage, being relevant predominantly for public sector organisations. The unequal performance of skills in the public sector is recognised in Chapter 13 of the *National Development Plan* (NDP) as being among the main challenges to the delivery of services at local, provincial and national levels. In addition, in Chapter 9 of the NDP, ongoing professional development, lifelong learning, innovation and the creation of expertise are considered to be strong elements in the capacity-building of the public sector and for use in addressing the shortage of public sector skills. The literature supports the opinion that the productivity of an organisation depends to a large extent on the performance of the workers. The need to ensure that workers have sufficient skills is evident. Chelechele (2009:47) argues that the proper T&D of public servants through quality skills development practices is required in order to improve organisational efficiency and the ability of employees to provide high-quality services to the public.

Policies such as those delineated in the *White Paper on Public Service Training and Education of 1997* and the *White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service of 1997* provide guidelines for building professional capacity. *The Skills Development Act, 97 of 1998* was introduced to strengthen the skills development approaches by organisations to ensure that everyone has access to education (Phago, Mohlala & Mpehle, 2014). The main idea of the Act is to improve the quality of working life of all citizens in terms of productivity, self-employment, and the T&D of employees, which includes learnerships. Furthermore, the *Skills Development Act, 97 of 1998* was introduced to address the challenge that was posed during the apartheid era in terms of the provision of training and education, and to close the skills gap. The *Skills Development Levies Act of 1999* was adopted with the goal of attracting resources to support initiatives for the development of skills. Despite substantial financial investment in the T&D of civil servants by organisations and the government, the effect of T&D initiatives on public employees is typically illusory. Given the reality of the lack of service delivery in the country, these strategic measures to strengthen the capability of public servant have not yet produced the desired results. Furthermore, the relationship between T&D initiatives and the success of organisations is still a topic for debate.

Furthermore, data from several studies suggest that T&D in the public sector has been receiving notable attention from scholars (Nwokeiu 2018); Al-Mughairi, (2015); Rani & Garg, (2014); Rajasekar & Khan, (2013). For instance Nwokeiu, Ziska & Achilike (2018) assess factors that may have a significant influence on the transfer of training in the public sector organisation. Also Al-Mughairi (2015) focuses on the evaluation and improvement of Kirkpatrick's four levels model. In another study Rani & Garg (2014) examine the effectiveness of T&D programmes for employees in fulfilment of their duties. Similarly, Rajasekar & Khan (2013) investigate the state of the training function and its effectiveness in Omani government. However, much of the research on T&D in the public sector has focused mainly on the factors

influencing training and on the impact of these factors. Surprisingly, training needs analysis as one of the critical factors influencing T&D has not been examined particularly closely in the public sector. Given the lack of evidence-based knowledge on the T&D needs analysis in South African government departments, this study seeks to illuminate these debates through an examination and analysis of T&D needs, specifically through a case study of the GCIS Department in South Africa.

This paper is organised into seven sections. Following this introduction, the next section presents a brief literature review on T&D. The third section explains the mixed method that was used to glean data for this study. Next, the fourth section considers and provides analysis of the findings of the GCIS case study. Finally, the last three sections of the paper provide discussion, draw conclusions and suggest how the public sector could implement T&D.

2. THE NEED FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Many scholars have argued that South Africa has a massive and increasing problem with its critical skills shortages in most sectors of the economy (Berman *et al.*, 2010; Phago, Mohlala, & Mpehle, 2014; Qwabe & Pillay, 2009). These authors point out that South Africa has few personnel with the essential skills to make a difference in our economy. Pillay, Subban, & Qwabe (2008) add that the shortage of staff with sufficient expertise and talent is a formidable challenge to service delivery. Other scholars are equally concerned with the ineffectiveness of the response of the government to society's needs. Mummmenthey (2016), for example, argues that skills shortages and unemployment do not only restrain the country rigorously in terms of future economic growth and further development, but most importantly, they are the extreme barrier against the achievement of a more equal society. In fact, attempts to bring about development in society are largely dependent on government staff. The scarcity of skills produces a considerable number of organisational problems in terms of proficiency and skills management, with the result that organisational effectiveness is a rather scarce quality.

Lack of skills development in the South African public service adds to poor service delivery because of inefficiency and ineffectiveness in government departments. The *National Planning Commission* (2012) further argues that skills development in the South African public service is seen as one of the major challenges to improving living standards in society, and that it is also a means of increasing efficiency levels to meet the social service demands in the country. Because the poor development of its skills can put the value of human capital at serious risk, it is important that further investment should be made in the skills and knowledge of the workforce through training. South Africa's development agenda will not work if public servants lack the requisite skills to do their jobs. The development of the human capital development resources of the public service is the best way to enhance the quality of the services delivered and to make the personnel more successful and efficient in the role they play with regard to the people they serve. Effective training is empowering and makes people feel valued. It fosters a



shared understanding of basic principles, gives people a chance to develop specific skills or knowledge and this allows for a neutral environment in which workers can discuss the challenges they face (*National Planning Commission*, 420). T&D do not merely improve individual competency, but they also improve the performance of an organisation. Based on the above, T&D should not be treated as an expense to an organisation. Rather, it should be seen as an important benefit added to the organisation, leading to the possible achievement of a superior competitive advantage.

3. FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SKILLS CHALLENGE IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SECTOR

There are numerous factors that contribute to the skills challenge in the South African public sector. The following section provides a discussion of such factors. The factors responsible for the skills challenge in the South African Public Sector include historical reasons, but not exclusively so. They also include political interference and technological changes.

3.1 Historical reasons

Over the years there has been a significant shift in the purpose and nature of the systems of South African governance. A number of authors have considered the effects of apartheid on the skills problem in the South African public sector (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000; Chelechele, 2009); Mummmenthey, 2010). For instance, Mummmenthey (2010) argues that the problem of skills development inherited from past restrictive education and training policies cannot be resolved easily. He further argues that apart from dealing with the general pressures produced by globalisation and the knowledge economy, South Africa faces some unique domestic challenges in skills development. These challenges have been inherited mainly from the apartheid era. Mohlala & Mpehle (2014) argue that pre-1994 education and training was premised on the policy of separate development, which prevented most of the African people from accessing relevant human resources T&D opportunities. The policies that were developed and implemented during the time of the apartheid government were intended to stifle the growth of human capital for Africans. Therefore, the proper implementation of T&D programmes must be seen as a priority that should also address the issues of the past.

Having said that, it may be impossible to understand recent governance system and human resource development in South Africa without considering the anti-apartheid struggle. In April 1994 the democratically elected government which then came into power did not take over a clean slate. (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000). Sheoraj (2007) also points out that the subject of skills in South Africa can hardly be isolated from its historical context. To this end, it is important to relate the current state of skills to the imbalances created by Apartheid. According to Mummmenthey (2010:10) due to the disintegrative and 'exclusive' education and training policy during the apartheid era, the overall educational system as well as its delivery institutions (i.e. private and public education and training providers) was highly fragmented and often



dysfunctional. Mohlala & Mpehle (2014) state that the post-1994 T&D landscape, which aimed at fast-tracking and empowering the previously disadvantaged people in South Africa, assumed priority with the implementation of a constitutional accord. It is for the reason that T&D is still needed in the South African public sector - in order to develop those who were disadvantaged during the apartheid era.

The South African democratic transition in 1994 saw the implementation of public sector reforms in all spheres of government. This placed a strain on workers who had been trained in an apartheid post-schooling system that left the majority of people without adequate employability skills. It is thus essential to remember that it was necessary to redress the legacy of the previous administration's oppression of the country's black majority by the then minority white administration (Mummenthey, 2010). In order to deliver public services to the expectant citizenry, the post-apartheid government was constrained by limited skills in both those who were already employed and those transitioning from school education. In addition to expanding the post-schooling system, the public sector embraced T&D for its workers. This was supported by both policy and funding. Unfortunately, the effectiveness of the training has been questionable. This could be countered by establishing an effective human resource development system which ensures that employees are provided with the skills required to carry out their jobs.

3.2 Technological changes

Continuous improvements in production technology and working practices involve ongoing interventions in T&D. Although some companies operate in stable market environments, others operate in organisations that require increasingly varying technologies (Rainbird, 2000). For the latter, it became important for them to train their workers on a continuous basis and to retain them.. Changes in the manufacturing processes of a highly complex product must affect the frequency of training offered by a business. In order to adapt to the changes, these modifications require not only highly qualified workers, but continuous learning. According to Hasani (2015), today's civil servants are addressing problems of unprecedented complexity in societies that are more pluralistic and demanding than ever. At the same time, the governance structure and tools are increasingly digital, transparent and interconnected. The GCIS department is experiencing rapid changes in the communication environment that call for technological advancement. Not all employees have the skills and capacity needed to be able to cope with advanced communication technology - thus the need for T&D. In general, to keep pace with the changes in their job requirements, civil servants need the right skills. Without the right skills, the day-to-day functions of government would cease. In support of these observations, Erasmus *et al.*, (2010) argue that training is the instrument by which the knowledge to implement technology is conveyed. There have been shifts in the job and market climate globally that require companies and their workers to continue learning to be on a par with other organisations. Similarly, Meyer *et al.*, (2012) suggest that in the workplace, new technologies have a significant influence on HRD.



4. METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

The data for this study were gleaned through a mixed-method approach of interviews and survey questionnaires.

4.1 Participants

The data for this study emerged from a broader project that used interviews & surveys using participants who were purposefully selected. The study drew on 108 such participants from the GCIS in South Africa. Out of the 108 respondents who participated in the study, almost 40 per cent were between 41 and 50 years old, 36.1 per cent were between 31 and 40 years old, 12 per cent were between 21 and 30 years old, 10.2 per cent were between 51 and 60 years old, whilst 2.8 per cent were above 60 years old. The age classification indicates that all age groups were fairly represented in the GCIS. Moreover, it was also noted that the highest level of education of the majority of the GCIS employees was a diploma, followed by degree qualifications, whilst the least number of respondents had no formal education. For ethical reasons, the identities of key informants in this study are not revealed. For instance, the alpha-numerical indicator GCIS1 is used for the first key informant.

4.2 Instrumentation

The tools used for gathering data in this study were semi-structured interviews. Interviewees (GCIS managers) were asked almost the same questions in a similar order, while the researcher allowed respondents to raise issues that they deemed relevant to the subject. A structured interview guide with issues to be discussed was determined in advance, but the sequencing was not strict, as it followed the trajectories of the themes that emerged during the interviews. The interview questions were derived from the research questions of this study. The questionnaire survey was used to solicit information on the perceptions of GCIS officials in South Africa regarding training needs analysis and implementation. The data collection instrument included a five-step Likert scale where respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement in terms of T&D rating as 1 = Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Somewhat agree, 4=Agree, and 5=Strongly agree. The Cronbach's Alpha was used to measure the internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.7$).

4.3 Collection procedures

In this research, an interview with 13 officials was conducted face-to face and telephonically. This method provided a platform for the study to gather detailed information from research participants. In addition, quantitative data were gleaned through a questionnaire survey. The study used a structured and an unstructured questionnaire survey (N=108). This method was useful in gaining detailed information on T&D needs analysis and implementation.

4.4 Data analysis

Before analysing qualitative data, audio files from the interviews were transcribed verbatim. The transcripts generated approximately 33 A4 pages. The transcripts were carefully studied to identify emerging themes in an iterative process. Regarding quantitative data, the study relied mainly on descriptive statistics to read the trends and patterns emerging from the data. Tables and graphs were used to give a pictorial view of issues that emerged from the data. In addition, the Chi-squared test was used to test whether or not variables such as experience and qualification determined their responses, and whether or not their responses were influenced by such variables.

5. RESULTS

5.1 The need for training and development for the current position

Training needs analysis is one of the critical subject matters for human resource development. The preliminary purpose of the study was to gain the views of the respondents on whether or not they needed T&D to maintain their current positions.

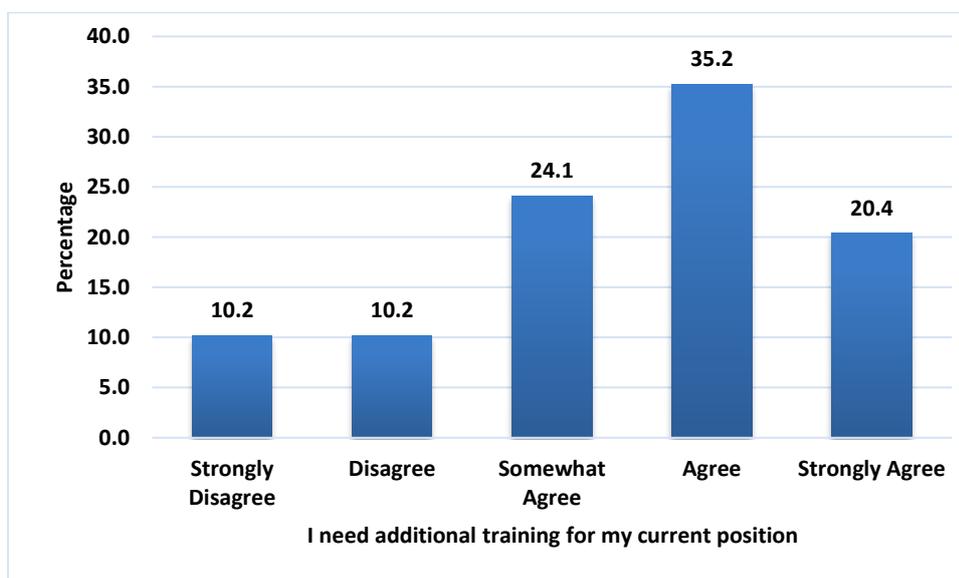


Figure 1: I need additional training for my current position

Figure 1 presents the summary statistics for training needs. It is apparent that most of the respondents (35.2%) strongly agreed that they need T&D for their current position. About 21 per cent of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The data presented in Figure 1 also shows that a minority of about 20 per cent of the respondents seems not to agree with the statement (10.2% strongly disagreed and 10.2% disagreed). Again 24.1 per cent somewhat agreed that they need T&D for their current position. The fact that about twenty per cent of the respondents are in disagreement with the statement that there is a need for T&D is a cause for

concern for the GCIS. This could either imply that that the employees are not aware of the T&D provided by GCIS relating to their current positions or that some employees have benefited from the training while others have not benefited and thus they need T&D. Nonetheless, the results, as shown in Figure 1, indicate that a majority of the GCIS employees need training for their current positions. These finding are profound for the GCIS human resource development practitioners as they strongly suggest that there is a substantial need for T&D for the GCIS employees. Furthermore, these results were scrutinised very closely by assessing respondents' perceived views about training needs in relation to their qualifications. A cross-tabulation was used to test these variables. Table 1 displays the training needs of the respondents in relation to their qualifications.

The quantitative data were supplemented by qualitative interviews and desktop analysis. The most interesting aspect of the findings is that most of the participants were of the opinion that there is a great need for T&D at the GCIS. On the whole, they argued that continued training is needed in the GCIS. Three broad themes emerged from the analysis, as highlighted in the following responses.

There is a need for T&D for employees in my section, but most important the Fourth Industrial Revolution, GCIS needs training in social media and current technology more than any other training as this is one of our core mandates. Not everyone is able to handle social media or the issue of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. This is very critical for the communicators in the department. GCISR1

I always get tasked to do the work that's not within my scope of work. This becomes too much for me as I am not trained how to do the work, but I also cannot say no because I know the work needs to continue. GCISR7

A recurrent theme in the interviews was a sense amongst the interviewees that that there is a need for T&D at GCIS. All the participants in the interviews agreed to the fact that there is a need for training in the Department. Their views surfaced mainly in relation to the introduction of the 'fourth industrial revolution' and job rotation. Their comments, as reflected in the extracts above, help in explaining the reasons for the training. For example, participant GCISR1 identified characteristics of the era of the fourth industrial revolution such as the use of social media and contemporary technology in the Department as motivating the need for training in T&D. Social media and current technology are the most common tools for the communicators in the Department. In addition to this finding, a documentary review shows that the GCIS is using technology to reach more South Africans through a government online application. The online application gives users quick access to government leaders, events, speeches and other government information (GCIS, 2019). In order to do so it is evident that there will be a greater use of social-media platforms such as 'Facebook', 'Twitter' and 'Instagram', as mentioned by the respondent GCISR1. Furthermore, the GCIS acknowledges the fact that in order to be ready for this, they are in the process of training staff for their drone



pilot licences to capture footage of larger events (GCIS, 2019). One concern expressed regarding the use of current technology was whether or not all the GCIS employees are ready for it.

One of the most common responses from the respondents was about job rotation. For example, respondent GCISR5 noted that as much as the training need may not be relevant to the current position the employees have, job rotation caused by the existence of vacant posts in the GCIS could lead to some of the employees needing training beyond the scope of their work. Respondent GCISR7 said that being given extra tasks which are not within her scope of work becomes too much, although there is extra compensation for it. Analysis of the *GCIS Annual Performance Plan* (2019) revealed that the GCIS has a vacancy rate of 8.99 per cent, which is perceived to be lower than the 10 per cent prescribed by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA). As much as the vacancy percentage is lower than the DPSA prescription, it seems that this has a major impact on some employees' capabilities to do the work, which might lead to stress. This is very important for the GCIS to note. Furthermore, most of the participants in the interviews, such as respondent GCISR10, referred to the issue of maintaining stakeholder relationships in order to deliver and strengthen government's message to the public. According to the documentary review, it was discovered from the strategic planning of the GCIS that one of its key mandates is to ensure and to continue to strengthen and integrate the government communication system by fostering communication partnerships with relevant stakeholders and coordinating forums for government communicators, among other things (GCIS, 2015). This is one of the reasons for the need for T&D. The employees of the GCIS are of the view that in order to maintain stakeholder relationships they need continuous training to keep up with the trends. Moreover, it is also increasingly recognised that it is inadequate to communicate in isolation. Partnerships with other related stakeholders that are intended to respond decisively to the socio-economic needs of the affected communities should be included (GCIS, 2019). The document analysis validates the importance of partnering with stakeholders, which is seen as vital for the GCIS to be able to address the socio-economic needs of South Africans.

Looking at all the data simultaneously, one can conclude that there is a great need for T&D for the GCIS employees. The human resource development practitioners need to consider T&D needs as identified by the respondents in order to allow the GCIS employees to achieve the mandate of the GCIS. The section below will investigate the T&D needs based on the organisational transformation.

5.2 The need for additional training to adapt to the current organisational transformation.

This paper also seeks to establish whether or not the GCIS had experienced any transformation that would require employees to engage in T&D in order to adapt to the organisational

transformation. Respondents were asked if they needed additional T&D to adapt to the organisational transformation. Their perceptions are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Cross-tabulation of the number of experiences regarding the organisational transformation T&D needs

		D	SWA	A	SA	Total	
Experience	Less than 1 year	% within experience	0,0%	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
		% within I need training	0,0%	4,3%	0,0%	0,0%	0,9%
		% of total	0,0%	0,9%	0,0%	0,0%	0,9%
	1-2 years	% within experience	46,2%	0,0%	46,2%	7,7%	100,0%
		% within I need training	33,3%	0,0%	12,5%	5,3%	12,0%
		% of total	5,6%	0,0%	5,6%	0,9%	12,0%
	3-5 years	% within experience	11,5%	19,2%	46,2%	23,1%	100,0%
		% within I need training	16,7%	21,7%	25,0%	31,6%	24,1%
		% of total	2,8%	4,6%	11,1%	5,6%	24,1%
	6-10 years	% within experience	3,8%	42,3%	26,9%	26,9%	100,0%
		% within I need training	5,6%	47,8%	14,6%	36,8%	24,1%
		% of total	0,9%	10,2%	6,5%	6,5%	24,1%
	Over 10 years	% within experience	19,0%	14,3%	54,8%	11,9%	100,0%
		% within I need training	44,4%	26,1%	47,9%	26,3%	38,9%
		% of total	7,4%	5,6%	21,3%	4,6%	38,9%
Total	% within experience	16,7%	21,3%	44,4%	17,6%	100,0%	
	% within I need training	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	
	% of total	16,7%	21,3%	44,4%	17,6%	100,0%	

Source: Field Survey 2019. Sample size = 108.

SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, SWA = Somewhat Agree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree.

About 62 per cent of the respondents agreed (44.4% agreed and 17.6% strongly agreed) that they needed training to adapt to the organisational transformation. However, 16.7 per cent of the respondent were of the view that they didn't need T&D to adapt to the organisational transformation. The findings above seem to reveal the truth about the current environment that the state operates in, which is forever changing, and hence the need for T&D. Public servants need to adapt to factors such as globalisation and political, social and economic transformation. The results in Table 1 support the argument that T&D should be an ongoing process in public administration due to the transformations that have been witnessed in government.

Further analysis was also made to determine whether or not the views of the respondents were dependent on the quantity of their experience at GCIS. Table 1 above shows that 54.8 per cent of the respondents with more than ten years' experience agreed that they needed T&D to adapt to the current organisational transformation. About 46.2 per cent of the respondents with three

to five years' experience agreed that they needed training to adapt to the current transformation. In addition, a total of 46.2 per cent of the respondents with one to two years' experience disagreed that they needed training to adapt to the current organisational transformation. Close to 20 per cent of the respondents with more than ten years' experience seemed to disagree with the statement. The reason for this could be that employees with more than ten years' experience have adequate skills to deal with organisational transformation. Another possible reason could be that their T&D needs are not merely based on organisational transformation. From this analysis, it is apparent that almost all the respondents with more than ten years of experience in the GCIS agree that they need T&D to adapt to organisational transformation. In addition, the views of the respondents regarding organisational transformation and the need for T&D are significantly associated with the years of experience of the respondents, as shown by the chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 16.683$, $df = 16$, $p = 0.04$). These quantitative data were supplemented by qualitative interviews and desktop analysis. The excerpts below present data obtained from interviews based on the summary of T&D relating to the organisational changes needed by employees of GCIS.

As GCIS employees, we need to ensure that every communication effort achieves the desired impact on the lives of people and hence we need training. Such efforts and strategies change now and then. We therefore need to be able to keep up with the trends. GCISR9

This observation reveals that organisational transformation in the GCIS usually takes the form of a change of policies to be implemented by the end users and the way the organisation communicates government messages to the public. This is validated by the views advocated by a GCIS human resource development practitioner, when she remarked that:

Most of the T&D needs of the GCIS employees reflecting on our workplace skills plan is[are] based on communication support such as online publication, digital media, communication research, media monitoring and many more. The ones that I just mentioned relates to communication as you are aware that the department itself is "government communication". Again, we have training needs such as financial management, minutes training and logistical training and office admin. (GCISR2)

The comments made by GCISR2 are particularly important as they show the relationship between the training needs of the employees and the organisational objectives of the GCIS. Furthermore, the quote also shows that the human resource development practitioners of the GCIS are aware of the training needs of the GCIS employees. The evidence above is also linked to the fact that the GCIS is made up of three programmes, the first being Programme One, which is administration, the second being Content Processing, the third being Dissemination, and the last being Intergovernmental Coordination and Stakeholder Management. The purpose of each programme is different. As a result the T&D needs will vary from programme to programme. Communication space is forever changing. Hence there is a need for regular



training. It is evident from the document analysis that one of the high risks of the GCIS is the inability to attract human capital that is responsive to the changing environment (GCIS, 2019). T&D could play a vital role in updating the talents and skills of those who are already with the GCIS.

6. DISCUSSION

6.1 The need for training and development for the current position

From a Human Resources viewpoint, job rotation may be recommended as a T&D technique which provides employees with a rounded view of the entire organisational operation, which eliminates boredom and enhances the perceived level of job satisfaction. Although job rotation could be regarded as a brilliant and flexible way to train employees in an organisation, if it is not properly managed it could lead to job dissatisfaction and stress. Thus, it is important to evaluate the disadvantages and advantages of job rotation. This is in agreement with Van Wyk, Swarts & Mukonza (2018), who contend that while larger companies are more likely to invest in job rotation programmes, businesses of all sizes might want to consider the implementation of such a programme when they see all the advantages it provides. According to Oparanma & Nwaeke (2015), job rotation makes the worker unconsciously acquire a variety of skills, technical know-how and knowledge of the various units and departments in the organisation. The main challenges to a job rotation programme may be resistance from superiors and employees and the need for adequate training before an employee is moved to a new department. Our research suggests that policy makers should consider these factors before deciding on job rotation. Job rotation may seem flexible and refreshing, but it could pose challenges when no proper consideration and management of it is made. Van Wyk, Swarts & Mukonza (2018) are correct to argue that flexibility in an organisation should not be adopted as a general policy to enhance employee performance, but should target only those workers who are more likely to be influenced positively by it. Consistent with Dhanraj & Parumasur (2014) and Gowsalya & Jijo (2017), acquiring additional knowledge and skills can be an inefficient and frustrating process unless it is carefully planned and controlled.

This paper notes that the trend for T&D is continuing in the GCIS due to the advent of the fourth industrial revolution and stakeholder engagement dynamics. Interestingly, the views expressed by the respondents were similar to and consistent with the recent work done by Karim, Choudhury & Latif (2019), whose study investigated the impact of T&D on employee performance. Their study reports that there is a need for continuous T&D, taking into deliberation the public sector dynamics and stakeholder satisfaction. There is a great need for T&D for the GCIS employees due to the nature of their work and the fact that the Department exists in a very challenging, uncertain and rapidly advancing technological environment. The GCIS Department being involved in the evolution of information thus creates information demands from stakeholders and customers. In this context, the respondents pointed out that



traditional working conditions may not always be sufficient to satisfy stakeholders and customers' needs. Thus the GCIS must rely on T&D, which could help in developing the creativity, innovation, flexibility and speed in delivering the service to the public and stakeholders being served. This result has further strengthened our confidence that there is need to develop an effective T&D system that will capacitate GCIS employees to deliver departmental objectives and government objectives as a whole.

6.2 Training needs and organisational transformation

The study also aimed to assess whether or not the training of employees had to do with any organisational transformation that might require them to adapt to the new situation. The study found that the communication space is forever changing, and GCIS employees therefore need to undergo regular training. This substantiates previous findings in the literature. Karim, Choudhury & Latif (2019) suggest that today's organisations are facing extensive competition in a continuously changing technological and business environment. Globalisation and ever-changing customer needs have added to the challenges in the business environment. In order for businesses to be able to rise to these challenges, more training programmes are needed. This is in accordance with the views of Dhanraj & Parumasur (2014), who suggest that training should be used to support the implementation of workplace reforms such as the introduction of team work, new technology and quality assurance. Therefore, it is imperative that training should be part of the overall human resources strategy and connected to the overall strategy of the organisation in order to be successful.

Earlier, this study suggested that the changing contexts in which government operates require the acquisition of new skills and knowledge by its employees. The findings of this study broadly support the work of other studies in this area, linking T&D with transformation in the public sector. The result accords well with the assessment made by Memon & Kinder (2016), who argue that the need for T&D is premised on the fact that most of its workers, particularly the managers, were trained for the hierarchy and networks while the current closely-coupled service systems require a different set of skills. Memon & Kinder underscore the need for T&D and argue that effective and successful public service requires new ways of working. That being said, the implications of these findings is that the capable public servant's contribution of time and effort is central to the attainment of the developmental government objectives. These results validate the presumption of the study, that the T&D of public servants is needed to improve organisational performance and the capacity of employees to deliver high quality services to the public.



7. CONCLUSION

This study sought to investigate the extent to which the GCIS employees need T&D and their awareness of such. It has concluded that there is a general feeling amongst GCIS employees that continuous and complex technological innovations, the dynamism of the public sector environment, and the constant change in the client and stakeholder population and the demands it makes, requires employees in the sector to continuously update their skills and knowledge. The findings will, therefore, be of interest to the HRD specialists in the public sector as they will help in the self-introspection of T&D implementation processes. They will also be of interest to the government at large, in order for it to come up with a new strategy of training implementation, especially in the context of its ongoing individual T&D agenda. Overall, this study strengthens the idea that although training might be seen as an urgent matter from an organisational perspective, it also has a huge impact in the wellbeing of the employees in the organisation. Hopefully, this work has successfully revealed that there is a lack of diversity in the T&D programmes in the GCIS Department. The provision of one-size-fits-all programmes affects the success of training in an organisation. There is no single best method of training staff; thus, any T&D method that is best for particular T&D programmes can be implemented. However, a mixture of two T&D approaches may have positive results in meeting the T&D needs of employees. Therefore, it is recommended that HRD experts be trained to use a mixture of suitable approaches for more positive T&D results.

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