

THE IMPACT OF TAILOR-MADE SKILLS BASED TRAINING PROGRAMMES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF MUNICIPALITIES: THE CASE OF THE CITY OF TSHWANE

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Abstract

Various South African municipalities are under close scrutiny due to widespread protests over poor quality of municipal services. Prior studies that examined situations in municipalities recommend training and development as the most apposite strategic tool for raising municipal performance. This study aimed to determine whether there is a statistically significant association between the provision of adequate training and development programmes and satisfactory performance at municipal level. A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analyses were used in the study in which data was collected from n=131 respondents (119 questionnaires + 12 in-depth interviews). Purposive sampling was used for selecting eligible respondents. The results showed that 49% of respondents have had past training opportunities. The percentage of employees with satisfactory performance was equal to 52%. The study found a significant association between the provision of training and development programmes and satisfactory performance among municipal employees. At the 5% level of significance, the results show that inadequate performance was significantly associated with lack of training opportunities, low level of formal education, and lack of job satisfaction, in a decreasing order of strength. A model has been proposed for ensuring adequate performance by municipal employees, and for monitoring and evaluating progress on a quarterly basis.

Keywords: City of Tshwane, Skills-Based Training, Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, Odds Ratio

1. INTRODUCTION

The study was conducted in order to assess the potential benefits of tailor-made skills based training programmes to improved performance among employees working in the City of Tshwane. The study was conducted by using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analyses. A review of the literature shows that there is a significant relationship between providing tailor-made skills based training programmes to employees and improved performance to clients and stakeholders. The City of Tshwane (Khale, 2015) has received qualified audit reports from the Auditor-General in the past several years due to factors that are known to affect service quality in local governments and municipalities.

Studies conducted by Khale (2015) and Marivate (2014) have shown that the quality of municipal services provided to customers, ratepayers and newly established small enterprises is a key predictor of sustained growth and economic development. According to Seeletse (2012) and Henrekson (2014), there is a statistically significant association between the perception held by residents about service quality and overall economic growth and development in the major metropolitan cities of South Africa. The study by Horn (2010) has shown that it is impossible to alleviate unemployment and

poverty among the urban population without improving the quality of essential municipal services. Shree and Urban (2012) have found that the rate at which small enterprises grow depends upon the quality of municipal services that are provided routinely.

2. BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Since April 1994, there have been protests over poor service delivery against municipal employees by ordinary residents in municipalities throughout South Africa (Khale, 2015). The City of Tshwane has received qualified audit reports (Khale, 2015) from the Auditor-General since 1994. The underlying cause has been failure to meet the expectations of residents and stakeholders mostly due to lack of capacity and shortage of specialised skills. The key challenges have been caused by failure to monitor and evaluate the degree of satisfaction of clients and stakeholders on the quality of municipal service delivery. Lack of skills and poor service delivery has led to protests, civil unrest, damage to property and infrastructure and financial mismanagement in various parts of South Africa (Mafunisa, 2004; Nel & Rogerson, 2005; Diedericks & Joubert 2006; Phago, 2009). Khale (2015) and Marivate (2014) have listed the most common causes of protests over poor service delivery in the City of Tshwane. In the year

2010, the City of Tshwane has experienced backlogs of 19% for water provision, 32% sanitation services, 27% electricity, and 40% refuse collection (Horn 2010; Snyman & Vorster 2011; Aigbavboa & Thwala, 2013). Between 2008 and 2009, there were about 100 municipal service delivery protests in various South African municipalities (Phago, 2009; Horn, 2010; Snyman & Vorster, 2011; Aigbavboa & Thwala, 2013).

Findings from the study are vital for improving the quality of essential municipal services that are routinely provided to residents, businesses, clients, stakeholders and the general public. The results are vital for developing training and development plans for the City of Tshwane for improving the current quality of municipal service delivery. The study will propose feasible remedial actions for addressing issues such as poor performance and poor service delivery.

3. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

The research study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- To identify and analyse the different training and development programmes offered in City of Tshwane
- To investigate the relationship between employee training and development on the quality of performance of City of Tshwane
- To establish the benefits of quality employee training and development strategies in the efficient provision of essential basic services within City of Tshwane

4. RESEARCH PROBLEM

The quandary with regards to service delivery performance by municipalities is multifaceted. However, the blame is largely directed at the management and employees' behaviour (Sanderson 2001; Nel and Rogerson 2005; Verbeeten 2008; Phago 2009). The amalgamation of district municipalities to form City of Tshwane was initiated by local government in a bid to monitor, evaluate and better manage public service delivery. Notwithstanding these efforts, *inter alia*, service delivery challenges are still rife as evidenced by service delivery protests that consistently erupt particularly in township locations (Cameron and Sewell 2003; Cameron 2005; Nel and Rogerson 2005; De Waal and Gerritsen-Medema 2006; Diedericks and Joubert 2006; Phago 2009; Horn 2010; Snyman and Vorster 2011; Aigbavboa and Thwala 2013). It appears that the problem in City of Tshwane lies with the quality of training and development programs offered to heighten employees' skills and attitudes to improve performance and conduct. Indeed, existing literature argues that as staffs skills are appositely trained and developed, they positively impact on or raise productivity and performance. In fact, several scholars concur that training and development are vital tools that assist to improve performance (Nel and Rogerson 2005; Horn 2010; Snyman and Vorster 2011). Thus, this study seeks to examine the relationship between training and development in improving employees' performance in City of Tshwane.

5. LITERATURE REVIEW

Nel and Rogerson (2005) have reported that improving the quality of municipal services is a key requirement for fostering growth in small enterprises and for the creation of jobs. Studies conducted by Worku (2014) and Ladzani & Netswera (2009) have shown that improving the quality of municipal services is helpful for promoting sustained growth in newly established small businesses. According to Khale (2015), in order to improve the quality of routine municipal services that are provided to newly established businesses, it is essential to develop tailor-made skills based training programmes to employees of municipalities such as the City of Tshwane.

Khale (2015) and Verbeeten (2008) have reported that the use of performance monitoring and evaluation tools must be accompanied by the provision of tailor-made skills based training programmes. Both authors have argued that training programmes need to be based on the practical needs of local municipalities as well as small businesses that are meant to grow and develop on a sustainable basis. According to Dierdorff and Suface (2007), it is vital to assess the training needs and key performance areas of employees before rolling out training programmes to employees of local municipalities such as the City of Tshwane. Khale (2015) and Marivate (2014) have both reported that the City of Tshwane needs to roll out tailor-made skills based training programmes to employees who are responsible for providing routine services to the general public as a means of reducing the current rate of failure in newly established small business enterprises.

Golam-Hossan (2007) have found that the provision of skills based and tailor-made training and development programmes is vital for motivating employees in large municipalities such as the City of Tshwane. The authors have shown that one key benefit is that of sound financial management and accounting. Cameron (2005) and Cameron & Sewell (2003) have reported that it is vital to implement monitoring and evaluation systems for monitoring the performance of employees who are required to provide routine and essential services to the general public. According to the authors, it is vital to provide incentives to such employees while monitoring and evaluating their performance on a regular basis. De Waal and Gerritsen-Medema (2006) have also reported a similar finding based on a case study conducted in the Netherlands. Diedericks and Joubert (2006) have shown that the transportation system in Tshwane could be improved significantly by providing sustained training opportunities to employees.

Breetzke & Horn (2006) have reported that performance at local municipal levels depends upon the legacies of apartheid. Studies conducted by Aguinis & Kraiger (2009) and Alegre, Tuhovcak & Vrbkova (2004) have shown that employees of local governments and municipalities must be provided with skills-based and tailor-made training programmes on a sustainable basis as a means of improving service quality standards to the general public. Barnow (2000) and Aragon-Sanchez, Barba-Aragon & Sanz-Valle (2003) have shown that improving service quality at municipal level is vital for fostering sustained growth and viability in start-

up business enterprises in large municipalities such as the City of Tshwane.

Mafunisa (2004) and Snyman & Vorster (2011) have reported that skills based training programmes are essential for improving service quality standards in areas such as water and lights, road maintenance, finance, tax collection and waste management. According to Phago (2009) and McNamara (2008), the training of employees must be aligned to key performance areas and indicators. Such a goal could only be achieved by assessing the training needs of employees. In this regard, Sanderson (2011) has proposed a guideline that could be used for aligning the training needs of employees with key performance areas. The author has pointed out that performance monitoring and evaluation should be used as a tool for aligning the training needs of employees with key performance areas of employees.

In 2000, City of Tshwane was formed as a metropolitan municipality. It is located in Gauteng Province and includes Pretoria (Breetzke and Horn 2006). In 2008, the municipality merged with Metsweding, Cullinan and Bronkhorstspuit forming the single-largest metropolitan municipality in Southern Africa. It comprises 7 regions, 105 wards, 210 councillors and residents estimated at 2.5 million (Phago 2009; Horn 2010; Snyman and Vorster 2011; Aigbavboa and Thwala 2013). Because of its size and composition, it is classified as Category A Grade 6 Urban Municipality under the Municipal Demarcation Board in terms of Section 4 of Local Government Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998). Its management comprises an executive mayoral system (Phago 2009; Horn 2010; Snyman and Vorster 2011; Aigbavboa and Thwala 2013).

The formation of the new City of Tshwane was consistent with the Gauteng Global City Region Strategy aimed at reducing the number of municipalities in the province and instituting new structures by 2016. In line with the new structures, the Mayoral Executive System combines with a ward participatory system along with Section 2 (g) of the Determination of Types of Municipality Act, 2000 (Act 1 of 2000). These change processes were geared towards local government transformation and aimed at enhancing the performance of employees in their positions of providing service delivery (Diedericks and Joubert 2006; Horn 2010). In fact, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) states that municipalities must structure and manage their administration, budgeting, and planning processes in such a manner as to prioritise the provision of essential needs of communities and promote social and economic development.

The efficient provision of services remains a priority as stated in the municipalities' charter. Yet, municipalities in South Africa are constantly faced with challenges of how best to advance the status quo (Cameron and Sewell 2003; Cameron 2005; De Waal and Gerritsen-Medema 2006; Diedericks and Joubert 2006; Aigbavboa and Thwala 2013). Government and such bodies as South African Local Government Association (SALGA) instituted a number of changes for stepping up the efficient provision of services. Notwithstanding those change processes and prioritisation, municipalities particularly City of Tshwane continue to encounter challenges relating to improving service delivery in

their areas of jurisdiction (Nel and Rogerson 2005; Phago 2009). Thus, employees' performance in municipalities is under close scrutiny.

In light of the above, the provision of training and development is one immediate solution that must be embraced in the provision of services to citizens (Golam Hossan 2007). In fact, related prior studies (e.g. Barnow 2000; Aragon-Sanchez, Barba-Aragón and Sanz-Valle 2003; Alegre, Tuhovcak and Vrbkova 2004) assert that it is the responsibility of human resource management to enhance employees' performance through training and development.

Employee training and development is a critical aspect in improving employee performance, which translates into improved organisational performance, growth and profitability. Aguinis and Kraiger (2009) and Dierdorff and Surface (2007) stress the importance of employee training and development and the resultant benefits that organisation receive. The latter authors note that in the future most organisations will depend on well-trained employees who perform key tasks and successfully manoeuvre in the global landscape performing different roles that contribute to the success of their organisations. McNamara (2008) argues that if organisations offer training and development programs, employees will be motivated and thus raises organisational commitment. It is in view of these assertions that this study examines the relationship between training and development and employees' performance in the specific context of City of Tshwane.

6. METHODS AND MATERIALS OF STUDY

The sample size of study was equal to 131. Purposive sampling was used for selecting eligible respondents working for the City of Tshwane in various Departments. A structured, pre-tested and validated questionnaire of study was completed by 119 municipal employees. In-depth interviews were conducted with an additional 11 municipal managers, directors and deputy directors working for the City of Tshwane. Quantitative data analyses were performed by using frequency tables, cross-tab analyses (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010), and logit analysis (Hosmer & Lemeshow, 2013). Qualitative data analysis was performed by using coding, tallying, text analysis and triangulation.

7. RESULTS OF STUDY

Table 1 shows the general characteristics of the 131 respondents who took part in the study. The table shows that 49% of respondents have had past training opportunities. The percentage of employees with satisfactory performance was equal to 52%. It can be seen from the table that 60% of respondents have matric level academic qualifications. The percentage of respondents with degree level qualifications is only 14%. The table shows that 60% of residents rent property. The table shows that 61% of respondents earn salaries of 10, 000 Rand or less. It can be seen from the table that respondents who took part in the study are characterized by low level of skills, low level of formal education, and lack of expertise in areas that require advanced operational competence in municipal service delivery.

Table 1. General characteristics of respondents (n=131)

<i>Characteristics of respondents</i>	<i>Frequency and percentage</i>
Past training opportunity	Yes: 64 (49%)
	No: 67 (51%)
Performance in most recent quarter	Adequate: 68 (52%)
	Inadequate: 63 (48%)
Job satisfaction	Satisfied: 79 (60%)
	Not satisfied: 52 (40%)
Highest level of education	Matric or below: 71 (54%)
	Certificate or diploma: 30 (23%)
	Bachelor's degree: 22 (17%)
	Master's degree: 4 (3%)
Gender	Male: 68 (52%)
	Female: 63 (48%)
Age category	20 years or less: 4 (3%)
	21 to 30 years: 33 (25%)
	31 to 40 years: 49 (37%)
	41 to 50 years: 35 (27%)
	51 years or more: 10 (8%)
Duration of service	Less than 5 years: 16 (12%)
	5 to 10 years: 34 (26%)
	11 to 20 years: 29 (22%)
	21 or more: 52 (40%)
Race	Black or African: 116 (89%)
	White: 8 (6%)
	Coloured: 5 (4%)
Marital status	Asian: 2 (2%)
	Single: 56 (43%)
	Married: 42 (32%)
	Divorced: 5 (4%)
	Windowed: 4 (3%)
Perception of low salary	Others: 24 (18%)
	Yes: 62 (47%)
Perception of lack of appreciation	No: 69 (53%)
	Yes: 29 (22%)
Perception of poor career development	No: 102 (78%)
	Yes: 31 (24%)
Perception of low salary	No: 100 (76%)
	Yes: 42 (32%)
Perception of lack of incentives	No: 89 (68%)
	Yes: 51 (39%)
Negative perception of performance evaluation	No: 80 (61%)
	Yes: 47 (36%)
Total	n = 131 (100%)

Source: Results obtained from own study

Table 2 shows results obtained from cross-tab analyses. At the 5% level of significance, the results show that inadequate performance is significantly associated with lack of training opportunities, low level of formal education, lack of job satisfaction, lack of performance monitoring and evaluation,

short duration of employment, perception of low salary, perception of poor employee benefits, perception of poor career development, perception of lack of incentives for employees, and perception of lack of appreciation from customers, in a decreasing order of strength.

Table 2. Results obtained from Pearson's Chi-square tests of associations (n=131)

<i>Inadequate performance</i>	<i>Observed Pearson chi-square value</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Lack of training opportunities	16.9754	0.000***
Low level of formal education	16.2946	0.000***
Lack of job satisfaction	16.0558	0.000***
Lack of performance monitoring and evaluation	14.3888	0.000***
Short duration of employment	13.4939	0.000***
Perception of low salary	13.3229	0.001**
Perception of poor employee benefits	13.3229	0.002**
Perception of poor career development	11.3609	0.004**
Perception of lack of incentives for employees	11.3295	0.007**
Perception of lack of appreciation from customers	10.9430	0.017*

Legend: Significance levels at * $P < 0.05$; ** $P < 0.01$; *** $P < 0.001$

Table 3 shows results obtained from logit analysis. At the 5% level of significance, the results show that inadequate performance is significantly

associated with lack of training opportunities, low level of formal education, and lack of job satisfaction, in a decreasing order of strength.

Table 3. Results obtained from logit analysis (n=131)

<i>Inadequate performance</i>	<i>Odds Ratio</i>	<i>95% C. I.</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Lack of training opportunities	6.80	(4.87, 8.36)	0.000
Low level of formal education	4.12	(2.89, 6.02)	0.000
Lack of job satisfaction	3.76	(2.28, 5.69)	0.000

The odds ratio of the variable lack of training opportunities is equal to 6.80. This indicates that an employee who is not trained on the job is 6.80 times as likely to underperform in comparison with another employee who is trained on the job.

The odds ratio of the variable low level of formal education is equal to 4.12. This indicates that an employee who has a low level of education (matric level or less) is 4.12 times as likely to underperform in comparison with another employee whose level of formal education is high (above matric level).

The odds ratio of the variable low level of job satisfaction is equal to 3.76. This indicates that an employee who has no job satisfaction is 3.76 times as likely to underperform in comparison with another employee who has job satisfaction.

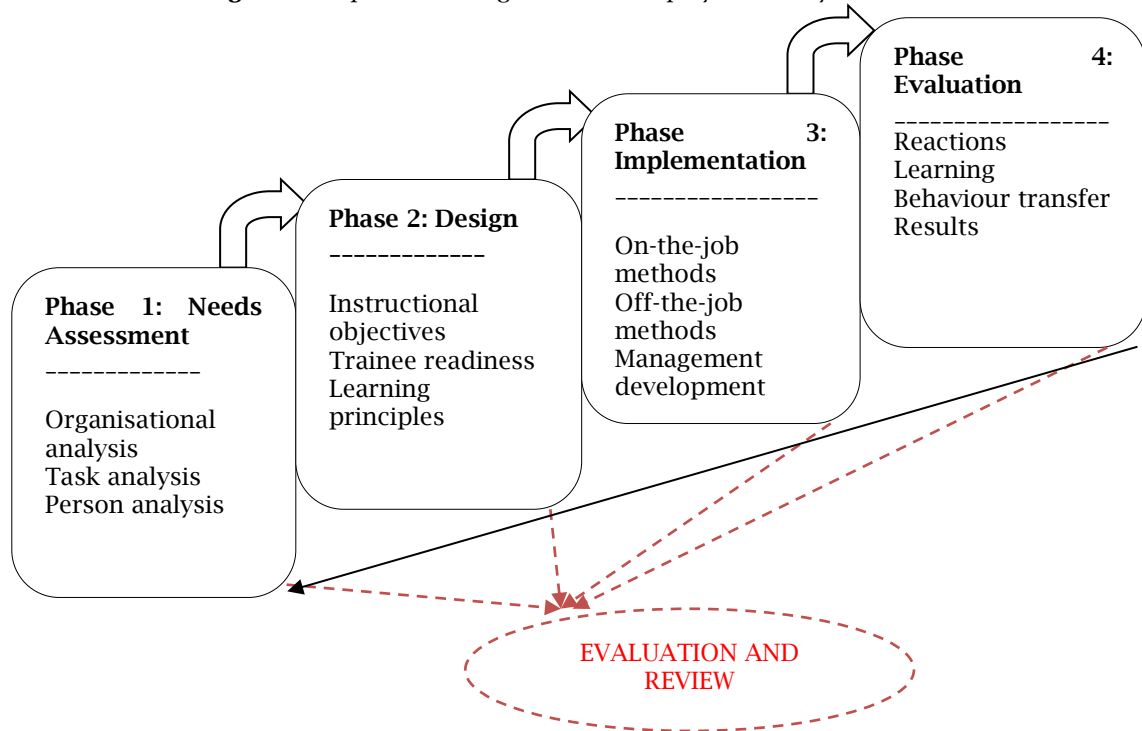
The key findings obtained from in-depth interviews were the following:

- There was a significant association between inadequate performance and lack of training opportunities.
- Employees who had a training opportunity were relatively more productive and better motivated at work in comparison with employees who did not have training opportunities. Training and development opportunities provided to

employees by the City of Tshwane were not aligned to the skills needed for performing key performance areas (KPA's). Although the municipality continues to provide training via its respective departments, its training academy and external service providers, there is rampant service delivery protests in City of Tshwane particularly in the townships.

- The evaluation of performance of employees was plagued by the perception of racism, partisanship and political interference.
- There was an acute shortage of adequately trained experts in key areas of service delivery. Although the City of Tshwane has initiated internship and learnership programs that are aimed at offering training and development programmes, such efforts were not implemented vigorously.
- Performance monitoring and evaluation was not done in the context of seeking to improve service delivery but to increase salaries and determine whether bonuses could be awarded.
- There was insufficient follow-up after training and development programs to determine if the performance of trainees has improved significantly.
- Regionalisation was hampered by lack of trained, suitably qualified and dedicated personnel.

Figure 1. Proposed training model for employees of City of Tshwane



RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CITY OF TSHWANE

It is strategically beneficial for the City of Tshwane to provide employees with career growth paths and development programmes. Tailor-made and skills based training opportunities should be provided to employees as a means of providing them with incentives and motivation at work. The training programmes must be aligned with the operational and business needs and requirements of customers of the City of Tshwane. The City of Tshwane should forge strategic partnerships and collaborations with key stakeholders such as research and academic institutions with a view to acquire suitable training and development programmes. A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation programme is vital for monitoring the progress made in this regard.

AREAS OF FUTURE RESEARCH

This study focused specifically on the relationship between training and development and performance management. Future research could focus on the following:

- The impact of training in specific areas such as communication, computer skills and customer service on the performance of employees in municipalities
- Evaluating the morale of employees as this aspect impacts on the quality of service delivery in municipalities
- The relationship between training and development and performance management in the context of private sector institutions
- Developing frameworks for training and development for municipalities that may be experiencing service delivery problems.

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