Factors influencing, contributing and curtailing training effectiveness in the South African Police Service: Evidence from a strategic perspective

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Abstract: Police training plays a crucial role in the development of police officers. A specific department within a police force can increase its services to the community and decrease its vulnerabilities by implementing an improved training curriculum. And although police training is a complex, multifaceted topic, the training of police officers combines various educational components and is governed by organisational guidelines. Inadequate training, insufficient training hours, or doing the minimum required can open the door to liabilities and lead to interdepartmental problems such as low morale, ineffective and inefficient staff, which negatively impacts the department as whole, including its administrative staff. This study sought to provide an analysis on the training and development of the South African Police Service (SAPS), as conventional wisdom dictates that for effective service delivery to occur, there is need for the effective training and development of SAPS employees. Thus, the purpose of this study is threefold, it seeks to assess the a) effectiveness of the training and development initiatives utilised at the SAPS training centres; b) SAPS training environment regarding the conditions or the mediums of the training programme and; c) use of knowledge and skills in the work environment to propose recommendations for the implementation of effective training and development initiatives at the SAPS. A survey was conducted among 329 respondents from 13 police stations in the Johannesburg metro region using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was prepared and distributed among the targeted respondents. The findings reveal that contextual factors namely effectiveness, the training environment, the trainer's skills, and having adequate resources towards development, have positive impact on the training programmes conducted at the training centre. Furthermore, the findings highlighted that respondents were of the view that since the inception of new methods of training after the 1994 democratic elections, the SAPS has demonstrated progressive development towards responding to community matters. However, there are gaps in the training and development programmes such as a lack of resources, a blanket approach to training and training models which focus on current challenges and exclude future trends. To address these challenges within the SAPS and to ensure that there is effective training and development for organisational performance, there is a need to ensure that adequate resources are allocated for training and development. The training and development procedures within the SAPS need to include international standards, and the management at the Johannesburg Training Centre need to create an effective strategy that can be used to identify the needs and skills gap of employees and ensure that these are addressed through an agile and adaptable training and development strategy. This study provides critical input and contributes to the body of literature related to training in the SAPS.

Keywords: Competence, community, skills, performance, police, training

Introduction

Training and its effectiveness have been a current topic of attention and concern no matter what the type of organisation or the nature of its activity. Organisations have understood the importance of training and the significant role it plays in enhancing job performance and employee efficiency. Training also provides an organisation with the ability to survive in a competitive landscape. It is the ideal approach for teaching employees' certain skills or giving them the ability to fill gaps in their performance (Radha & Shree, 2017). It is practically impossible for any organisation, be it in the public or private sector, to achieve its objectives in terms of its vision and mission statements, if its employees do not have sufficient skills and cannot competently to perform their duties. Therefore, it is necessary to maximize the skills and knowledge of employees, to achieve organisational goals and objectives, thus sustaining the optimal performance of the organisation. The SAPS's strategic plan of 2014-2019 is clearly rooted in Chapter 12 of the National Development Plan (NDP) Vision 2030 which focuses on building safer communities. The NDP Vision 2030 clearly emphasizes that the police are to be a well-resourced professional institution that is staffed with highly skilled officers who value their work, serve the community, protect the peaceful against violence, and respect the rights of all to access equality and justice (Republic of South Africa, 2011 as cited in Mofokeng & Aphane, 2022, p. 489). Mofokeng and Aphane (2022) posit that "this futuristic plan focuses on professionalising the police through strategic outcome-oriented goals, which include an efficient, effective, and developmental-oriented public service. In order to improve employee performance and motivation, the SAPS managers should utilise training to improve police officers' capabilities. Therefore, there should be a paradigm shift regarding the quality of training programmes offered by the SAPS."

Therefore, the implementation of training and development programmes in the workplace is important to enhance employee performance. Training and development improve individual competencies that can assist employees in effectively executing their functions. The South African Police Service's (SAPS) Division of Human Resource Development previously known as the Training Division has undergone many changes in the past 15 years. Over the years, SAPS has been restructured a few times, and one of these restructuring efforts included a functional analysis of provincial head office training divisions. As a result of this analysis, Decentralised Human Resource Development Training Centres were established in each of the nine provinces to conduct training and service training for all SAPS members. In the Gauteng seven decentralised training centres were established due to an increased demand for the retraining and training of SAPS members. However, new recruits are trained at the national training colleges situated in Pretoria, Cape Town, Durban, and the Eastern Cape Provinces. These centres are in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Vaal, Soweto, Krugersdorp, Benoni and Tembisa. The centres equip SAPS members with the essential skills required to perform their duties. The decentralised training centres offer courses that cover a wide range of subjects such as management, training for the trainer, detective services, junior management, client service centre, domestic violence, and tactical and street survival. These decentralised training centres conduct their own annual needs analysis to formulate a training plan for the following year and to identify the courses that they need to offer. This plan and its corresponding analysis are forwarded to the provincial head office for approval, as the province funds these courses. Community Service Centres (CSC) which can also be referred to as police stations, nominate their members to attend courses in accordance to their work and placement needs.

Problem Statement

Mdhlalose (2020) reflecting from various sources, posits that many organisations do not evaluate their training undertakings, and those who do repeatedly evaluate training inadequately. Moreover, Niazi (2011 as cited in Mdhlalose, 2020) states that inadequate attention is paid to the evaluation of training, in comparison to that of planning and implementation. The effectiveness of training and development initiatives within the SAPS has been questioned over the years, which shows the significant challenges associated with such initiatives. The fact that the competency of SAPS employees is being called into question even after they have attended training, suggests that the SAPS Training Centres have certain shortfalls. There appear to be gaps in the synchronicity that should naturally occur as an outcome of training, between the training environment, the curriculum offered at the training centre, the expectations of the regions and SAPS members. Additionally, there is a knowledge gap in terms of understanding how training and development initiatives is interpreted and managed in SAPS Training Centres. An initial search through existing literature confirmed that very little research has been conducted on how the training and development initiatives implemented at the training centres are interpreted and managed internally for the promotion of an improved quality of service. Current management research is too far removed from the world of practice, is overly theoretical and abstract, hence it cannot be applied to real life situations that could lead to the improvement of performance in the SAPS.

Literature review

Training and development

Ngema, Rajlal and Utete (2022, p. 175) posit that "in the previous millennium, employees in the security and safety industry were unwilling to be involved in the training process and some took it for granted which resulted in a continuous deficit of skills among employees." This statement is supported by Salem (2019, ii) who states that "training is a strategic mechanism used for the achievement and deliverance of efficient and proficient public security. It is also used as a measure to observe the performance of the organisation, whereby fully trained and skilled employees will be capable of returning to the workplace, providing optimal service within a safe and well-organised manner." According to Huang, W.-R. (2020), training and development can be understood as an effort by both the employer and the employee, to advance skills development and to target organisational performance requirements. Arguably, training and development is premised on the development of the skills and attributes that are initiated by organisations to enhance employee competence. In terms of conformity, Bayer (2015) argues that training and development aims to engage employees so that they can develop concepts of attachment towards organisational processes. The underlying assumption about training and development is that it gives an employee a sense of belonging and the ability to benefit from improved organisational performance. Bennon (2016) defines training and development as the process in which the employer helps the employee go through various workshops, procedures, camps, vocational training and school, to sharpen the knowledge and skillset of the employee.

However, there is a lack of effective and quality training of the SAPS procedures that offered to its officers. This poor training quality has negatively impacted South African police officers' performance, which in return, has created a culture of corruption and poor quality police investigations and work ethic. Training and development has become an increasingly important component for the realisation of organisational goals and objectives. McGaw-Hill (2018) asserts that training is the process of improving an employee's abilities, skills and expertise for performing a particular job. Furthermore, the concepts of training and development have been broadened over time and have become part of the corporate vernacular concerning organisations and their staff development (Bayer, 2015). Moreover, training and skills development are some of the ways through which organisations can ensure that their employees are empowered to execute their duties as required. Aswathappa (2013) posits that training can be viewed as a process where the skills, capabilities and aptitudes of workers are often improved so that they can perform specific tasks. Beebe, Mottet and Roach (2004,) hold the view that training emphasises doing, it focuses on behavioural change, and it is underscored by knowledge gain for a specific task. Training, therefore, is important as new talent is identified and old talent is upskilled. For instance, in the SAPS environment, training ensures that neighbourhood watch officers are trained and developed into patrol officers. From the preceding definitions of the concepts of training and development, it is evident that training is crucial for organisations who want to survive changes in the environments in which they operate. Therefore, it should be the goal of every organisation to ensure that training and development programmes are implemented across the organisation (Bayer, 2015). This understanding of training and development forms part of the founding principles of the training and development mechanisms found within the SAPS. These aim to develop SAPS personnel who will be effective in completing their work and its related tasks and activities. The intention of the concept of development is to enable employees to achieve job satisfaction and improve organisational performance. This understanding of training and development summarises the process in the SAPS where pre-service and in-service training are provided to ensure that employees are effective in conducting their duties.

Serwade et al. (2018) concur that training is a process of performance improvement used to promote learning new techniques and methods that will be utilised by employees to perform the job with utmost efficiency and effectiveness. Which means that training is the process of equipping employees with the necessary tools and knowledge for them to be effective in their work-related tasks. According to Brad Fords (2018), training may be viewed as a process related to immediate changes in organisational effectiveness via organised instructions; while development is a process related to the progress of longer term organisational and employee goals. Training can be viewed as the process of being conditioned or taught to carry out duties, and the individual actions or abilities related to the task at hand. While development as defined by Armstrong and Taylor (2020), see development as the effort by both the employer and the employee to advance the skills of the latter. In other words, employee development is an initiative that sharpens the skills of an employee through training methods and development attributes. Bayer (2015) further asserts that employee development is a concept that helps an employee develop a sense of attachment towards the company, with the employee attaining this attachment through development activities. When discussing conformity Mdhlalose (2020) argues that the concept of employee development consists of a process where the

employee, with the help of the employer, undergoes various training and development schemes in order to sharpen their skills and knowledge. The intention of the concept of development is to achieve employee satisfaction and improve organisational performance.

A plethora of methods have been used over the years in the training and development of police officers. According to Mozael (2015) the training and developing of police officers starts at the pre-recruitment process which involves systematic procedures from the sourcing a candidate to arranging and conducting their interview. This process however, requires many resources such as financial and human capital resources that some police departments do not have (Mozael, 2015). It is imperative to note that law enforcement recruitment is based on the needs of the organisation, and that the training that recruits are offered is in line with its commitment towards meeting community goals (Weber, 2015).

Training environment

The training environment is all about the conditions in which or surroundings of the medium in which the training programme takes place. The training environment often involves a site that has good sound clarity and levels, proper lighting with adjustable colour and strength, active hardware and computing devices, specific site arrangements including U-type table arrangements and adequate parking amongst other training resources (Sanjeevkumar & Yanan 2011 as cited in Yaqoot, Mohd. Noor & Isa, 2017, p. 33). Studies undertaken by the Centre for Corporate Strategy and Change at the University of Warwick (Sparrow & Pettigrew 1985; Hendry & Pettigrew 1989 as cited in Ridoutt, Dutneall, Hummel & Smith, 2002,) identified two types of factors that affect the provision of training in enterprises under study. These could either be factors that set training in progress (triggers); or factors that established training within the enterprise (stabilisers). In their view training is only stabilised by a combination of factors found inside and outside the organisation, and legislative requirements (Sparrow & Pettigrew 1985; Hendry & Pettigrew 1989 as cited in Ridoutt, Dutneall, Hummel & Smith, 2002, p. 26). Factors inside the organisation include training champions, commitment from senior management, training infrastructure within the organisation, budgetary constraints, and trade unions who monitor the enterprise's training provision. Factors outside the organisation include the availability of skills on the labour market and external support, such as grants given for training.

Yaqoot et al., (2017) point out that the learning environment is the link between learning and the area created for this purpose. The learning environment encompasses the design, structure, contents, control and the ways of using the premises in favour of learning. All organisations plan to achieve quality in training. Quality in training requires that a certain level of quality be present in all the aspects related to the training programme from setting up the venue to facilitating the training session. The instructional activity of the programme can be a reflection of its quality level by assessing an employee's access to a convenient learning environment, classroom convenience, organisation of chairs, accessible water, toilets, fresh air etc., (Niwaz, Asad, & Muhammad, 2011). The training environment was found to have influence and functional control over the expected results of trainees, while its quality was significantly correlated to the training effectiveness of the organisation. An effective relationship was detected between the training and work environments which are IVs (independent variables), and training effectiveness which is a DV (dependent variable). It is critical to determine every factor that may contribute to the outcomes in the setting stage of the objective, in addition to those that raise the probability of the success of the programme (Sanjeevkumar & Yanan, 2012).

Institutional resources

Resources are a critical part of delivering service in any organisation (Mdodi, 2019). However, there are serious concerns regarding the complexities of SAPS service delivery when the organisation has inadequate resources (Mars, 2021). In South Africa, the advancement of safety and security depends on the allocation of adequate policing resources to all nine provinces (Simelane, Brown & Seyisi, 2017). Although Simelane et al., (2017) noted that the allocation of police resources to certain police precincts might contribute to heightened safety and security within that community and contribute to a decline in some crime categories, human and physical resources still remain a challenge across the country in all provinces. It has been established that effective policing necessitates the documentation of identified crime problems in an area, and this must include the documentation of police responses in a broader context, the assessment of available resources and record of personnel in key positions. The objective of effective training is to ensure that institutions achieve success by delivering a quality service to the public. For the SAPS, it means providing a safe and secure community for all citizens (Kotze, 2017). However, it must be noted that SAPS is facing numerous resource challenges including a lack of management support for mentoring and coaching staff. These resource challenges may result the institution not being able to retain talented employees especially if attention is not given to their career goals, development and growth (Kotze, 2017). Policing is considered to be an intricate and challenging profession (Salem, 2019), and this is evidenced by law enforcement organisations battling to uphold law

and order through acceptable workforce numbers that correlate with increasing safety and security needs (Barkhuizen, Schutte & Shipena, 2021). As with any other organisation, for the SAPS to achieve its objectives, it needs adequate resources to meet the demands of its services. Globally organisations (including the SAPS) are moving towards the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), and this transition requires SAPS employees to have adaptable skills and the necessary technological equipment that will drive the SAPS mission and vision (Mdodi, 2019). Due to the high cost of technology and budget constraints, the SAPS is unable to acquire some of the technologies needed to transition into the 4IR. In addition, the maintenance of these technologies and training personnel to use the equipment has proved to be a challenge for the organisation.

Mars (2021, p. 46) reveals that challenges such as "aging physical resources", indirectly hinder SAPS employees form performing their duties optimally and providing quality service delivery. Further, it was found that certain police stations are now too small and as a result, the service demand and supply to the population is affected. Moreover, inequalities in the educational performance of the various training centres is a direct reflection of the disparities in their individual resources and socio-economic status, and of the resources invested in the training centres. The the unequal distribution of police resources within the domain of safety and security is not a new phenomenon, this realisation forced the SAPS to standardise the allocation of resources across all police precincts, with this standardisation requiring consideration of the numerous factors impacting the precinct's mandate and policing to be taken into account (Simelane, et al., 2017). One of the ways to safeguard the effectiveness of the police force is the implementation of appropriate and comprehensive training (Salem, 2019). The main part of the SAPS mission is to provide a secure and safe environment for all who reside within the borders of country. Additionally, its mission includes combating and preventing crime, participating in efforts that are focused in addressing the root causes of crime, investigating criminal offences and bringing those found to be on the wrong side of the law to justice. However, when there are insufficient resources to equip SAPS members with the adequate skills needed to carrying out the tasks assigned, it is highly unlikely that the organisation will achieve its vision and mission (Faull, 2017).

As previously stated, SAPS resources are allocated in a standardised manner which takes cognisance of each police precinct's needs. Nonetheless, it was established that the allocation of human resources in policing is complex and failing to do so correctly encroaches on numerous constitutional rights, such as the right to dignity, life and equality; and the right to safety and security. Further, the unequal distribution of resources more profoundly affects those who are economically marginalised, this is a significant human rights violation in South Africa, and is unfair, unjustifiable and undesirable unless the state can prove it otherwise (Redpath & Nagia-Luddy, 2015). Mars (2021) found that the unfair and unequal distribution of resources could be exacerbated by lack of policy frameworks designed for a democratic approach that is aligned to the values and norms which are explicitly expressed in the South African Constitution. According to Bouranta, Siskos and Tsotsolas, (2015), the SAPS's aim to guarantee peace and order for all citizens while taking their constitutional rights into consideration, includes their main concern of neighbourhood safety which considers the feelings of citizens (Bouranta, et al., 2015). The SAPS resource allocation is based on a 'theoretical' condition and is "calculated on the total time taken for all tasks done at a particular police station, as affected by a myriad of factors" (Redpath & Nagia-Luddy, 2015). This theoretical condition takes into account factors that contribute to an area being classified as high risk into consideration, which would for example mean that gang ridden communities are allocated a higher budget. However, the approval for more resources in a police precinct in dependent on the Theoretical Human Requirement (THRR). This approach requires that every police station must meet all the criteria set out under the THRR. These include specifications of the number and rank of police members in the most affected police precinct (Redpath & Nagia-Luddy, 2015). In the SAPS, this process requires that the Organisational Development department gather such information from all police stations across the country on an annual basis between January and March. In addition, where unlimited funds are allocated, the THRR is used to ensure that standards and norms are adhered to by the inclusion and management of criteria and weights to determine the required posts per police station category; and to ensure that allocated tasks are calculated in accordance with to the allocated resources per police station (Simelane et al., 2017. Further, the THRR aims to consider all key factors affecting policing in the various police stations, which Simelane et al., (2017) postulate to include station infrastructure, the area size of the station, various key facilities, rooms, community service centres, holding cells, toilets, information on other service points in the community such as satellite stations, and the number of Community Service Centre (CSC) activities. Lastly, the THRR considers all long-term activities undertaken with the aim of reducing criminal activities (Simelane, et al., 2017). Hence the implementation of employee training is an important feature in enabling the optimal performance of an employee in their assigned position. In this case, the SAPS must acknowledge that training must to be continuous and congruent with the requirements and skills needed for the occupations (Machethe & Obioha, 2017).

Basdeo (2018) postulates that police officers who are unskilled and not properly trained, are more prone to fall back on their personal store of knowledge and stereotypes when interpreting cases. However, Ngema (2021) argues that organisations are hesitant to provide training to employees because some employees tend to find it more convenient to rely on their old ways of conducting work even after learning new techniques or skills from training. Zethu (2019), counters this by positing that the greatest investment in an organisation is the recruitment, selection and training of employees, with Barkhuizen et al., (2021) adding that generally training and development play a critical role in the performance of police officials. The effective training and skills development of employees in any organisation must take precedence because highly skilled employees will be able to achieve institutional objectives and perform their roles and tasks effectively. Moreover, a good retention strategy is underpinned by skills development and training initiatives that create career advancement and opportunities for employees (Zethu, 2019). Charles (2000, as cited in Salem, 2019b, p. 11) emphasises that "it is critical in the police profession, as elsewhere, that law enforcement personnel learn how to think critically, conceptually and creatively when confronted with situations needing analysis, and when developing solutions to problems; they must also have the needed skills to learn from their experiences". Efficient training plays an important role in preparing SAPS members because it empowers police officers with skills that will assist them in adjusting to different settings and circumstances that require agility when addressing the practical, social and operational aspects of the organisation. Furthermore, proper training will afford officers the ability to "act and react, learn and relearn at an optimal level" (Salem, 2019, p. 2). Knight and White (2017), found that any public service organisation which overlooks employee training is bound to collapse because the physical, human, and financial resources invested in training have a great impact not only on those receiving training, but also on the characters of the instructors who need to ensure that their teaching emphasises learning the area of study. Continuous development is key in achieving organisational goals and objectives because of the challenging nature of the occupation of policing (Makgopa, 2019). In South Africa, standardised competency-based training aimed at equipping and developing SAPS members with the necessary and relevant skills needed for combating combat crime is critical (Modise, 2017). Esteban-Lloret, Aragón-Sánchez and Carrasco-Hernández (2018) advocate for training that encourages self-reliance, and that promotes job satisfaction and effectiveness in discharging one's roles. Also, employee training endorses and embeds learning within the internal systems of an organisation (Kotze, 2017). Essentially, the SAPS is mandated to ensure that it increases the number of skilled personnel by providing training to its employees on a continuous basis, to meet the future needs and challenges that it will face as an organisation (Salem, 2019). The importance of continuous job-related training cannot be emphasised enough as it plays an integral part in reenforcing learning while ensuring that employees meet institutional expectations (Armstrong & Landers, 2018). Employee training is viewed as a channel for vertical career development within an organisation, which is why it must be provided to all SAPS members irrespective of their rank, gender or race. Further, vertical development in career advancement requires an employee to acquire suitable skills in order to perform and deliver on assigned tasks (Ngema et al., 2022).

Motivation of personnel

Motivation describes "the initiation, direction, intensity and persistence of goal-directed behaviour" (Mohajane, 2017, p. 13). In general, motivation is dependent on factors such as the circumstances of the individual and their environmental influences. Hence, people can be tasked with equal goals to complete but their performance might differ in accordance with their motivational scale (Makokga, 2009). Therefore, it must be acknowledged that motivation differs across subgroups, from one person to another, and includes the grounds for their job satisfaction (Mohajane, 2017). Mofokeng and Aphane (2022) are of view that healthy working relationships have a direct link to an increased level of job satisfaction and productivity. Adding to this, the quality and improvement of institutional service quality relies heavily on employee management. Research found that in most cases employees will commit to undergoing training in return for promotions with lucrative remuneration, whereas the employers focus their attention on other productivity factors (Ngema, 2021). Employee training plays an important role in the actualisation of organisational goals and in the determination of the kinds of skills that trainees will need to acquire (Ngema, 2021).

Dhar (2015) is of the opinion that employees who believe that in attending a training programme, they will gain the positive results aspire form will be highly motivated to attend the training programme. Further, employees who understand the advantages of attending a training programme will display a higher level of commitment toward their institution so that they can be included in future training activities. Mnisi (2015) concurs that once employees are provided with the opportunity for self-development, they put their best efforts forward and contribute to the growth of the organisation. Ngema (2021) posits that employees who are afforded the opportunity to learn, have the potential for upward job mobility by growing in their current and future jobs, this also becomes a form of motivation for their

general growth and performance within the organisation. However, the majority of SAPS employees are reluctant to accept opportunities for further learning due to poor personal motivation and a lack of support from their managers, while others are scared to assume more duties because of lack of experience. Employees who are feel unrecognised or unappreciated end up being demoralised in the workplace and end up not seeing the need to work hard (Nkosi, 2019). These arguments reveal that inconducive working environments have a negative impact in the overall quality of service delivery (Dhlewayo, Bello & Mofokeng, 2021). It is important to note that employee satisfaction plays a critical role in employee satisfaction and that it can positively impact performance outcomes and the quality of service delivery (Bouranta, et al., 2015). According to a study conducted by Ngema, Rajla and Utete (2022), employee training is one of the institutional factors that SAPS employees are dissatisfied with. SAPS authorities must develop and put into place measures that are exciting and that will keep their members motivated and encouraged to maintain their best performance (Dhlewayo, Bello & Mofokeng, 2021). In most cases, demotivated employees struggle to meet deadlines, submit substandard work full of noticeable errors, fail to follow clear instructions and slack at work (Mofokeng & Aphane, 2022). Mofokeng and Aphane (2022) suggest that for SAPS managers to promote a culture of high performance and motivation, training must be part and parcel of the tools employed to advance employee competences. To achieve the above, it is important for the SAPS to adopt a "paradigm shift" in the quality of training programmes they offer, including the approach and techniques employed to facilitate these programmes (Mofokeng & Aphane, 2022). The effect of poor access to training opportunities within SAPS has demotivated employees who now seek alternative employment within the private sector which provides them with adequate training, that promotes growth, career advancement and employee retention (Ngema et al., 2022). Supervision and institutional support can have a negative or positive effect on job satisfaction. The findings in a study conducted by Ngema et al., (2022) revealed that career development has a positive and direct influence on employee commitment and motivation. Moreover, having a variety of skills gives employees a higher chance of being promoted into higher ranks. Based on the above argument, one of the main contributing factors to the noticeable resignation of police officials is the failing and poor system of governance that exacerbates low staff morale (Molupe, 2019). To add to the problematic governance system, allocated resources continue to decrease while job related responsibilities are increasing, this has resulted in a higher demand for qualified and experienced officers capable of serving the demographics of the communities they serve (Molupe, 2019,). A critical observation of a factor that contributes to the poor morale of personnel, is job stagnancy, as some SAPS members have served in the same position for more than three decades because of varied reasons such as a lack of qualifications or inadequate readiness to qualify for vacant positions within their departments (Ngema et al., 2022). Ngema (2021) postulates that most employees are motivated to attend available training with the hope that upon completing such training, they will be recognised and rewarded in a form of a salary increase or promotion. However, it is also possible that the feelings of inadequacy that demotivated SAPS members have may stem from a lack of knowledge or ignorance about the continuous training available to SAPS staff.

Job stagnation, which ultimately affects work performance is also a significant contributing factor for members who feel dissatisfied. Generally, the lack of career development within the SAPS is attributed to the lack of employee training for SAPS for staff. Scientific and technological advancements have brought about significant changes to security mechanisms and as a result, some workforce skills obtained prior to the digital age are becoming obsolete and irrelevant. Dhar (2015) states that most organisations in the safety and security environment do not have an adequate budget to invest in the retraining of their staff members for the digital environment. As with any other organisation, for the SAPS to achieve its objectives it needs resources to meet the demands of its services. The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) necessitates organisations to acquire the necessary technological equipment and employ people who are technologically competent to make it easier for them to perform their duties. Due to the high cost of technology and budget constraints, the SAPS is unable to acquire some of these technologies. In addition, the maintenance of these technologies and the training of personnel for their use costly. However, this training can create an opportunity for employees to experience personal growth, learn new skills and develop a sense of self-worth as they become valuable members of their organisation (Mohajane, 2017). Hence, continuous training is important in assisting members to find ways of simplifying their tasks to increase their productivity and efficiency (Ngema et al., 2022).

The police service is known to be one of the most underpaid jobs in South Africa (Mdodi, 2019). It has been shown that high salaries play a huge role in retaining employees as this benefit improves employee performance and promotes their commitment to their jobs and employer. Research indicates that there is evidence which supports the relationship between prospects for promotions and career advancement; and job satisfaction (Mohajane, 2017). The tasks and duties of police officers are viewed as being extremely demanding, this view is worsened by the "shortage of resources, poor relations on an interpersonal level and a limited number of human resources" (Mars, 2021, p. 56). Taking into consideration stress levels linked with serving in the police force, the quality and quantity of their work

is inherently affected negatively, and consequently, the provision of motivating elements is necessary for improving the quality and quantity of their work performance (Molupe, 2019). Adding to the factors that demotivate SAPS personnel are the poor salaries they earn in a demanding job, insufficient overtime allowances and punitive performance appraisals. Although there is no documented promotion and transformation policy (Molupe, 2019), the SAPS is more likely to promote and appoint members who have proven to fit the job and organisational values and needs. In some instances, immediately after the promotion of a member, a process of attrition might take place. This process is likely to occur because the employee is not suitable for the position and environment, and because of this mismatch the employee may possibly face dismissal or resign voluntarily (Ngema et al, 2022). Poor communication about the training opportunities that SAPS offers, and a poor quality of training has understandably impacted the performance of SAPS officers. This poor performance has indirectly affected the levels of corruption, the quality of case investigations and the quality of service delivery to members of the community (Salem, 2019). To counter this, the SAPS must continuously promote and provide diverse training programmes of a high quality. Doing this will enable employees to develop a variety of skills that will equip them for opportunities that arise within the organisation, while allowing for a higher probability that promoted employees will be "fitting into high positions" (Ngema et al., 2022, p. 177). A study conducted by Mofokeng and Aphane (2022) revealed that job satisfaction leads to improved performance. Although there is an increase in the number of studies conducted on the SAPS, there is little information or research exploring the influence of employee training on career development. However, it must be noted that most SAPS employees display a certain level of reluctance to learn new skills and acquire the new knowledge because of poor motivation and a lack of support from their managers (Ngema et al., 2022). Consequently, there is a need to provide police officers with appropriate and quality training that will not only improve their performance but will also improve the way they perform crime related investigations and serve their communities (Salem, 2019).

Theoretical and conceptual background

Effective policing is recognised throughout the world as an essential element to the economy of the country (Chauke, Motlalekgosi & Mofokeng, 2022; Modise, Taylor, & Raga, 2022; Melwich & Mofokeng, 2020; Mofokeng, 2020; Mofokeng & Aphane, 2022). Mvuyisi and Mbukanma (2023) posit that "skilled and engaged people result in high job satisfaction, commitment and hence retention, which are advantages of staff improvement and engagement. Regardless of whether an organisation has established functional training programmes, staff growth can never be effective until the work environment allows for and encourages ongoing learning." Thus, through training and development police officers should capacitated to respond adequately to the demands of the public. Sharma and Kurukshetra (2013) are of the view that training and development is an important concept for any organisation that needs to facilitate the learning of job-related behaviour for its employees. The term behaviour in a broad sense, includes any knowledge and skills acquired. Davis, Leach and Clegg (2011) explain that training and development focus on identifying, assuring and developing an individual's key competencies through planned learning, to assist the individual in performing their current and future jobs. Employees are the blood stream of any organisation, however they are a crucial but expensive resource.

Kleygrewe, Oudejans, Koedijk and Hutter (2022) and Lukele (2018). support the notion that police training plays a crucial role in the development of police officers. Police training is a complex and multifaceted topic which combines various educational components and is governed by organisational guidelines. Wolfe, McLean, Rojek, Alpert and Smith (2019) suggest that police officers are exposed to numerous training programmes throughout their careers on a variety of topics, ranging from the use of force to emergency driving. While police managers are increasingly turning to research evidence to make decisions regarding how to address crime, the same cannot be said about how they select training programmes. The political nature of policing often forces police managers to pursue new training programmes in response to be seen as "doing something" about controversial officer-citizen encounters.

The SAPS as South Africa's principal law enforcement agency, has a key role in contributing to the safety of all citizens. The SAPS's strategies consist of operational priorities and organisational priorities. The SAPS's Strategic Plan of 2020-2022 is clearly rooted in the National Development Plan (NDP) Vision 2030's chapter on building safer communities. By highlighting the importance of training and skills development, the NDP Vision 2030 clearly emphasises that the police force should aim to be a well-resourced professional institution that is staffed with highly skilled officers who value their work, serve the community, protect the peaceful against violence, and respect the rights of all to access equality and justice (Republic of South Africa, 2011). This futuristic plan focuses on professionalising the police force through strategic outcome-based goals, which include giving efficient, effective and developmentally oriented service to the public. To improve employee performance and motivation, SAPS managers should utilise training to improve police officer capabilities. Different authorities and pieces of legislation in South Africa govern the training and development of SAPS members.

These pieces of legislation and authorities are outlined as follows:

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996)

Section 195 of the Constitution states that public administration must be governed by democratic principles and values, such as good human resource management and career development (Republic of South Africa, 1996). This can only be achieved through training and the continuous development of SAPS employees. Chapter 2, Section 29, subsection (1) positions education, adult basic education and further education as a basic right. Chapter 10, Section 195, sub-section (1) of the Constitution (Republic of South Africa 1996, p. 115) stipulates that career-development practices and good human resources should be cultivated in public sector organisations to maximise human potential. This Constitutional value is specific to education, training and development (ETD) practitioners, and is among the eight values and principles outlined in Chapter 10 of the Constitution that govern public administration, which includes ETD practitioners. For the public sector industry to uphold its mandate effectively, it is obligated to have skilled employees who are able to meet the objectives and future challenges of the organisation.

SAPS Act (No. 68 of 1995) as amended

The SAPS Act of 1995 states that the minister may make regulations regarding training, appointments, promotion and the transfer of members. Chapter 8 of the Act stipulates that the minister can obligate members to attend training courses (Naidoo, 2004, as cited in Mokoena, 2018; Mokoena, Pheiffer & Mofokeng, 2022). It also states that the National Commissioner determines the type of training that the employees of the SAPS will undergo. The SAPS falls within the ambit of the public sector, but the SAPS Act (68 of 1995) governs some of its employees, whereas the Public Service Act (103 of 1994 as amended) governs others. The SAPS Act (68 of 1995) and Public Service Act (103 of 1994) enact a distinction between the two types of SAPS employees (frontline versus administrative) due to the nature of duties that are performed (Naidoo, 2011).

Skills Development Act (No. 97 of 1998)

The Skills Development Act of Act (97 of 1998) forms part of the National Skills Development Strategy, which is aimed at addressing social and economic problems in South Africa (Mnisi, 2015, as cited in Mokoena et al., 2022, p. 67). The Skills Development Act (97 of 1998) is one of the important pieces of legislation concerning skills development. Mohlala (2011:38) states that the development of skills through training and skills development has been the most important tool for improving both individual and institutional competitiveness. Skills development and training in the South African context should be addressed against a social, political and economic background where restitution and community development are still high on the national agenda. The author further states that the Skills Development Act (97 of 1998) was introduced because of the realisation that the economy was being constrained by a shortage of a skilled workforce which needed the political imperative to redress unfair discrimination in training and development through employment opportunities. At this period of time, the country was facing an increase in unemployment, with a labour market did not have sufficiently equipped and trained human resource to hire. Furthermore, employers did not provide sufficient training for under-skilled employees. The purpose of the Skills Development Act (97 of 1998) is to develop the skills of the South African workforce. The Act further stipulates that this is needed for the following reasons:

- To improve the quality of life of workers, their prospects of work and labour mobility;

- To improve productivity in the workplace and the competitiveness of employers;

- To promote self-employment and increase the levels of investment in education and training in the labour market;

- To encourage employees to use the workplace as an active learning environment;

- To provide employees with opportunities to acquire new skills;

- To encourage workers to participate in learnerships and other training programmes.

The rationale for the Skills Development Act (97 of 1998) is to provide an institutional framework which can be used to devise and implement national, sector and workplace strategies for the development and improvement of the skills found in the South African workplace. The special focus of the act is the improvement of employment prospects for previously disadvantaged persons through education and training (Van Dyk, Nel & Haasbroek, 2001 as cited in Modise et al., 2022, p. 306). Mohlala (2004, as cited in Mnisi, 2015, p. 46) states that the development of skills through training and development efforts has been the most important tool for improving individual and institutional competitiveness.

Skills Development Levies Act (No. 9 of 1999)

The Skills Development Levies Act of 1999 states that every employer must pay a skills development levy to the South African Revenue Service (SARS), which is responsible for administering the Act. The SAPS has a registered skills development facilitator (SDF) at the police station level (Masilela, 2012). The purpose of the SDF is to consolidate workplace learning needs at the station level and report them to the provincial SDFs so that they can nominate members with skills deficiencies for further workplace learning programmes, monitor individual skills needs and assist members with compiling individual development plans (Mokoena, 2018; Mokoena et al., 2022).

Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA)

SETA is a body that comprises of representatives from labour (unions), employees, key government department members, professional bodies and bargaining forums from the various business industry sectors (Masilela, 2012). The main function of the SETA is to contribute to the development of skills.

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)

SAQA is responsible for the establishment of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the national standards bodies who set training standards that ensure progression and portability. This means that a qualification earned in a workplace training environment has value in the formal education system of the country and vice versa (Mohlala, 2011). Because of the SAPS's attempts to improve service delivery, the timeousness of arrests and the quality of investigation into criminal activity, it is important for SAPS to offer learning programmes offered that are needs based and relevant to circumstances. SAQA was formulated to ensure the development and implementation of the NQF, which contributes to the full development of each learner, and their social and economic development at large (Meyer, 2007). SAQA has the responsibility to monitor a Sector Education and Training Authority's (SETAs) accreditation processes of their learning programmes. It is responsible for monitoring the implementation of standards, certifying national qualifications and credits, and approving secondary accreditation from providers and assessors (Mohlala, 2011). The main functions of SAQA are to:

- Oversee the implementation of the NQF through a multi-year rolling strategic plan, budget and implementation framework;

- Recommend level descriptors to the minister after considering proposals by each Quality Council (QC);

- Recommend a policy framework to the minister for the development, registration and publication of qualifications in each sector; and recommend a policy framework to the minister after considering proposals by each QC, for assessment, recognition of prior learning, credit accumulation and transfer;

- Register a qualification recommended by a QC if it meets the approved criteria;

- Recommend a policy framework to the minister for the recognition and registering of a professional body and designation for this act, after consultation with statutory and non-statutory bodies of expert practitioners in occupational fields, and only after considering proposals by each;

- Recognise a professional body and register its professional designation if the approved criteria have been met;

- With respect to records of education and training, maintain a national learners' records database comprising of the registers of all the national qualifications, standards, learner achievements, professional bodies, and professional designations and their associated information; and

- Provide an evaluation and an advisory service to foreign qualifications holders (Bellis, 2001: p. 11).

It is necessary to bear in mind that SAQA provides the necessary mechanisms through which learning programmes can be evaluated for their suitability to meet the set national standards and norms as discussed above (Mohlala, 2011).

National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

The NQF is a framework that provides a vision and structure for the creation of a national qualification system. It is a national effort to integrate education and training into a unified structure of recognised qualifications. All qualifications and competencies are registered with the NQF according to their field of learning and level of progression (Botha, Kiley, & Truman, 2007, as cited by Mokoena, 2018).

Sector Education and Training Authority (SASSETA)

SASSETA is a SETA that was specifically established to facilitate the education and training for the wide range of safety and security providers in South Africa, such as the military, police and the diplomatic corps. According to the SAPS Education, Training and Development Policy (2007, as cited by Mokoena, 2018), in the SAPS, the Divisional Commissioner: Training, must ensure that a quality management system is developed, implemented and managed in accordance with the criteria provided by SAQA or SASSETA. Every education, training and development institution in the SAPS must, on a quarterly basis, report to the Divisional Commissioner: Training on all the learning interventions offered.

Research methodology

This study was carried out using a descriptive research design. The study describes the opinions of the respondents about the factors influencing training effectiveness in the public sector and operational the practices of the SAPS in the Johannesburg metro region in Gauteng. Ethical considerations are an important aspect of any research output, especially research that deals with human participants. Hence, all research requires ethical clearance and approval for it to be conducted. For the purposes of this study, ethical clearance was granted by the university, initially on the condition that the SAPS approved the request to conduct this research. This was later changed to full ethical clearance following the approval of the research request by the SAPS. In agreement with the pre-selected police stations, permission was requested and granted by the Gauteng Provincial Office, in accordance with the National Instruction of 2006. The Gauteng Provincial Office communicated with the selected police stations to provide the lead researcher with contact details and to allow the researcher to continue with the research. The sample population are police officials who work within the study area; are aware of the training activities offered; know to what extent the concepts of training and development can be applied to their respective policing areas, and how these influence crime prevention and enable SAPS employees to contribute towards the attainment of organisational goals.

A survey was conducted among 329 respondents from 13 police stations in the Johannesburg metro region using a structured questionnaire. The collected data were analysed using a descriptive analysis and the chi-square goodness of fit test to draw inferences. The responses were captured in Excel and exported into the Statistical Programme for Social Sciences (SPSS) for coding and further analysis. A chi-square test of independence (X^2) was used to test the relationships or associations between the demographic variables and the opinions of respondents. In a more general sense, a chi-square test of independence tests whether distributions of categorical variables differ from each other. One way of applying this test is to define the null hypothesis and the alternate hypothesis for sets of data that are to be compared (Fourie & Chimusoro, 2018). The chi-square value for the sets of data were then calculated and compared with a critical value obtained from a chi-square table. If the chi-square value is less than the critical value, then there is no significant difference, and the null hypothesis can be rejected with the alternate hypothesis being accepted.

Further, Phi and Cramer's V coefficients were used to test the strength of the association. The strength of the association is between -1 and +1. Very strong positive associations are 0.7 and above, fair associations are between 0.5 and 0.64, and weak associations are below 0.3. According to Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout (2014), hypotheses are statements or proposed explanations made on the basis of limited evidence, and serve as a starting point for further investigation. They can also take the form of statements of the proposed alternative 'facts', state of affairs, or tentative statements that can assist in establishing whether certain relationships exist between the dependent and independent variables. Furthermore, it can be a process by which hypotheses follow principles of deductive logic - that is, drawing conclusions about having particular knowledge of the general (Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006). The following three research hypotheses were tested in this study:

H1: There is a positive relationship between the quality of training and the performance of police officials.

H2: There is a positive relationship between the training environment and the quality of the training.

H3: There is a positive relationship between the monitoring and evaluation of the programme and the quality of the training in general.

Results And Discussion

Demographic characteristics of respondents

The sample included African, White, and Coloured respondents all employed in terms of the Police Act. The ranks comprised of: Constables 38% (n=126; 38.4%); Sergeants 29% (n=95; 28.9%); Warrant Officers 13% (n=41; 12.5%). Commissioned officers i.e., Captains, Lieutenant Colonels, Colonels and Brigadiers, comprised the combined number of 20% (n=67; 20.4%). Males constituted of 70 % (n=172; 70.4%) of the respondents, and female respondents were the least represented group at 30 % (n=157; 29.6%). Not only are females minimally represented, but they are most likely to be found in the lowest ranks. This might be linked to the history of the policing profession, or it may be due to other factors. The *p*-value is 0.043 < 0.05 and suggests a link between gender and rank. It is also noted that global trends show that fewer females consider entering policing as a profession (Hau-Nung & Ka-ki, 2013, p. 489; Helfgott, Gunnison, Murtagh & Navejar, 2018, pp. 237; Rabe-Hemp, 2009, pp. 114). The majority of the study participants were aged 20–30 (n=293; 90.9%), followed by those aged 31–40 (n=11; 3.3%). Few respondents were over the age of 41 (n=19; 5.8%). All participants were equally represented, with all age groups decreasing as the responsibility of policing decreases. The *p*-value is 0.040 < 0.05, and indicates a significant link between age and experience or service. The distribution of the respondents by area of employment indicated that the majority were from the Detective Training Academy department (n=154; 46.8%), followed by the Visible Policing department (n=149; 45.29%), and lastly 8% (n=26; 7.9%) of support staff.

Findings and Discussion

Research findings and discussion

Statement 1: The effect of training provided at the centre on employee performance

The findings indicate that the majority of respondents were satisfied with the level of training received. The responses did not differ significantly across years of service at a P- value of 0,118. The findings also showed that satisfaction with the level of training provided at the centre differed significantly between commanders and trainees (P = 0.00). Indeed, police commanders previously noted negative views on training were one of the motivating factors of this study. However, the remainder of the responses from supervisors, trainers and other personnel did not differ significantly (P = 1.000). The results suggest that the majority of respondents are satisfied that the training provided is adequate. Research indicates that in the real world, organisational growth and development is affected by multiple factors (Nassazi, 2013). Taking the present study into account, it can be deduced that employee training plays a vital role in improving performance, increasing service delivery, and reducing crime and victimisation. This in turn leads to increased police acceptability by communities which places the SAPS in the better position to improve their image within communities. These results imply that there is a significant difference in employee attitudes between SAPS employees who attend in-service training and those who do not. Further, existing literature presents evidence of the obvious effects of training and development on employee performance.

Statement 2: Updating of course material

The findings showed that 60% of the respondents agreed that the course material used is updated and revised on a regular basis, while only 16% disagreed. The highest level of concord was recorded among respondents with 13+ years of service. The findings also revealed that respondents in different categories had differing views on the updating of study material. The opinions of commanders and trainees differed significantly from the other groups, both groups indicated that they were not satisfied with the training material at a P- value of 0.009 and 0.022 respectively. Across categories, respondents did not differ significantly in opinion regarding to the courses attended. The training material used pre-1994 was affected by the political changes in the country during that same year, when the SAPS became the new national police service and whose rank structure needed to be amended accordingly. Management was tasked with the huge responsibility of transforming its course material to suit the new dispensation. Research indicates that there are a number of methods which may be used to develop the skills required within an organisation. One of these includes developing courses and programmes with a set of defined outputs and whose content, course duration, and other the details are clear to both the organisation and the personnel to be trained. Unlike informal training and programmes, formal training and programmes can be planned for and include an evaluation of the training. At the SAPS, employees may be granted leave to attend these courses and programmes for a certain duration of time or alternatively attend them on a part-time basis. These programmes can be held within the organisation (in-house) or off the job. Off the job training is argued to be more effective since employees are away from the workplace and their concentration is fully on the training at hand. Depending on the knowledge needed and the organisation's structure and policies, trainers can come from within the corporation or be external third parties (Nassazi, 2013).

Statement 3: Course content

The findings showed that the majority of respondents (83.59%) across all years of service were satisfied with the course content. There were no significant differences, with a P- value of 0.593. The 83.59% figure is a combination of respondents who answered with definitely agreed and agreed. The responses also showed that the different categories of respondents i.e., Commanders, supervisors, trainees and trainers etc., were satisfied with this aspect of the training. In terms of the courses attended, there was a slight difference in responses with some of the respondents who attended a train the trainer or detective services course indicating that they were not satisfied with the content of their programme. Their responses differed significantly to those who attended other courses. This suggests that the management of the training centre need to evaluate the programme to address the concerns of employees who attended the detective services and train the trainer courses.

Statement 4: Facilities at the training centre

The findings indicate that the majority (71%) of respondents across all categories and years of service agree that the facilities are suitable for training. This percentage is a combination of respondents who answered with definitely agreed and agreed. The remaining 29% of respondents disagreed (15%) or were uncertain (14%). The responses in this category did not differ significantly as reflected by a P- value = 0.095. There were no significant differences across the different categories of respondents. However, some respondents who attended the train the trainer and senior management courses believed that the facilities are not conducive for training purposes. Their main concerns centred around the age of the building and its retro fitting as it was not originally designed to be a training centre.

Statement 5: Programme outcomes covered by the trainers

The findings show that the majority of respondents (71%) agree with the statement that all outcomes are covered during training, while 19% were uncertain and 9% disagreed. This means that learning outcomes should be better aligned with employee on-the-job requirements. Commanders, supervisors, trainees and trainers all agreed with this statement, only the group represented as 'others' indicating dissatisfaction with a P- value of 0.043. In terms of the courses attended, respondents who attended the senior management course did not agree that the trainers covered all outcomes. This view was not shared by those that who attended the other courses.

Statement 6: Training methods used at the centre achieve results

The findings show that 74.16% of respondents agree that the training methods achieve results, with only 9.12% disagreeing. The findings also show that the majority of those who agree have spent 13+ years in the SAPS. This suggests that even members who experienced the demilitarization of the SAPS are satisfied with the current training methods. Furthermore, the findings also reveal that commanders, supervisors and trainers did not differ significantly in responding to this question. However, trainees differed from the rest of the groups as indicted by the P- value of 0.427. Regarding the courses attended, respondents who attended the detective services course and those in the group represented by 'others; were not satisfied with the training methods. The detectives differed significantly from the majority with a P- value of 0,634 and 'others' with a P- value of 0,005. These results indicate some dissatisfaction with the training methods used at the centre. Management should adopt monitoring mechanisms to enable the evaluation of trainers as they facilitate sessions. This will assist them in identifying problems and implementing solutions.

Statement 7: The number of trainers is adequate

The findings show that 65% of respondents with 0 to 3 years of service, 70% with 4 to 6 years of service, 75% with 7 to 9 years of service, 73.08% with 10 to 12 years of service and 62.42% of those that have served for 13+ years agree that there is an adequate number of trainers at the centre. The highest percentage was found among those with 7 to 9 years of service, followed by those with 10-12 years of service. This is significant as these respondents have more experience within the SAPS. In terms of the different categories of respondents commanders, supervisors and the 'others' group differed significantly from the rest of the groups. This suggests that, were the research to be repeated, results might differ. In terms of the courses attended, the respondents who attended the senior management course differed significantly from the rest with a P- value of 0,677. Thus, the overall results indicate employee satisfaction regarding the number of trainers available at the training centre.

Statement 8: Use of knowledge and skills in the work environment

The findings show that 79% of respondents across all years of service feel that trainees are able to use the knowledge and skills acquired through training in the workplace. Respondents in the different categories had slightly different responses to this statement, however Commanders differed significantly in their response with a P- value of 0.014. There were no significant differences in the responses when discussing the courses attended, as most respondents agreed with the statement. Therefore, it can be inferred that police members who receive good training will be confident in dealing with clients and will know how to address the challenges they face. This is important to note, as it was indicated that sometimes book sick leave due to frustrations arising from a lack of training. Employee performance is normally looked at in terms of employee outcomes. However, it can also be looked at in terms of employee behaviour (Armstrong, 2000 as cited in Nassazi, 2013, p. 27). Regarding the adequacy of the training programme, the findings show that 75% of respondents agree that the training programme enables trainees to meet their performance objectives while 8% disagreed. This shows that respondents did not differ significantly in their response to this question. Therefore, it can be deduced that after training, employees should be placed in posts where they are best able to use their newly acquired skills. The highest proportion of those who agreed with this statement had 13+ years of service with SAPS. Their views are important as they have extensive experience within the police force. However, this should not be inferred to mean that the views of those with less service are of less value. The findings show that the responses of commanders and trainees differ significantly from those of supervisors and trainers. This suggests that if the same study were to be repeated, the results would differ. Moreover, there was no significant difference in responses regarding the courses attended.

Discussion

As organisations strive for flexibility, speed and constant innovation, planning with people and not for people ensures that employees have a positive relationship with their organisation which can translate into performance improvement. When employees are given the freedom to participate in organisational decision, there is are higher chances of fostering mutual trust between management and employees. An environment of mutual trust and cooperation helps to break down the barriers between parties, and as such employees will not resort to strikes and work stoppages without exhausting all other available channels of dispute resolution. In such an environment, employees will be motivated because management considers them as partners who contribute to organisational success instead of mere subordinates. Employees in these environments tend to avoid engaging in counterproductive behaviours hence their performance continuously improves which ultimately contributes to the achievement of organisational goals and objectives (Carrel, Kuzmits & Elbert, 1989 as cited in Nassazi, 2013, p. 32). Despite the significant survey pool (329 respondents from 13 stations) these findings cannot be generalised to the SAPS. However, they do offered insight into what may be occurring in other policing areas and their centres. It was found that 60% of the respondents believe that the course material is satisfactory and is revised on a regular basis, with only 16% in disagreement. The majority of the members who agreed with this statement have 13+ years of service in the SAPS, thus, their opinion can be seen as a reflection of their experiences in the SAPS. Commanders differed significantly from other groups in this respect (P = 0,009) and overall there were no significant differences regarding the courses attended. These findings suggest that some of the material needs to be upgraded to incorporate modern policing practices. A significant number of respondents with differing periods of service were of the view that trainees can use their knowledge and skills in their work environment, post-training, however Commanders differed significantly in their responses to the question with a P- value of 0.014. Furthermore, 75% of the respondents across all categories and years of service believe that training enables trainees to meet their job and performance objectives. Even so, different opinions were expressed by the station commanders and trainees. Commanders differed significantly at a P- value of 0.066 and trainees at a P- value 0.099 which suggests that more needs to be done in this regard. Seventy-nine per cent of respondents agree that the work environment enables trainees to practice what they have learnt, however Commanders differed significantly in their response with a P- value of 0.014. The respondents differed significantly across the the surveyed categories when answering the question of whether trainees can competently handle their job requirements after training with a P- value of 0. 010. This suggests that there is a level of dissatisfaction regarding how trainees perform their duties. The association between trainees competently performing their duties and years of service was not significant, with a 5% level of significance that has a P- value of 0.039. This means that even if this study were to be repeated elsewhere, there is a high probability that the results would not change. In terms of years of service and the courses attended, there were no significant differences in the responses as to whether the training programme enhanced trainee confidence. However, the different categories of respondents differed significantly regarding their own reflecting on the training they have attended with a P- value 0.009. This suggests that poor performance remains a challenge in the SAPS. Furthermore, most of the respondents are of the opinion that the centre

is performing regarding the development of trainees. In terms of respondents in the various years of service groups there were no significant difference, with a P – value of 0.118. However, commanders and trainees differed significantly to the other groups when answering questions about the adequacy of the training (P = 0.00). Most of the respondents were of the opinion that the content of the programme is relevant for their daily activities. Although most of the respondents in this study are in lower SAPS ranks, their feedback still provides valuable insight about the quality of training and how it is linked to performance. But this also suggests that the majority of respondents (including trainers), lack field experience due to their shorter length of service and years of experience within the SAPS.

While there were no significant differences in perceptions across categories (specifically years of service and number of courses attended), on whether trainers explained the outcomes of the courses, there were significant differences in terms of the categories of respondents (P = 0.043). In all categories, most respondents believed that the methods used by the trainers achieved the desired results. When discussing whether trainers had sufficient theoretical knowledge, there were no significant differences, even when disaggregated by years of service. Only those who attended the senior management course disagreed with this statement and they recommend that better trained trainers should be used. However through further probing, the researchers posit that this outcome might be influenced by the overall poor results of respondents as many did not achieve good results or pass the course as they had envisioned. Most the respondents felt that the facilities at the training centre were up to standard and the commanders who participated in this study agreed with these sentiments. In terms of years of service, category of respondents and number of courses attended, there were no significant differences in responses as to whether the learning outcomes are realistic and achievable, with most respondents believing that they are. Discipline poses a challenge in most environments; however, the study found that across all categories, the respondents believe that trainees are disciplined and there were no significant differences in the responses.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study found that while the majority of respondents are satisfied with the content of the training manuals, the commanders in particular are dissatisfied. It was established that this is due to some manuals still containing references to outdated terms and ranks. Furthermore, the results suggest that trainees are not making full use of the skills and knowledge acquired during workplace training. This could be due to a lack of monitoring by their supervisors. Consequently, centre management should work in tandem with station management to formulate a strategy to monitor trainee progress when they return to the workplace. In courses such as senior management, employees are expected to finalize a portfolio of evidence at work and it was found that if they are not closely monitored, some employees do not submit their final portfolio. By a slight majority, respondents indicated that they were satisfied with their course trainer's skills and efficiency. This suggests that there is room for improvement. The study also revealed that a lack of field experience causes trainers to omit content that they are not familiar with to avoid embarrassment when facilitating the course. Accordingly, trainers should have periodic exposure to real life situations. Finally, respondents rated the training methods used as excellent. This shows that trainers take their work seriously and are committed to developing their colleagues as stipulated in the SAPS Code of Conduct.

The results of this study will be of assistance to trainers and station commanders and will assist training managers in identifying areas that require attention. Regarding training material, it is recommended that all training material is reviewed to remove all old terminology and names and updated to reflect current research and developments. Material that represents the present rather than the past will enhance the performance of all parties involved with implementing training. These updates will also assist in removing the stigma of the SAPS still being associated with pre-1994 South Africa and hopefully create better practises for improved service delivery. While respondents were generally of the view that trainees use the skills acquired through training, it is recommended that the centre's training manager create a pro-forma mechanism that is overseen by station management, to monitor trainees in the workplace. This feedback mechanism will assist in improving the programmes offered at the centre. Furthermore, such monitoring should be included in station management's annual performance assessment to incentivise them to monitor trainees more closely. In addition, while the study showed that although trainers have the necessary training experience, there is still room for improvement as they need to update their skills and knowledge on an on-going basis. Thus, it is recommended that trainers are regularly sent on refresher courses to enhance their skills, and that are monitored while conducting training to identify any areas for further training. Finally, it is recommended that trainer job descriptions are classified according to their rank and that they should be allowed to train SAPS members who are a rank below or on the same rank. This would assist junior trainers to develop their confidence as they will be training their peers in some instances.

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