

**EMPLOYABILITY OF GRADUATES ON THE PUBLIC SERVICE INTERNSHIP
PROGRAMME: THE CASE OF THE LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT & TOURISM (LEDET), SOUTH AFRICA**

by

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my family, my wife Pheladi (Maria) and kids Kgothatso, Tshepo and Tumelo. To my granddaughters Temosho, Tiisetso, Tshepi, Leona, and my beloved great granddaughter Lerato for their everlasting love and support.

To my mother Rose and late father Hlabesane (Mafutha), brothers and sisters for their support and encouragement to study.

My supervisor, Prof K.G. Phago for all the support and dedication through my studies. To my colleagues and Management of LEDET for their time and effort to support my studies.

DECLARATION

I, Kgwadikatsoga Joseph Motene hereby declare that the work contained in this mini-dissertation, hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the fulfilment of Master of Public Administration has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other institution, that it is my work in design and in execution and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

MOTENE K.J.

Date:

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ABSTRACT

The Internship programme has been used by many governments and employers throughout the world to integrate academic theory learnt at schools and Universities and practiced in the workplace. The South African government introduced the Public Service Internship Programme(PSIP) in 2002, and one of its objectives was to reduce the high rate of graduates who are unemployable by appointing them as graduate interns for a period of 12 months, thus providing them with the public service skills and experience required by the Public Service in South Africa.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the implementation of the Public Service Internship Programme with regards to its contribution to the employability of graduates: The case of the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment, and Tourism in the Republic of South Africa.

The study used the qualitative research method to interview 80 respondents ranging from Executive Management, Senior Management, Middle Management, Junior Management, Operational employees, Mentors and Graduate Interns to solicit their views and understanding on the implementation of the Public Service Internship Programme within the department. The study used content analysis to analyse data obtained from the 80 research respondents. The analysis was made using themes in line with thematic content analysis.

The research findings confirmed that Graduate Interns are obtaining the necessary and relevant skills that will make them employable after completing the PSIP. The PSIP imparts Graduate Interns with skills that contribute to their employability in both the public and private sectors. It instils confidence and provides exposure and experience to Graduates Interns to have competitive advantages during job interviews in the public service and the private sector. It is a very useful programme that must be supported and encouraged in the public service as it assisted many to get jobs and reduce the rate of graduate unemployment in South Africa. It is relevant, useful and necessary to deal with the unemployment of graduates. It is successful and must be promoted because most Graduate Interns are employable during and after the completion of the programme.

The study made the following recommendations;

That all stakeholders must be inducted on PSIP to ensure its successful implementation, mentors must be trained on mentoring and coaching prior to their appointment, Mentoring

be linked to the key result areas and key performance indicators of employees for it to be recognised in terms of the Performance Management and Development System, PSIP must be monitored and evaluated like all other government programmes, that the assignment of duties to graduates must be in line with their qualifications and their careers, graduate interns should be allowed to attend departmental meetings and functions as part of their learning areas, that those interning on the departmental Human Resources Management and Development be granted access to the PERSAL system as it is an important system in the South African Public Service, exit interviews must be conducted to get feedback from the interns on the implementation of the programme, and that proper allocation of offices or work spaces must be done by the department to enhance and improve the working conditions of the Graduate Interns .

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The study was conducted to evaluate if the implementation of the Public Service Internship Programme (PSIP), by the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET) leads to the employability of interns. The background below outlines the origin of the PSIP in South Africa. The problem statement explains why the study is necessary and further unpacks the impact of youth unemployment in our country and internationally. The motivation or rationale of the study provides information on why the study is conducted, and the purpose is to generate know knowledge as well as to contribute to the body of knowledge on the implementation of the PSIP. The significance of the study will explain the importance of this research to the Department and the discipline of Public Administration and other disciplines. The aim of the study will tell why the study is conducted. The objectives will provide clarity on why this study is unique from other studies conducted previously. The research questions are used to define the scope of the study and to avoid unnecessary and irrelevant information. The section on conceptualisation will explain and define the concepts and words used frequently in this study. The outline of the research dissertation will provide the format of the study to assist and help readers to locate information with ease. The research limitations will explain the constraints experienced by the researcher while conducting the study.

1.2 BACKGROUND

The internship programme is an important aspect of development of those who come straight from either college or university in order for them to be exposed to real work situations. Governments and organisations throughout the world embrace such programmes as recruitment and development tools. According to Furco (2011:74), internship programmes engage students in service activities primarily for the purpose of providing them with hands-on experience that enhances their learning or understanding of issues relevant to a particular area of study.

Bacon (2011:68) says: "Internships are important to individuals seeking to learn a particular area, gain experience in a particular field, build connections, and have a competitive advantage over those who do not have internships". According to Finkle & Barclay

(1979:236), interns bring new insights and perspectives to government, they would be an inexpensive source of qualified and motivated personnel, and they could provide the resources to complete special research projects which might normally be assigned to an outside consulting agency. According to Loretto (2007:1), the programme is beneficial to interns as it assisted 64.1% of them to plan their careers, 74.5% gained real work experience, 65.75% were able to build their resume, 65.3% learned new skills, and 59.9% made new connections (networking). The study commissioned by the Umsobomvu Youth Fund in 2007 on the evaluation of the internship programme found that it is relevant, exposes and prepares the interns for the world of work.

According to Clinton (2003:45) and Chauhan (1978:100–105), the internships are used to attract, acquire and retain talent for the next generation of public sector leaders. The graduate student internships often result in job offers from host organisations (Benavides, Dicke & Holt, 2010:353), and this is in line with Henry (1979), that the graduates developed leadership ambition due to the training and experience they got from the programme; they need less supervision as compared to non-interns, and that they were ready to work without the much needed induction and orientation. This experience justifies the necessity of the internship programme in the work place to assist new recruits.

Internship programmes engage students in service activities primarily for the purpose of providing students with hands-on experiences that enhance their learning or understanding of issues relevant to a particular area of study and that students are the primary intended beneficiaries and the focus of the service activity is on student learning. Students are placed in internships to acquire skills and knowledge that will enhance their academic learning and /or vocational development (Furco, 2011:74).

Internships provide a context in which interns can understand the importance of applying academic knowledge in a professional setting. Internships also offer interns the opportunity to develop professional relationships by networking within a particular field and thus developing an important support structure. The comprehensive nature of the internship allows students to develop their ability to associate ideas and concepts, engage in analyses and amalgamate learning experiences (Garcia, 2008). The supervisory process within an internship also constitutes an important part of the intern's learning experience. Garcia (2008) highlights the role of the supervisor as being one who guides and advises the learner, helping the learner to resolve issues or raising important questions, thus the

supervisor is seen as an experienced individual in the field who is able to convey knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for becoming a professional. Through the internalisation of the attitudes observed, students could follow their advisor's example and this becomes a model to be emulated (Garcia, 2008). The supervisory relationship is therefore important in ensuring a sense of accomplishment, satisfaction and motivation for the intern. It is therefore important to appoint experienced supervisors to train interns in the workplace.

The training of graduate students or workers during the apartheid government in South Africa was based on the Apprenticeship Act, No. 37 of 1944. The Act was repealed by the Manpower Training Act (MTA), 56 of 1981. The purpose of this act was to provide for the promotion and regulation of the training of manpower. Section 13 of the MTA allowed the Minister of Labour to prescribe the qualification and educational standard required for apprenticeship; the standard of proficiency, including the level of theoretical training and the minimum period of practical training in actual production and maintenance circumstances which is required before an apprentice is permitted to undergo a trade test. Section 17 of the MTA outlines the terms and conditions of the apprenticeship as follows: any person who has the qualification prescribed under section 13; has obtained a certificate of physical fitness in the prescribed form; has attained the age of fifteen years; and is not required by law to attend any school.

The new democratic government of South Africa was elected in 1994, and a new Constitution was approved in 1996. Section 29 (1) of the Republic of South Africa's constitution states that everyone has the right to a basic education, including adult basic education, and to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible. The Skills Development Act (SDA), No 97 was approved in 1998 to give effect to the RSA Constitution. The intention of the SDA is to provide an institutional framework to devise and implement national, sector and workplace strategies to develop and improve the skills of the South African workforce; to integrate those strategies within the National Qualifications Framework contemplated in the South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995; to provide for learnerships that lead to recognised occupational qualifications; to provide for the financing of skills development by means of a levy –grant scheme and a National Skills Fund; to provide for and regulate employment services; and to provide for matters connected therewith (SDA, 1998:1).

The Public Service Internship Programme (PSIP) was approved by the South African Cabinet, as per Cabinet Minutes number 5.5 of 25 April 2001, 3.3.8 and 7.1 of 4 December 2002, with the primary aim of resolving the general shortage of qualified and skilled employees in the public service (The Public Service Internship Programme Step by Step Guide, 2006:32). The Cabinet's decision mandated all Departments and State Owned Entities to appoint, train and pay a minimum stipend of R3 609-00 and maximum of R6 644-00 per month (based on the 2014 Public Service Salary scales) for a period not exceeding 12 months. Graduates are allocated mentors who are experienced in the different units and directorates within the public service. Graduates are allowed to leave their employment if they secured permanent and better paying positions in either the public or private sector. According to Koma (2010:5), the Human Resource Development Strategic framework reveals that the target for the internship programme is that all public service departments must have interns constituting at least 2% of employees.

According to the DPSA guide (2006:32), the objectives of the PSIP are as follows; (a) To resolve the general shortage of qualified and skilled people in the workplace by encouraging graduates to equip themselves with the necessary practical experience, (b) to assist in meeting the strategic staffing needs of the public service by providing practical and accelerated work experience programmes that expose interns to specific occupations, (c) to provide unemployed graduates with valuable work experience and skills to enhance their employability, (d) to address the problem of youth unemployment, especially tertiary (University and Technicon) graduates by providing them with work experience opportunities in the public service, (e) to provide opportunities to gain some practical experience for students who are required to do this to earn credits towards a qualification, (f) to contribute to accelerated service delivery by government through the improved introduction of skilled personnel in the public service, (h) to improve equitable access to public sector employment for rural and marginalised groups such as women and the disabled, (i) to contribute to lifelong learning, and (J) to increase awareness among students of job and career opportunities in the public service.

The United Nations 2030 Development Agenda has the following targets that all member countries must strive to achieve. Increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship; achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men including for young people and persons with disabilities; equal pay for work of

equal value; substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training; develop and operationalise a global strategy for youth employment; and implement the global jobs pact of the International Labour Organisation(ILO). The PSIP focuses on young people who have relevant skills both technical and vocational but are without work experience.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2015:72) argues that: “The positive effect of public investment on youth employment can be maximised by ensuring that young workers have the right skills and are supported in the job matching”. The PSIP is a vehicle to assist young people to get a job for a period of twelve months, and possibly a permanent job in the public sector or private sector.

The ILO (2015: 53) Identified three stages of labour market transition for youth as follows;

(i) Transited where the youth is currently employed and not in school. The youth must be in a stable job or satisfactory temporary job lasting for 12 months, or satisfactory self-employment. (ii) In transition, a young person who is still in transition is an active student at school, unemployed, employed in a temporary and non-satisfactory job, and in non-satisfactory self-employment, inactive and not in education or training, with the aim of looking for work later. (iii) Transition not yet started when a young person is still at school and inactive, or inactive and not in education or training. The PSIP focuses on young people who are in transition who have completed their tertiary studies but find it difficult to get jobs, because of their lack of the required experience.

LEDET is currently implementing the PSIP in line with 2002 cabinet decision, focusing on the appointment and training of unemployed graduates in scarce skills like environmental science, economics and tourism required to enhance service delivery based on the mandate of the department. The focus is on the work based education and training, with particular interest in unemployed graduates, who need workplace exposure and experience to improve their chances of employment.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

According to the World Economic Forum (WEF) (2014:14), South Africa’s youth unemployment is the third highest in the world after Greece and Spain, and this is also noted by Kingdom & Knight (2007:814) who concluded that South Africa has one of the highest rates of unemployment in the world.

WEF (2014:14) estimates that more than 50% of young South Africans between the ages of 15 and 24 are unemployed, and this is further reflected by Statistics South Africa (2011:43) that the unemployment rate is 52.9 % amongst 15–24 year olds. The figures clearly show a bleak future for the South African youth, which requires measures to be put in place to turn this tide of unemployment. The South African National Development Plan (2012:66) is responding to this challenge by targeting to reduce the unemployment rate to 6% by 2030.

The South African government introduced the PSIP as a response to the high rate of youth unemployment in the country. However, despite the introduction of the PSIP the South African Graduates Development Association's (SAGDA) (2013:22) final report on the Internship baseline study estimates that between 300 000 and 600 000 graduates are unemployed in South Africa. A study conducted by Van der Berg and Broekhuizen (2013) also found that the graduate unemployment rate is 5.9%. It is upon this premise that this study is aimed at investigating the employability of graduates who have completed the Public Service Internship Programme using the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment, and Tourism (LEDET) as a case.

The study will therefore find out if the PSIP as implemented by LEDET leads to the employability of graduates

1.4 MOTIVATION /RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The motivation and rationale for the study is to contribute towards the generation of new knowledge on the evaluation of the effectiveness of the PSIP. It will investigate if departments are providing Graduate Interns with the necessary training, skills, mentors and other resources that will empower them to secure permanent employment in both the public and private sectors.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The following studies were conducted to investigate the Public Service Internship Programme in the Republic of South Africa.

The Umsobomvu Youth fund conducted two studies in 2006 and 2007. The 2006 study investigated the effectiveness of the programme within its divisions, and the 2007 study investigated the effectiveness of the programme in both the National Department of Home Affairs and the North – West Department of Health in 2007.

A study conducted by Koma in 2010 investigated the effectiveness of the PSIP in the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA). The South African Graduate Development Association (SAGDA) conducted a study in 2012 to evaluate the effectiveness of the internship programme implemented by the Education, Training, Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority (ETD SETA) and the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services SETA (MERSETA).

However, no study was conducted to investigate the programme in the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism. The present study therefore seeks to investigate the effectiveness of the PSIP in LEDET.

The study is significant as it will inform Government policy on the PSIP with the primary aim of improving and making it effective. The study will serve as a basis for further studies in the whole Province and Nationwide by other researchers. It will assist the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism to determine if the PSIP leads to the employability of graduates, and if not, corrective measures can be put in place. It will assist all Departments to enhance and improve the implementation of the PSIP.

1.6 AIM OF THE STUDY

The primary aim of this study is to investigate the employability of graduates on the Public Service Internship Programme in the LEDET.

1.7 OBJECTIVES

- To describe whether interns at the end of the Public Service Graduate Internship Programme have acquired the necessary and relevant skills necessary to secure their employment;
- To determine measures in place to ensure employability of interns from the PSIP;
- To determine inherent challenges of PSIP.

1.8 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research question serves as a means of focusing on the research problem (Mouton, 2001:53). According to Robson (2007:50), the research question directs the research aim to

obtain answers, Strydom & Delport (2005:32) say that the research question must be related to the goals, objectives and hypothesis of the study. The research questions are as follows;

- Does interns who have completed the PSIP, possess the necessary and relevant skills to be employable?
- What measures are in place by the LEDET to ensure the employability of interns upon completion of the PSIP?
- What are challenges faced by the LEDET in making the Public Service Graduate Internship Programme effective?

1.9. CONCEPTUALISATION

Conceptualisation: is aimed at analysing the meaning of words and concepts by clarifying, defining as well as elaborating on their different meanings (Mouton, 2001:175). The following are conceptual analyses of some concepts and words used in this study:

Effectiveness: Pauw, Woods, Van Der Linde and Visser (2009:124) define effectiveness as the extent to which the activity's stated objectives have been met, the extent to which objectives are achieved and the relationship between the intended impact and the actual impact of an activity.

According to Productivity South Africa (2007:27), productivity is the ability to achieve set goals and objectives. It also has to do with the actual impact of the service and the quality of service rendered.

Employability: According to Hillage and Pollard (1998), employability is being capable of getting and keeping fulfilling work. The Cambridge English Dictionary defines employability as the skills and abilities that allow you to be employed. The Manchester Metropolitan University defines employability "as the development of skills, abilities and personal attributes that enhance students' capability to secure rewarding and satisfactory outcomes in their economic, social and community lives".

Evaluation: Cloete and Wissink (2000:211) define evaluation as the use of policy analytic research methods or techniques to measure the performance of programmes so that continuous change in activities can be made with a view to improving effectiveness.

Intern: An intern is a person who is contracted with a Department to engage in an internship programme (The Public Service Internship Step by Step Guide, 2006:3). The American Heritage Dictionary of the English language defines an intern as a student or a recent graduate undergoing supervised practical training. The SAGDA report (2013:10) refers to an intern as a graduate with no or little practical working experience in the specific discipline seeking to enter the corporate world or organisation through a structured bridging programme.

Internship: According to Koma (2010:4), internship means the professional training and experience that every person leaving an institution of learning may find useful to go through for practice before they enter the world of work as a professional in their respective fields. The Public Service Internship Programme Guide (2006:5) defines internship as a public service graduate work experience programme targeting unemployed graduates. The South African Graduates Development Association report (2013:10) refers to internship as a temporary position with an emphasis on, on –the- job training rather than merely employment and it can be paid or unpaid.

Internship programme: The Public Service Internship Programme Guide (2006:5) defines it as a Public Service Programme that provides practical experience to the graduates. The SAGDA report (2013:10) mentions that it is a bridging programme for graduates that have completed a tertiary qualification from an institution into a workplace.

Methodology: According to Bailey (1987:33), methodology is the philosophy of the research process, including assumptions, values, standards and criteria used by a researcher for interpreting data and reaching conclusions.

Unemployment: Baskin (1996:144) describes unemployment as a condition at which any person of 15 years and older is not in paid or self-employment and is available for paid employment or self-employment while Kingdom & Knight (2007:827) explain it as more of a reflection of joblessness in the South African condition.

Unemployment rate: According to Erasmus et al. (2009:51), unemployment rate is the number of unemployed persons expressed as a percentage of the total active economic population. National unemployment rate in a country is normally defined as the percentage of the total labour force that is unemployed but actively seeking employment and is willing to work.

Training: According to Nel et al. (2009:446), training is focused on improving employees' performances in their current jobs. Grobler *et al.* (2006:300-301) argue that training takes place when employees gain skills that can be used in most workplaces.

Skill: Harrison (1993:264) defines skill as the process of enabling individuals to assume new roles and implement systems effectively in order to successfully achieve stated performance outcomes. It is the ability to demonstrate behaviour that is realistically related to the attainment of a performance goal (Robbins, 1995:15).

1.10. OUTLINE OF THE RESEARCH DISSERTATION

The research report will consist of five chapters, structured as follows;

Chapter one: Introduction

The chapter introduced the topic of the study, background of the Public Service Graduate internship programme and its purpose, the rationale or motivation of the study, the problem statement, the aim of the study, the research objectives, questions and definitions of key concepts .

Chapter two: Literature review

The chapter focused on the concepts, literature review, employability concept, skills development, public service training on skills development, the Public Service Internship (PSIP) as part of skills development in the public service, the focus of public service training, skills development funding and financial accountability. Literature is reviewed to ascertain the views of different scholars on skills development and the Internships' programme.

Chapter three: Research Methodology

This chapter outlines and explains the types of research designs used which is qualitative in nature. The 1 382 population in the department will be explained and the 80 respondents sampled for this study will be outlined and described in detail. The method used for data collection in the current study is called content analysis, and some scholars prefer to call it thematic content analysis, tools used for analysis are interviews and focus groups. The ethical matters considered for this research like informed consent, permission to conduct the study and others will be explained.

Chapter four: Presentation and Analysis of the Research Findings

An outline of the research presentation and analyses will be made on the implementation of the Public Service Graduate internship programme as implemented by LEDET. The chapter will provide academic discussions of the findings made by the study.

Chapter five: Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter provides a conclusion about the study as well as recommendations to LEDET based on the findings and analysis of the research conducted.

1.11. RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

The Public Service Internship Programme is implemented nationally in South Africa by all National and Provincial Departments, as well as by State Owned Enterprises reporting to National and Provincial Departments. As a result the scope covered by this study in terms of the sample of only 80 respondents drawn from the Limpopo Department of Economic, Development, Environment and Tourism makes it extremely difficult if not impossible to generalise on the implementation of the PSIP to the whole Public Service in South Africa and globally.

The limitation is that there are not sufficient research studies and literature on the Public Service Internship programme, but there is plenty of literature on internship programmes and this makes it difficult to compare and contrast which different countries are implementing the programmes that are run and controlled by the state as is the case here in South Africa. The study is the first to be conducted for LEDET and this makes it impossible to benchmark it with previously conducted studies on the same subject.

1.12 CONCLUSION

This chapter gave the background of the study, defined the problem statement, the aim of the study, the rationale and outlined the research objectives and questions. It provided the research limitations and outlined the structure of the research report. The next chapter will review, critique and analyse the literature related to the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided the background on the Public Service Internship Programme (PSIP) aimed at reducing the rate of graduate unemployment by providing skills and experience to enable them to be employable in the public service and beyond. The problem statement, research objectives and research questions were clearly articulated.

The current chapter will focus on the concepts, literature review, employability concept, skills development, public service training on skills development, the Public Service Internship (PSIP) as part of skills development in the public service, the focus of public service training, skills development funding and financial accountability challenges in the implementation of PSIP in South Africa. Literature is reviewed to ascertain the views of different scholars on skills development and the Internships' programme.

2.2. THE CONCEPT, LITERATURE REVIEW

It is important for any research project to begin with a review of existing literature to avoid duplication of work to the already existing body knowledge in the field. The main objective of literature review is to determine what has been done by other scholars in the field of study (Mouton, 2001:86).

Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2010:121) describe literature review as a systematic, explicit and reproducible method for identifying, evaluating and synthesising the existing body of completed and recorded work produced by researchers, scholars and practitioners. Anderson and Poole (2009: 21) emphasise that since a thesis aims to be a contribution to the body of knowledge, therefore there is a need to verify that the study has not been done previously. A literature review provides a platform for the researcher to check, validate and benchmark the present study with the knowledge and contribution made by other researchers before.

A literature review, according to Punch (2006:41), must be critical of the existing literature on the chosen field. It must therefore critique, analyse the methods used in similar research studies. According to Ridley (2012:3), literature review is part of the thesis where there is extensive reference to related research and theory in the field. It provides the researcher

with a platform to engage other researchers through a written dialogue with specific reference to the research topic and questions.

The purpose of literature review is to describe the work done on a specific area of research and to evaluate this work. Both the descriptive and evaluative elements are important parts of the review (American Psychological Association, 2010).

2.3. THE EMPLOYABILITY CONCEPT

According to Hillage and Pollard (1998), employability is being capable of getting and keeping fulfilling work. The Cambridge English Dictionary defines the word employability as the skills and abilities that allow you to be employed. The Public service, just like all other employers in the private sector, needs skilled employees to implement the National Development Plan.

Employability in the public service is based on recruitment and selection. According to Nel, Werner, Haasbroek, Poisant, Sono, and Schultz. (2009:223), recruitment is the process of attracting potential job applicants from the available labour force. Every organisation must be able to attract a sufficient number of job candidates that will help the organisation achieve its objectives. The organisational recruitment policy includes information on the following aspects;

- Whether internal or external recruitment will take place,
- if relatives of existing employees may be hired,
- if part-time, or any type of flexitime workers will be considered, and
- if people over retirement age may be employed.

According to Nel *et al* (2009:241), the selection process is a series of steps through which applicants pass. The following are examples of the selection process; initial screening, interviews, employment tests, reference checks, offer of employment and appointment.

Koma (2010:58) found that 83,3% of graduate Interns were ready and willing to secure full time employment in the public service after completing the PSIP with the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) in South Africa, and that the main purpose of the Internship Programme is to make available a cadre of dedicated public service employees and to facilitate employment of graduates. Koma (2010:58) further noted the shortcomings

on the PSIP especially because there are no formal ways of mainstreaming interns in the Public Service labour market.

Skills development is important for the public service to deliver goods and services to the public and according to Munzhedzi (2011:99), a favourable working environment for employees should be created, and he further argues that good communication and relations between subordinates, supervisors, and management should be facilitated. Koma (2010:51) also found that 50% of mentors at the DPSA were not trained on mentoring and coaching. Koma (2010: 63-64) said that “the people entrusted with capacitating the future public service workforce should be capacitated to this job themselves, if the department is to reap the benefits of the Internship Programme, and that mentors should be trained to execute this task and it should be made compulsory for everyone before assuming this task of mentors”. According to Koma (2010:48), 100% of mentors are giving interns administrative duties.

Kroukamp (2002: 456) says that “highly skilled personnel constitute 3% of the Public Service in South Africa”. The skills shortage in the public service makes it difficult for the government to deliver quality goods and services to the citizens. The problem needs government to accelerate the training of its public servants in order to realise its goals and objectives as outlined on the National Development Plan vision 2030. The shortage of skills and lack of skills development make it difficult for national and provincial departments to fill vacant positions (Chelechele, 2009:50). Kroukamp (2002:459) said that “the demands for skills and a better educated workforce will increase rather than diminish”.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2015:72) argues that “The positive effect of public investment on youth employment can be maximised by ensuring that young workers have the right skills and are supported in the job matching, and that strategies to promote youth employment should articulate the mix and interaction of macroeconomic policies, labour and employment policies and other interventions specifically targeting young people, particularly the most disadvantaged.

The design and implementation approaches that have proven effective on youth employment coordination mechanisms in East Africa are;

(i) The mainstreaming of youth employment in broader National Development Plans and Strategies, yet with explicit objectives and targets.

- (ii) Clear indication of roles and responsibilities of different implementation partners in employment policies and action plans on youth employment.
- (iii) Establishment of links between the youth employment policy and other policies that affect youth employment.
- (iv) Reflection of government commitments to youth employment in national budgets, and
- (v) Setting up of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, not just for the programmes but also for the budget allocations toward youth employment (Phororo, 2013).

2.4. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

The public service is dependent on skills that the public servants possess for the effective and efficient delivery of its goods and services to the citizens. Public servants must therefore be trained to have the requisite skills that will enable them to discharge their functions. The South African government introduced the Public Service Act of 1994 to provide a legal framework on how the public servants must be trained to deliver goods and services on behalf of the government. The Public Service Act was followed by the White Paper on Public Service Training and Education in 1995, as well as the White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service in 1997. The two White Papers were intended to professionalise the public service in South Africa.

Skills development must be in line with the requirements of the South African Constitution which reflects the following points on public administration;

Section 195 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa is dedicated to basic values and principles governing Public Administration. The values are as follows;

- (a) A high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained.
- (b) Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted.
- (c) Public administration must be development orientated.
- (d) Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias.
- (e) People's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making.

(f) Public administration must be accountable.

(g) Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information.

(h) Good human resource management and career development practices to maximise human potential, must be cultivated.

(i) Public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation.

Section 196 of the Constitution demands the establishment of the Public Service Commission and section 196 (4) outlines the powers and functions of the commission as follows;

(a) To promote the values and principles as set out in section 195, throughout the public service.

(b) To investigate, monitor and evaluate the organisation and administration, and the personnel practices of the public service,

(c) To propose measures to ensure effective and efficient performance within the public service.

(d) To give directions aimed at ensuring that personnel procedures relating to recruitment, transfers, promotions and dismissals comply with the values and principles set out in section 195.

According to Nel *et al.* (2009:435), The National skills development strategy (NSDS) is underpinned by six guiding principles;

- Lifelong learning
- Promotion of equity
- Demand led
- Flexibility and decentralisation
- Partnership and co-operation

- Efficiency and effectiveness

According to Nel *et al.* (2009:435), the objectives of the National Skills Development Strategy are as follows;

- Prioritising and communicating critical skills for sustainable growth, development, and equity.
- Promoting and accelerating quality training for all in the workplace.
- Promoting employability and sustainable livelihoods through skills development.
- Assisting designated groups, including new entrants, to participate in accredited work, integrated learning, and work-based programmes to acquire critical skills to enter the labour market and self-employment.
- Improving the quality and relevance of provision.

The purpose of skills development in the public service is to ensure that there is a big enough pool of skills to speed up service delivery. The ideal public servant to deliver goods and services to the public must be trained and nurtured in line with the Constitution and the skills development strategy.

2.4.1 AN IDEAL PUBLIC SERVANT

According to Mollo (2010:532), an ideal public servant in South Africa should be the one who will be fighting against the discrimination of the people. The South African public servants should always know how to fight for the rights of citizens and are not afraid to engage in a just cause because they are supposed to know that freedom, like peace, is indivisible for the society (Harold Ickes in Safire, 1997:71, in Mollo, 2010:532). They should be guided by the aphorism of quality service for a better life for all; they should be patriots, in that there is a need to consider putting the country's needs before that of individuals. This means being a public servant entail a sense of national responsibility which will enable our country to be the master of her own destiny – and the public officials will walk with it in serenity and wisdom, with self-respect and the respect of all humankind. True patriotism should be based on tolerance and a large measure of humility (Adlai Stevenson in Safire, 1997:71).

According to Mollo (2013:528) the public service requires a strong and able workforce or human capacity to deliver on its objectives. He argued that the National School of Government contributes towards skills development in the public service.

2.4.2 THE TYPES OF SKILLS REQUIRED IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

According to Critten (1993:51), there are four types of skills that are key to effective and efficient public service delivery and they are as follows;

- Task skill which is about making up the technical components of all jobs in public and private institutions.
- Task Management skill which is needed to manage tasks and to prioritise such tasks.
- Contingency Management skill which is the ability and capability to recognise and properly deal with irregularities in the immediate work environment, and
- Job role environment skill required to cope with environmental factors

Smit *et al.* (2007:17-18) identified three skills used by employers to determine the employability of employees. The three skills are listed and explained as follows;

- Conceptual skills which refer to the mental ability to view the organisation and its parts holistically. The role of conceptual skills is to equip the employee with a clear understanding of the organisation with the ability to think strategically and to plan accordingly. Critten (1993:51) categorises this skill into two and names them Task Management and Contingency Management skills. A Task Management skill is needed to properly manage the tasks and to prioritise such tasks in the workplace. Contingency Management skill is the ability and capability to recognise and be able to deal with any irregularities in the workplace.
- Interpersonal skills which refer to the ability to work with people. An employee works with other employees and teams and is therefore expected to communicate, resolve problems and to motivate others in the workplace. Critten (1993:51) refers to this skill as the Job role environment skill needed to work well with others within the workplace or institution. It assists the employee to cope well with the specific environmental factors.

- Technical skills which refer to the ability to use the knowledge or techniques of a specific discipline to attain goals. Task skill is needed to deal with the technical aspects of all jobs in public and private institutions (Critten, 1993:51).

Executive Management and Senior Management need more conceptual skills to think strategically to plan the future of the organisation, and they also need interpersonal skills to motivate their subordinates to implement their plans, but they need less technical skills as they are not directly responsible for operations.

Middle Management and Operations Management need more interpersonal skills than conceptual skills to motivate their subordinates to produce more in the workplace. They need interpersonal skills to resolve the problems experienced by various groups in the workplace. They need communication skills to constantly communicate with lower level employees.

Lower level employees or non-managers need more technical skills to attain set goals based on their performance contracts. Public Service Graduate Interns are therefore non-managers and low level employees who need more technical skills as compared to both conceptual and interpersonal skills.

Chelechele (2009:46) argues that even though most of these skills are self-taught, it is important that the government of the day encourages the public servants to make time available to acquire these skills as they are vital for development and proper management and administration of a public institution.

2.4.3 THE TYPE OF COMPETENCIES REQUIRED IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

The concept, competency, denotes the ability of a person after obtaining the necessary or adequate qualification, specific skills and knowledge to properly perform allocated tasks (Chelechele, 2009:46). Public servants are required to perform and execute different tasks to fast-track service delivery and therefore, without the required competency, they will be unable to perform and execute such tasks.

Competency can be understood as a reference for someone who is effective and efficient and possesses the complete ability to perform to a high standard (Chelechele, 2009:46). Competence is related to the ability and capacity of a person to perform a task through the integration of knowledge, skills and abilities which will lead to behaviour that is required to

complete a task according to predetermined and desired levels of performance (Hellreigel et al., 1999:5). According to the Public Service Regulations, 2001, competence is the blend of knowledge, skills, behaviour and aptitude that a person applies in a work environment and that person's competence should always indicate the ability that can be properly used to meet the requirements of the job that person is tasked to perform.

The Public Service Handbook (2003), chapter 5, outlines the following competencies that public servants must have;

- Financial Management
- Project Management
- Change Management
- Service delivery innovation
- Problem Solving
- Customer Focus
- Honesty and
- Integrity

Public servants must be competent in terms of task, profession, ethics and politics to fully implement the policies of the ruling party, and in order for the transition to be successful, capable people need to be attracted, developed and attained in the public service (Kroukamp, 2002:471).

2.5. SKILLS TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

The National Development Plan vision 2030 states that building a professional public service requires;

- Making the public service and local government the career of choice through graduate recruitment, skills development and assessment, placements and secondments. This includes building confidence in the recruitment and appointments' process and adequate criteria.

- Ensuring that staff at all levels have the authority, experience, competence and support required to perform their jobs.

According to Koma (2010:1), “the main contributor to the high levels of graduate unemployment is the lack of experience and training of young people leaving institutions of higher learning. The problem is further aggravated by employers who require experience from prospective employees, as is the case in the current South African labour market”.

Bacon (2011:68) says “Internships are important to individuals seeking to learn a particular area, gain experience in a particular field, build connections and have a competitive advantage over those who do not have internships”. A study conducted by Henry in 1979 found that the graduates developed leadership ambition due to the training and experience they received from the programme, they need less supervision as compared to non-interns and that they were ready to work without the much needed induction and orientation. This experience justifies the necessity of the internship programme at the work place to assist new recruits.

According to Kruss (2004:677), and Amos et al. (2008:324), employers must train their employees to improve their skills. The goal of the Human Resources Development Strategy for South Africa (2009:18) is to reduce the high rate of unemployment through the provision of skills development programmes. According to the ILO (2014:77), the combination of skills development with working experience has proven to be effective. According to Mafunisa (2000:83), managers must ensure that juniors have the skills, knowledge and experience to perform assigned tasks by coaching and mentoring them. Quality apprenticeships and quality internships can serve as important pathways for helping youth make a smoother transition from school to work. It is important that internships do not result in exploitation of young people and, instead, provide a good learning experience and a gateway to a good quality job (OECD and ILO, 2014:2)

The South African government through its White paper on Public Service Training and Education (WPPSTE) (1998) made a commitment to train and educate its public servants. The introduction of the Internship Programme in the public service in 2002 is therefore part and parcel of the 1998 commitment. The South African government introduced the Public Service Internship Programme (PSIP), as per Cabinet minutes number 3.3.8, item 7.1, Employment Strategy, on 4 December 2002 (The PSIP Step by Step Guide, 2006:32). According to Nel et al. (2008:415), “A hard but important lesson that countries have learned

over the years is that economically and socially disadvantaged citizens do not benefit from training unless the skills learnt improve their productivity in employment.”

2.6. THE PUBLIC SERVICE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME (PSIP) AS PART OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The main objectives of the National Skills Strategy are to develop a culture of qualitative lifelong learning, foster skills development in the formal economy for productivity and employability, promote skills development for employability and livelihoods through social development initiatives, as well as to assist the new entrants into employment (Potgieter, 2003:173–174).

According to Furco (2011:74), internship programmes engage students in service activities primarily for the purpose of providing them with hands-on experience that enhances their learning or understanding of issues relevant to a particular area of study.

Bacon (2011:68) says “Internships are important to individuals seeking to learn a particular area, gain experience in a particular field, build connections and have a competitive advantage over those who do not have internships”.

According to Harvey and Brown (1996:15) in Kroukamp (2002:460), experiential learning is based upon three basic concepts which are;

- One learns best when one is involved in the learning experience
- Concepts have to be experienced or discovered by the learner if they are to change your behaviour; and
- A commitment to learning will be greatest when the learner is responsible for setting own learning objectives.

The internship or placement programmes allow students the chance to combine theory and practice in a subject, apply theoretical concepts to a work environment and induce new knowledge from practical activities (Garcia, 2008). Internships allow students to become responsible for their own learning. However, it is necessary for professors and internship advisors to be an integral part of this process of mentoring interns effectively. Garcia (2008) notes that to ensure success during internships, a collaborative effort needs to be

undertaken and that all parties need to recognise that the overarching concept of internship programmes remain that they are educational, learning processes.

Internships are an essential part of the career ladder in many professions. They are part and parcel of a modern, flexible economy and are useful both for the interns and for employers. Where once they were an informal means of gaining practical insight into a particular career, today they are a rung on the ladder to success. The prime purpose of internships is to provide interns with a meaningful experience that enhances their employability and skills (CIPD, 2015:2).

Jackie Orme (2009:3) says that “We know times are tough for business, but times are tough for graduates too and internships are a great way to meet in the middle. Internships help young people gain employability skills, such as team working and project management that will be invaluable in their future careers”.

The declaration by the G20 Leaders in September 2013 states that “Promoting youth employment is a global priority. We are committed to quality apprenticeships and vocational training programmes, finding innovative ways to encourage firms to hire youths for example by, where appropriate, reducing non-wage labour costs, moving towards early intervention measures and effective job search assistance for different groups of youths, and motivating youth entrepreneurship and business start-ups. Tailored strategies including youth guarantee approaches, developing school and university curricula that support entrepreneurship and facilitating exchange of best practices amongst the G20 countries and social partners are crucial in this respect”.

According to the DPSA Guide (2006:7), the objectives of the Public Service Internship Programme are as follows;

- To resolve the general shortage of qualified and skilled people in the workplace by encouraging graduates to equip themselves with the necessary practical experience,
- To assist in meeting the strategic staffing needs of the public service by providing practical and accelerated work experience programmes that expose interns to specific occupations,
- To provide unemployed graduates with valuable work experience and skills to enhance their employability,

- To address the problem of youth unemployment, especially tertiary (University and University of Technology) graduates by providing them with work experience opportunities in the public service,
- To provide opportunities to gain some practical experience for students who are required to do this to earn credits towards a qualification,
- To contribute to accelerated service delivery by government through the improved introduction of skilled personnel in the public service,
- To improve equitable access to public sector employment for rural and marginalised groups such as women and the disabled,
- To contribute to lifelong learning, and
- To increase awareness among students of job and career opportunities in the public service.

Parilla and Hesser (1998) indicate that a well-structured internship is necessary for optimal levels of meaningful knowledge synthesis given that the internship environment is often viewed as being foreign. The supervisory process within an internship also constitutes an important part of the intern's learning experience. Garcia (2008) highlights the role of the supervisor as being one who guides and advises the learner, helping the learner to resolve issues or raising important questions, thus the supervisor is seen as an experienced individual in the field who is able to convey knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for becoming a professional. Through the internalisation of the attitudes observed, students could follow their advisor's example and this becomes a model to be emulated (Garcia, 2008). The supervisory relationship is therefore important in ensuring a sense of accomplishment, satisfaction and motivation for the intern. It is therefore important to appoint experienced supervisors to train interns in the workplace.

The internship programme serves as an induction of graduates to the Public service. According to Nel et al. (2009:261), the main purpose of induction is to assist the new employee in his/her integration into the organisation. The induction programme helps the individual to understand the social, technical and cultural aspects of the workplace and speeds up the socialisation process.

Public servants must be competent in terms of task, profession, ethics and politics to fully implement the policies of the ruling party, and that in order for the transition to be successful, capable people need to be attracted, developed, and attained in the public service (Kroukamp, 2002:471).

Mollo (2013:535) says that the National Development Plan vision 2030 requires that making the public service and local government a career of choice through graduate recruitment, skills development and assessments, placements and secondments and by ensuring that staff at all levels have the authority, experience, competence and support required to perform their jobs.

The Umsobomvu Youth Fund study on internship (2006:39) explained that the role of mentoring and coaching should be included in the key results areas of the mentor, otherwise mentoring will always take the lowest priority. There must be a reward for performance which can enable mentors and interns to work as a team.

Berry (2003:11), in Nel et al. (2009:367), defines mentoring as a process by which the knowledge, skills and life experiences of a selected successful manager or other senior employee are transmitted to another employee in the organisational system for the purpose of developing that employee for greater workplace efficiency and effectiveness.

The study commissioned by the Umsobomvu Youth Fund (2007:22) recommended that departments be encouraged or supported to enrol their officials for a mentoring course prior to appointing them as mentors. This would assist mentors to deal professionally with interns and to recognise their roles and responsibilities.

The DPSA guide (2006:16-25) requires trained mentors who meet the criteria established for mentorship; that line managers must supervise the intern; that internships should be the function of relevant managers, supervisors, mentors, heads of human resource development and management; that Heads of Departments must appoint an internship committee to monitor and evaluate the progress of the internship programmes; that they integrate internship programmes into the performance agreements of relevant managers; and that departments should not promise interns posts on completion of the programme.

Mbeki (2002) says that "We will have to attend to the improvement of the state machinery on a sustained basis so that it is both responsive to the needs of the people and accessible to the masses. Among other things, this requires that those who serve within the public

service should have the necessary skills to provide the required goods and services as well as commitment to serve the people”.

The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) (2003:12) maintains that the South African Labour Market is characterised by severe problems including, most fundamentally, an inability to facilitate the progression of young people from school to other learning or employment activities. The unprecedented youth unemployment crisis requires countries to take immediate and targeted action (ILO, 2014:77). The International Monetary Fund in its 2013 report on South Africa recommended that the imperative is to generate the growth necessary to create the millions of jobs needed to reduce unemployment and absorb new entrants into the labour force.

According to Clinton (2003:45) and Chauhan (1978:100–105), the internships are used to attract, acquire and retain talent for the next generation of public sector leaders. Amos et al. (2008:324) state that “training and development is about the organisation providing assistance to employees so that they become effective in their jobs. It is not only about extending the knowledge and skills of employees, but is also about modifying their attitudes to the job and adjusting their behaviour in the organisation”. The study commissioned by the Umsobomvu Youth Fund in 2007 on the evaluation of the internship programme found that it is relevant, exposes and prepares the interns for the world of work. Munzhedzi (2011:95) tells that “there are several Acts and statutory guidelines which guide the development and implementation of performance management in the public service”.

2.6.1 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Fourie (2005:682-684) says that in terms of the requirements as set out by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, each department is required to table a report of its performance and all related activities to the legislative authority, National Treasury, media, and the public. The aforementioned is a constitutional requirement to ensure transparency and accountability in the utilisation of public funds. Departments should also indicate mechanisms and systems that will be put in place in order to monitor progress and compliance with legislative requirements, and if public funds are properly used, society will experience value for the money they have paid.

The DPSA guide (2006:23) says that performance management systems should recognise contributions made by managers to support the internship programme.

The main objectives of the LEDET Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) policy (2007:2) are;

- Enhance performance at strategic and operational levels of the department by programmes, teams and individuals to achieve the desired results,
- Identify individual's potential, strengths and weaknesses, and align them to departmental priorities and strategies,
- Identify and remedy poor work performance,
- Provide a framework for recognising and rewarding excellent performance,
- Provide clear linkages between performance and recognition,
- Ensure that performance assessment is fair and promotes equity, and
- Comply with the requirements of the Public Service Regulations.

2.6.2 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The DPSA guide (2006:23) says that “a system for monitoring, evaluating and supporting the internship programme must be put in place. This includes monitoring the effectiveness of supervisors, mentors and their line managers responsible for the internship programme.”

According to the UNDP (2009:8), monitoring can be defined as the on-going process by which stakeholders obtain regular feedback on the progress being made towards achieving their goals and objectives, whereas evaluation is a rigorous and independent assessment of either completed or on-going activities to determine the extent to which they are achieving stated objectives and contributing to decision making. Evaluations, like monitoring, can apply to many things, including an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector or organisation.

The monitoring and evaluation of performance should be done on a regular basis to detect weaknesses as soon as possible (Munzhedzi, 2011:99). Monitoring is used in the public service to collect and analyse data against set indicators related to a particular programme or project, while evaluation is used to assess the performance of the programme or project with regards to its effectiveness, efficiency and impact.

2.7. THE FOCUS OF PUBLIC SERVICE TRAINING

Mollo (2010:536) says that Public service training will focus on the following;

-That training will focus on junior and middle managers of the public service for management development, and senior management for leadership development.

- A two day public service induction programme for all new entrants to the public service.

-Training programmes to be designed, developed, quality assured and accredited in-house and with the use of contracted providers.

-Training is to be provided using an outsourced approach, i.e. using individual contractors, higher education institutions and private training providers.

-A funding model that is based on a cost recovery approach, also ensuring revenue-generation for sustainability of the Academy (National School of Government).

2.8. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FUNDING

2.8.1 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FUNDING

According to Phororo (2013), the budget allocations towards youth employment is of paramount importance.

The LEDET 2015/2016 budget reflects that R11 238 816-00 have been spent on the training and development of employees. A breakdown of the total R11 238 816-00 is as follows;

Training and development	= R 1 746 314-00
Employee bursaries	=R 897 359-00
Registration fees for conferences	=R 1 204 226-00, and
PSIP Stipends	= R 7 390 262

2.8.2 FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

According to Ngwakwe (2012: 314), the fundamental for financial accountability is the existence of skills capacity core areas of the public sector, such as the finance sector. The importance of financial skills in the public sector and private sector of any economy cannot be over emphasised given that finance is a key to service delivery.

Managerial accountability means that public managers at all levels of government should take decisions that are focused towards the successful implementation of government policies in an effort to deliver quality service to citizens. Accountability enhances and improves relationships between government and citizens. Accountability builds a relationship of trust between governments and citizens (Fourie, 2005: 685).

2.9 CHALLENGES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME IN THE CONTEXT OF SOUTH AFRICA

According to Koma (2010:1), the main contributor to the high levels of graduate unemployment is the lack of experience, and training of young people leaving institutions of higher learning. The problem is further aggravated by employers who require experience from prospective employees, as is the case in the current South African labour market. Koma (2010:58) explains that the purpose of the Internship Programme is to make available a cadre of dedicated public service employees and to facilitate employment of graduates but if there is no means to ensure that this happens the goal will not be attained.

The Umsobomvu Youth Fund study on internship (2006:39) explained that the role of mentoring and coaching should be included in the key results areas of the mentor, otherwise mentoring will always take lowest priority. There must be a reward for performance which should enable mentors and interns to work as a team.

Koma (2010:56-57) who identified that the current term of internship is not enough to allow for gaining meaningful experiential training and that it should be extended to 24 months. He further argued that the duration of the Internship Programme is important when analysing the implementation processes, as it measures the perceptions of how long the experiential training should be offered for to render the implementation of this programme effective, and that the purpose of the Internship Programme is to make available a cadre of dedicated public service employees and to facilitate employment of graduates, but if there is no means to ensure that this happens, the goal will not be attained.

Ross Perlin (2011:23) says “we have seen that the recruitment of interns is cheap labour and disposable labour at Foxconn and it has become routine practice that continues in the present day, and extends to many other companies such as Samsung and Lenovo”.

2.10. CONCLUSION

The current chapter outlined the two concepts namely; literature review and employability. The literature on skills development, on competency and on internship were extensively reviewed to establish what has been researched by scholars on those topics to avoid the duplication of studies.

The literature review is in line with the study objectives to describe whether interns at the end of the Public Service Internship Programme have acquired the necessary and relevant skills to secure their employment, to determine measures in place to ensure employability of interns from the PSIP, as well as to determine inherent challenges of PSIP. The reviewed literature confirmed that the PSIP imparts graduate interns with skills that contribute to their employability, and that it is a useful programme that assists the youth to acquire practical experience required by employers at the workplace.

The next chapter will outline the research methodology used to evaluate the Public Service Internship Programme in terms of its contribution to the employability of Graduates with the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter focused on literature review on skills development and the internship programme.

The current chapter focuses on the research methodology used to evaluate the PSIP implementation in terms of its contribution to the employability of graduates. The research methodology used is qualitative research. The target population are the 1 382 employees of the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism. The sample size consists of 80 respondents drawn from LEDET and their graduate Interns. The data collection was made using interviews, and focus group type of interviews. The data analysis was done using content analysis. The ethical considerations like permission to conduct the study from LEDET has been obtained, respondents have been told about their rights in terms of informed consent, voluntary participation, anonymity, confidentiality, as well as the recording and storage of data collected.

Research can be regarded as a voyage of discovery (Ramenyi, 1996:22). According to Leedy (1993:08) the research methodology is a basic procedure and steps in solving an unresolved problem. It deals with the how of collecting data and the processing thereof within the framework of the research process (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997:27).

The research methodology is structured and discussed by the researcher as outlined below;

Research design, Research approach, Study area, Target Population, Sample, Sampling methods and Sample size, Data Collection, Data Analysis, Ethical Considerations, and Conclusion

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Babbie & Mouton (2001:341) state that “once the design and development of a programme has been completed, it is implemented within a certain context or setting”. The choice of research design is therefore important as it will provide direction to the whole study and findings. The research design is a plan outlining how one intends to conduct scientific

inquiry into a particular phenomenon, entity, process or event identified as the object of study or unit of analysis (Mouton, 2005:55-56). According to Babbie and Mouton (2006:75), the research design focuses on the logic of the research. The first step in developing a research design is, of course, to determine what it is that is to be explored, discussed, analysed and possibly explained. This study explored the implementation of the PSIP by LEDET, discussed how it is implemented, analysed how respondents view its implementation and explained how best it can be improved.

The study used the phenomenological design to evaluate the implementation of PSIP within LEDET leading to the employability of interns. According to Lester (1999:1), phenomenology is concerned with the study of experiences from the perspective of the individual and it brings the experiences and perceptions of individuals from their own perspectives and therefore challenging structural or normative assumptions. The phenomenological theory will be used to understand the experiences and perceptions of graduate interns appointed by LEDET with regard to employability.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

The study used the qualitative research approach to evaluate the employability of graduates after the completion of the PSIP implemented by LEDET. According to Mason in Wessels (1999:390), the qualitative approach is concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood and experienced. The aim of qualitative research is to produce rounded understandings on the basis of contextual and detailed data.

Thomas & Hersen (2010:425-456) describe qualitative research as group of inquiry approaches to produce knowledge about the experiential realm of human beings, and that the focus of these approaches is on describing and understanding the meanings people attach to their encounters with other people, their cultural environment and material objects. In this study qualitative research was used during the semi-structured interviews that were conducted with 10 senior officials of LEDET, during the focus group with 20 mentors and another focus group with 20 graduate interns still using the open-ended questions to collect data about their knowledge on the implementation of the PSIP in the department.

According to Kelly (1999), the qualitative methodology is more concerned with making sense from within the context and perspective of human experience, and he further argues that this form of methodology is gaining acceptance in social science research and

therefore implying that there is validity to research findings of the qualitative methodology. The study made sense from within the context and perspective of the LEDET Senior Managers, mentors and interns.

Qualitative research is more commonly used to inductively explore phenomena and provide “thick” descriptions thereof (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999). The focus in this study was to gain insight into all the participants’ experiences with the PSIP as well as to identify the common themes or emerging patterns gathered from the interviews with the senior Managers, mentors and interns.

3.4 STUDY AREA

The study area is the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism Head office in Polokwane. This also includes five districts offices which are Capricorn in the centre, Mopani in the east, and Sekhukhune in the south, Vhembe in the north and Waterberg in the western part of the Province.



Table 1: Map of the Limpopo Province showing all the 5 Districts and their Towns.

3.5 TARGET POPULATION

According to Brink (1996:132), a population is defined as the entire group of persons or objects that meets the criteria of the study. Greenstein (2001:1) says that a population is the complete and inclusive collection of all theoretically defined elements. Rossi & Freeman (1989:182) say that the issues of target participation consist of problems of coverage and bias. Coverage refers to the extent to which participation by the target population achieves the levels specified in the design. Bias is the degree to which subgroups of the target population participate differentially. The point made here is that the target population is very important in any research project to achieve the desired reliable and credible results. The reliability and credibility of the research results or findings depend on the information provided by the target population. The Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism has a population of 1 382 employees structured as per the table below;

Occupational category	Male				Female				TOTAL
	African	Coloured	Indian	White	African	Coloured	Indian	White	
Top Management	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Senior Management	21	0	2	4	16	0	1	2	46
Middle Management	134	1	0	10	91	0	0	7	243
Junior Management	160	0	0	9	158	3	1	8	339
Semi -Skilled	441	0	0	0	153	0	0	0	594
Unskilled	57	0	0	0	100	1	0	0	158
TOTAL	815	1	2	23	518	4	2	17	1382

Table 2: LEDET TOTAL POPULATION

Source: LEDET Annual Report 2014/2015 Financial Year

3.6. SAMPLE, SAMPLING METHODS AND SAMPLE SIZE

3.6.1 DEFINITION OF SAMPLE

According to Greenstein (2011:1), “a sample is the collection of elements drawn from the population that is studied”.

3.6.2 PURPOSIVE SAMPLING METHOD

The Purposive sampling method was used to obtain information from the identified respondents. The researcher is also an employee of LEDET and therefore has inside knowledge about the Department and the type of respondents required. According to Latham (2007:9), purposive sampling is selecting a sample on the basis of your own knowledge of the population, its elements, and the nature of the research aims. Purposive sampling provides appropriate data (Babbie, 2002:166). The researcher is able to select participants based on internal knowledge of the said characteristics. The researcher made a deliberate attempt to select respondents who were representative of the interest of the population (Greenstein, 2011:6). The method is useful as only a small subset of 80 of the 1 382 population was studied. The researcher used own judgment about who to include in this sample frame, and it allowed the researcher to use prior knowledge to select the elements to be sampled.

According to Koeber & McMichael (2008:464), purposeful sampling means that the researcher is looking for participants who possess certain traits or qualities. The researcher sought key specific information on PSIP from the respondents and therefore purposive sampling assisted in collecting the required data.

3.6.3 SAMPLE SIZE

The sample size for this study is 80 respondents constituting the total number of data sources that are selected from the total population of 1 382 employees. The sample was drawn from several participants from different levels of the department. The sample included members of the Executive Management, Senior Management, Middle Management, Junior Management, Operational Staff, Mentors and Graduate Interns as follows;

Table 3: Type of respondents

TYPE OF RESPONDENTS	NUMBER
Executive Management	5
Senior Management	6
Middle Management	12
Junior Management	10
Operational staff	7
Mentors	20
Graduate Interns	20
GRAND TOTAL	80

The sample for this study is the 80 respondents selected as follows,

Five from the Executive Management, including the Head of Department (HOD), Chief Financial Officer and three Chief Directors,

Six from the Senior Management members at the level of Directors,

Twelve from Middle Management at the level of Deputy Directors;

Ten from Junior Management at the level of Assistant Directors;

Twenty Mentors at the level of Administration Clerks and Administration Officers,

Seven operational employees at the level of cleaners, grounds men, drivers, and

Twenty Graduate Interns.

The identified participants reflect the correct sampling frame; they are the realistic version of the population, the ones that the researcher can identify and access. They provided accurate and reliable information pertinent to the study.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION

In this study both semi-structured interview and focus group type of interviews were used to gather or collect the research data.

The study collected primary data through face-to-face semi-structured interviews from 5 members of the Executive Management, 6 members of the Senior Management, 7 Operational staff of the Department. The 20 Graduate Interns were interviewed telephonically.

Focus group discussions which are also regarded as interviews were conducted to gather data from 12 Middle Management, 10 Junior Management, and 20 mentors. The additional primary data which are information already available in the Department were collected from official reports such as: Annual reports, Strategic Plans, Annual Performance Plans, and budget statement and reports.

The data collection instruments or tools were compiled by the researcher in the form of a semi-structured interviews and focus groups (Annexures C-F). Executive and Senior Managers are responsible for policy planning and development. They provided clarity on the relevance and effectiveness of the PSIP towards the employability of Public Servants. Middle Managers are responsible for the supervision and control of operational employees. They explained and described how they control and manage the PSIP in the Department. Operational staff explained their views and understanding of the PSIP. Mentors are key drivers of the PSIP implementation. They outlined the procedure used to appoint them, their training and supervision during the implementation of the programme. The Graduate Interns are the beneficiaries of the PSIP. They described their experiences with the programme.

Interviews were conducted in English and all the interviews were transcribed verbatim by the researcher. The recorded information will be retained safekeeping, or destroyed by the University of Limpopo once the study has served its purpose.

3.7.1 Interviews

According to Kahn & Cannell (1957:149), an interview is a conversation with a purpose to gather information from an interviewee with the intention of making an informed analysis and drawing a conclusion. Cohen and Manion (1982:246-250) identified three types of structured interviews which are, fixed alternative items which allow the respondent to

choose from two or more alternative answers provided by the researcher, open-ended questions which must have a minimum restraint to ensure that an accurate answer is provided by the respondents, and the scaled items with responses structured by means of a series of gradations.

Semi-structured interviews were used in line with Cohen and Manion (1982:246-250) to obtain data from Executive Management, Senior Management, and Graduate Interns.

3.7.2 Focus group

A focus group type of semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions was conducted with the 12 Middle, 10 Junior Managers, and the 20 mentors using the open-ended questions as identified by Cohen and Manion (1982:246-250).

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

According to LeCompte & Schensul (1999:46), analysis is a process a researcher uses to reduce data to a story and its interpretation. Data analysis is the process of reducing large amounts of collected data to make sense of them. Data analysis is the process of turning data into information which can be used to explain and describe phenomena for enhanced and effective decision making.

According to Babbie and Mouton (2012:646), qualitative analysis means “the non-numerical examinations and interpretation of observation”. Qualitative data analysis is all forms of analysis of data that were gathered using qualitative techniques, regardless of the paradigm used to govern the research (Babbie & Mouton, 2012:490).

The study used content analysis to analyse collected data from all levels of employees at LEDET. According to Palmquist (1993) in Babbie and Mouton (2012:490), content analysis is a research method which: “examines words or phrases within a wide range of texts, including books, book chapters, essays, interviews and speeches as well as informal conversation and headlines”.

Qualitative content analysis goes beyond merely counting words or extracting objective content from the texts to examine meanings, themes and patterns that may be manifest or latent in a particular text. It allows researchers to understand social reality in a subjective but scientific manner (Zhang & Wildemuth, n.d.).

According to Palmquist (1993), and Kelle (1998) in Babbie and Mouton (2012:492), content analysis is divided into two types, namely conceptual analysis and relational analysis. Conceptual analysis is also known as thematic analysis. According to Boyatzis (1998), “The purpose of thematic content analysis is to identify patterns of meaning across a data set that provides an answer to the research question being addressed. Patterns are identified through a process of data familiarisation, data coding, and theme development and revision”.

The following are the six-phase process of thematic content analysis as identified by Boyatzis (1998);

1. Familiarisation with the data. This phase involves data collection. The reading and re-reading of the data to become familiar with its content.
2. Coding. The phase involves the coding of data and generating labels or codes that identify important features of the collected data that might be relevant to the research question. The good code is the one that captures the qualitative richness of the phenomenon. A code should be clear and concise, clearly stating what it is. Codes become the foundation for the themes that will be used by the researcher.
3. Searching for themes. The phase involves code validation by examining the codes to identify broader patterns of meaning to provide potential themes.
4. Reviewing themes. It involves checking each theme against the research question to determine if they are telling a particular story.
5. Defining and naming themes. It is about the development of detailed research information informed by the analyses of each theme.
6. Writing up. It deals with the weaving together of the analytic narrative and data extracts and contextualising the analyses in relation to existing literature.

The study used thematic analysis to analyse collected data. According to Boyatzis (1998), thematic analysis is the categorising strategy for qualitative data. It is a data analytic strategy. The collected data are reviewed and sorted into categories. Thematic analysis leads to the discovery of patterns and themes from the collected data. Thematic analysis has been used in the social, behavioural and applied sciences.

The advantage of thematic analysis is that it is theoretically flexible, to be used within different frameworks, to answer quite different types of research question. It suits question related to people's experiences, or people's views and perceptions. It suits question related to understanding and representation. It suits question related to the construction of meaning.

The study used content analysis to analyse data obtained from the structured interviews with both the Executive Management, Senior Management, Operational staff of the Department and the Graduate Interns. According to Marais (1996), the aim of qualitative interview is to provide a framework for the subject to speak freely and in his /her own terms about a set of concerns, which the researcher brings to the interaction.

The study further used content analysis to analyse data obtained from the focus groups with middle Management, Junior Management, and mentors. Content analysis enables researchers to sift through large volumes of data with relative ease in a systematic fashion (Holsti, 1969:14). It is a method of analysing written, verbal or visual communication messages (Cole, 1988:53-57). According to Abrahamson (1983:286), content analysis can be fruitfully employed to examine virtually any type of communication. Braun and Clarke (2006) describe content analysis as a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Welman, Kruger & Mitchell (2005:182) explain that ethical considerations and ethical behaviour are important. The researcher identified the following ethical considerations that must be prioritised in this study as follows;

3.9.1 Permission to conduct the study

Permission to involve employees from LEDET has been obtained from the Head of the Department prior to any engagement with them as reflected on Annexure A. The Department also informed all staff members including interns about this research project.

3.9.2 Informed consent

According to Frankfort-Nachmias (2008:521), informed consent is the agreement of an individual to participate in a study after being fully informed about the study's procedures and potential risks.

All respondents were requested to give consent to the study by signing a consent form prepared by the researcher. The consent form will provide the topic, aim and the objective of the study. It must also indicate the duration of the study to allow respondents to see if they will have all the time required by the study. The consent form must provide information about risks or possible risks associated with the study for the respondents to agree or disagree. It must further tell the respondents that their participation is voluntary. It must also indicate the advantages of doing the study and its benefits.

3.9.3 Voluntary participation

Babbie & Mouton (2001:523) explain that no one must be forced to participate in the research. The researcher will explain to all respondents that they have the right not to participate in the study and that they can withdraw their participation at any time if they feel uncomfortable with the direction taken by the study.

3.9.4 Anonymity

Respondents may be classified as anonymous if they do not wish to be identified by their names and surnames and this is scholarly and legally acceptable. The researcher must keep the identity of the respondents confidential and secret and must ensure that third parties do not have access to this classified information. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:523), a respondent may be considered anonymous when the researcher cannot identify a given response with a given respondent.

3.9.5 Confidentiality

The respondents will be informed that their confidentiality will be respected. Babbie and Mouton (2001:523) explain confidentiality as a situation where a researcher can identify a given person's response but promises not to do so publicly.

3.9.6 Recording and storage of data

Data from respondents will be recorded on a tape recorder and in a note book which will be kept secret and strictly confidential by the researcher and such data will be disposed of after the research report has been submitted to LEDET Management and the University of Limpopo.

3.10 CONCLUSION

The qualitative research used in this study has been explained in details, and its primary focus is to make sense from human experience. The purpose sampling method was used to obtain information from the identified respondents. Data collection was gathered through semi-structured interview which allows for a one-on-one interaction between the researcher and the respondent. Data has been collected from the Management, Mentors and graduate interns of the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism. The data are analysed in the next chapter using content analysis.

Ethical considerations were made during the study, and as a result permission to conduct the study was sought from LEDET. All research respondents were requested to give consent to the study by signing a consent form provided by the researcher. Respondents participated on the study voluntarily without any pressure and force from the researcher. The information provided by respondents was treated with anonymity and confidentiality. The next chapter will present and analyse the research findings using qualitative content analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with the research methodology using the phenomenological approach as the research design to fully understand the experience of all the stakeholders in the implementation of the Public Service Internship Programme by LEDET. The chapter also used the qualitative research to interview the Senior Managers as well as to use the focus group discussion with Middle Managers, Mentors and Graduate Interns to probe the implementation of the PSIP. The previous chapter outlined how the collected data have been analysed using thematic analysis method.

This chapter presents and analyses the data collected during the previous chapter from the Executive Management, Senior Management, Middle Management, Junior Management, Lower level employees, Mentors and Graduate Interns.

4.2 THE DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

The demographic profiles will focus on the gender, race, age and educational levels of respondents.

4.2.1 The gender of respondents

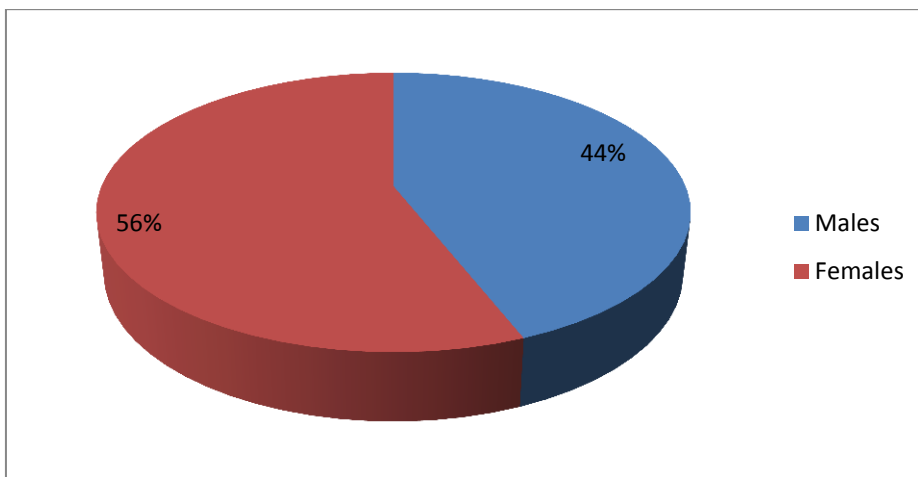


Table 4: Shows the gender of respondents

The table above indicates that (44%) of respondents are males and (56%) are females.

4.2.2 The race of the respondents

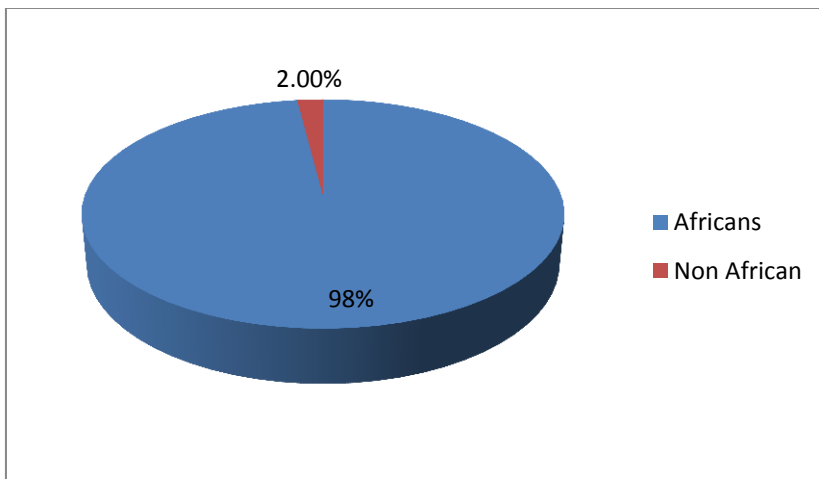


Table 5: Race of respondents

The table above shows that 98% respondents are Africans and with only 2% being other races (1% Indian and 1% Whites).

4.2.3 The age of respondents

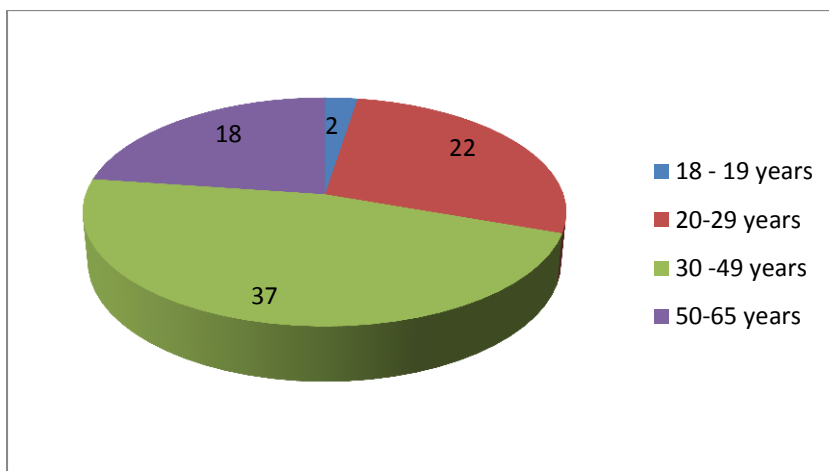


Table 6: Age of respondents

The table above shows that the ages of respondents range from 18 to 65 years. The majority of respondents are between the ages of 30 to 49.

4.2.4 The educational levels of respondents

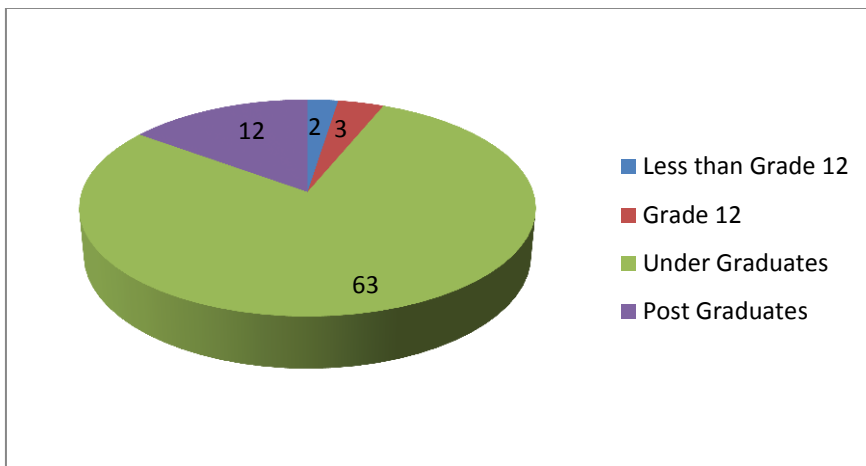


Table 7: Educational levels of respondents

The table above shows that the majority of respondents are undergraduates (63%) and with only 12% of them having post graduate degrees.

4.2.5 Post level of respondents

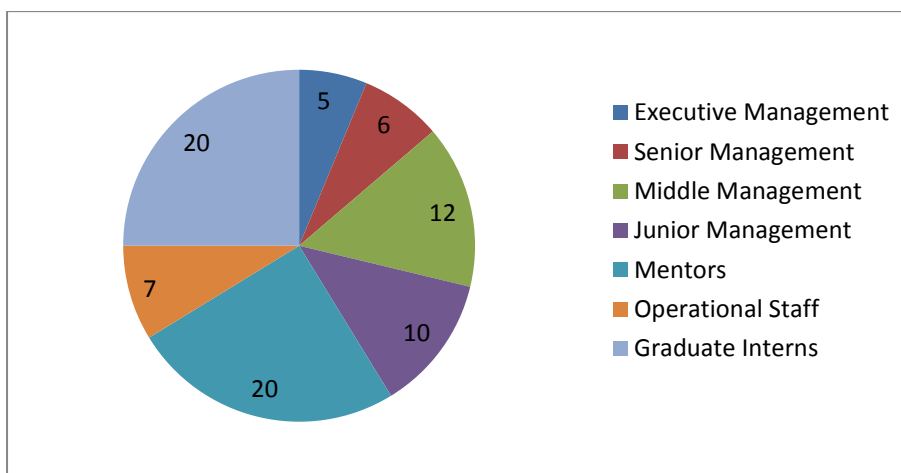


Table 8: Post level of respondents

Table 8: shows that 5 Executive Management, 6 Senior Management, 12 Middle Management, 10 Junior Management, 20 Mentors, 7 Operational staff and 20 Graduate Interns took part on this study.

4.3 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Presenting research findings from qualitative content analysis is challenging. Although it is common practice to use typical quotations to justify conclusions (Schilling, 2006) one may also want to use matrices, graphs, charts and conceptual networks (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The study used quotations and matrices where necessary to present the findings.

According to Patton (2002:503-504), an interesting and readable report “provides sufficient description to allow the reader to understand the basis for an interpretation and sufficient interpretation to allow the reader to understand the description”.

The study strived to provide sufficient descriptions and sufficient interpretations of the research findings.

The presentation and discussion of the research findings are as follows;

4.3.1 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

On whether the PSIP is relevant, useful and necessary for the employment of graduates in the Public Service.

The finding is that 97% of the respondents sampled responded that the PSIP is relevant, useful and necessary for the employment of graduates in the Public Service.

The study commissioned by the Umsobomvu Youth Fund on the evaluation of the internship programme (2007:10-12) found that the PSIP is relevant, exposes and prepares the interns for the world of work.

According to Clinton (2003:45) and Chauhan (1978:100-105) the internships are used to attract, acquire and retain talent for the next generation of public sector leaders.

Chief Director A said that “*the PSIP gives the public Service an opportunity to identify possible talent that can contribute and enhance its performance and it also helps to give unemployed graduates an employment opportunity to earn an income to gain valuable work experience*”. Graduate interns are provided with opportunities to compare their theoretical achievements with real job situations.

On whether the PSIP is instilling confidence, providing exposure and experience to the graduate Interns to have a competitive advantages during job interviews in the Public Service.

Of the respondents sampled 91% attest to the view that the PSIP is instilling confidence to the graduate interns and that it provides exposure and experience to them to have competitive advantages during job interviews in the Public Service. The finding is supported by Bacon (2011:68) who says, "Internships are important to individuals seeking to learn a particular area, gain experience in a particular field, build connections and have a competitive advantage over those who do not have internships".

It is further in line with the study conducted by Henry in 1979 which found that the graduates developed leadership ambition due to the training and experience they got from the programme, they need less supervision as compared to non-interns, and that they were ready to work without the much needed induction and orientation. This experience justifies the necessity of the internship programme in the work place to assist new recruits.

Mentor A argues that, *"the intention of the programme is good and to some extent does give the graduates confidence and competitive advantage, an enhanced Curriculum Vitae and a verifiable experience which is captured through the Government PERSAL system"*.

Graduate Intern A was appointed by LEDET in 2005 as a Graduate Intern with a Bachelor of Administration degree to intern under the Human Resource Development Directorate and completed her internship in 2006 explains her story as follows; *"The PSIP was a good stepping stone for me to face job interviews in the Public Service. My first job was a records Clerk in 2006, the second one was as a Personal Assistant to a Director in 2007, the third one as an Assistant Director in July 2010 and Deputy Director since 2013 by the Northwest Provincial Treasury."*

On whether Graduate Interns will be employable after completing the LEDET PSIP.

Of the respondents 96% said that Graduate Interns will be employable after completing the LEDET PSIP.

This finding is confirmed by Koma (2010:58) who found that 83,3% of graduate interns were ready and willing to secure full time employment in the public service after completing the PSIP with the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) in South Africa.

This is line with Chelechele (2009:46) where the emphasis is on the required skills that public servants in South Africa must possess to effectively and efficiently execute their work and enhance service delivery.

According to Bukalinga (2012:118-133) the internship programme “provides interns with hands-on practical experience and workplace exposure”.

Chief Director B says that, *“almost all my Graduates Interns are now working in different sectors of the economy like the South African Reserve Bank (SARB), Statistics South Africa (StatsSA), and Amalgamated Banks of Southern Africa (ABSA), which implies that they are employable”*.

On whether the PSIP imparts Graduate Interns with skills that contribute to their employability

Of the respondents 93% emphasised that the PSIP imparts Graduate Interns with skills that contribute to their employability. Graduate Interns are trained in conceptual skills, interpersonal skills and technical skills that are required in the labour market.

Operational employee A sampled also agreed that the Graduate Interns acquire skills that will make them employable as they are trained in, *“conceptual skills to sharpen their knowledge and understanding of the Public Service as compared to those without any public service experience and exposure.”* She further argues that, *“the interpersonal skills they get will develop them into a strong and formidable people to understand working with other employees and members of the public while the technical skills will make them unique and special especially those trained on the BAS, PERSAL and Vulindlela systems used by the Government in South Africa.”*

Graduate Intern B says that, *“LEDET trained us to prepare reports which need knowledge and understanding of conceptual skills, we were trained to work in teams, groups and with different people from different backgrounds, cultures and diversity which is an interpersonal skill, as well as how to use the Basic Accounting System to capture and generate orders for government procurements and payments, which is a technical skill”*.

On whether the LEDET PSIP is successful

Of the respondents 92% explained that the LEDET PSIP is successful. The programme is successful as most Graduate Interns are employable during and after the completion of the

programme. One Middle Management Member says that, *“the programme is successful as it gives the graduates the opportunity to be exposed to work environments across the Departmental four programmes which are Administration, Economic Development, Environment and Tourism, and some are even fortunate to secure permanent employment in the Department”*.

One member of the Executive Management says the, *“LEDET PSIP is successful as a number of graduate interns have been appointed by LEDET, while others are employed in other public Service Departments and the Private Sector. Our Graduate Interns are found in the South African Presidency, Office of the Premiers in Limpopo and the Northern Cape, National Department of Tourism, South African Taxi Alliance, Shoprite/Checkers and other employers”*.

According to Haire & Oloffson (2009), the American Internship programme produced several successes like Bill Gates who is the owner of the Microsoft Company, and Oprah Winfrey the world acclaimed celebrity and television host.

4.3.2 MEASURES PUT IN PLACE BY LEDET TO IMPLEMENT PSIP

On whether LEDET conduct induction to all stakeholders at the beginning of the PSIP to explain their role and functions.

Of the respondents 100% agreed that induction workshops are conducted by the Departmental Human Resource Development Directorate to all newly appoint Graduate Interns at the beginning of the PSIP to explain the role and functions of all stakeholders involved with the implementation of the programme.

All (100%) agreed that there are no induction programmes conducted for the Executive Management, Senior Management, Middle Management, Junior Management, operational employees, as well as mentors in the Department about the implementation of the PSIP as well as to explain and clarify the role and functions of all stakeholders.

The finding is supported by Nel et al. (2009: 261) who said that *“the main purpose of induction is to assist the new employee in his/her integration into the organisation. The induction programme helps the individual to understand the social, technical, and cultural aspects of the workplace and speeds up the socialisation process”*.

Garcia (2008) notes that to ensure success during internships, a collaborative effort needs to be undertaken and that all parties need to recognise that the overarching concept of internship programmes remain that they are educational, learning processes.

On whether LEDET appoints competent and experience mentors

Of the sampled respondents 81% indicated that appointment of mentors is not based on competency and experience and that this is done by the line functions. Directorates are allocated interns based on their needs and approved requisitions. Ten percent responded that appointment of mentors is based on the approved interns requisition made by sub-directorates and not related to competency and experience and 9% believe they are appointed based on their competency and experience.

The finding is in line with Berry (2003:11) in Nel et al. (2009:367) who defined mentoring as a process by which the knowledge, skills and life experiences of a selected successful manager or other senior employee are transmitted to another employee in the organisational system for the purpose of developing that employee for greater workplace efficiency and effectiveness.

Mollo (2013:535) says that the National Development Plan vision 2030 requires that staff at all levels have the authority, experience, competence and support required to perform their jobs.

Public servants must be competent in terms of task, profession, ethics and politics to fully implement the policies of the ruling party, and that in order for the transition to be successful, capable people need to be attracted, developed and retained in the public service (Kroukamp, 2002:471).

On whether mentors are sufficiently trained

Of the sampled respondents 89% indicated that mentors are not trained by LEDET to mentor Graduate Interns. It is important to note that only 5% of mentors indicated that they have been trained by PALAMA which is now called the National School of Government (NSG) and have certificates on mentoring and coaching. The finding is in line with Koma (2010:51) who found that 50% of mentors at the DPSA were not trained on mentoring and coaching.

The finding is supported by the study commissioned by the Umsobomvu Youth Fund (2007:22) which recommended that departments be encouraged or supported to enrol their officials for a mentoring course prior to appointing them as mentors. This would assist mentors to deal professionally with interns and to recognise their roles and responsibilities.

The research finding is also supported by Koma (2010:63-64) who says that “the people entrusted with capacitating the future public service workforce should be capacitated to this job themselves, if the department is to reap the benefits of the Internship Programme, and that mentors should be trained to execute this task and it should be made compulsory for everyone before assuming this task of being mentors.

On whether LEDET conduct exit interviews for Graduate Interns to get their views and feedback

Of the respondents 88% responded that one-on-one exit interviews are not conducted by LEDET to get Graduate Interns’ views and feedback at the end or at the completion of the PSIP.

Of the respondents 57% alluded to the fact that only a farewell ceremony is conducted where LEDET bids the exiting Graduate Interns goodbye and to wish them good luck.

The department is using the farewell ceremony to provide Graduate Interns with certificates which indicate that that they have completed the Public Service Internship Programme at LEDET.

This research finding is supported by Koma (2010:64) who emphasise the importance of conducting exit interviews when interns are leaving the department.

4.3.3. CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY LEDET DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PSIP

PSIP INCREASES WORKLOAD OF EMPLOYEES AND NOT PART OF KEY RESULT AREAS IN TERMS OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Of the mentors sampled 80% view the supervision of Graduate Interns as more workload for them, especially because it is not part of their performance agreements with their supervisors. The study found that no formal agreement is signed by the mentor and his or

her supervisor on PSIP deliverables and this leads to the lack of supervision by supervisors over the mentors on the implementation of the PSIP in the Department.

The finding is supported by the Umsobomvu Youth Fund study on internship (2006:39) which explained that the role of mentoring and coaching should be included in the key results areas of the mentor, otherwise mentoring will always take lowest priority. There must be a reward for performance which should enable mentors and interns to work as a team.

The Department does not include the work done by mentors to supervise Graduate Interns on the mentors' Performance Management and Development System (PMDS). The practice of not including PSIP on the Mentors' Performance Agreements leads to the non-supervision of Graduate Interns. Mentors view the PSIP implementation as more workload which is not recognised and paid for by LEDET and as a result, less effort and attention are paid to graduate interns mentoring and coaching. This practice is against the DPSA guide (2006:23) which says that performance management systems should recognise contributions made by managers to support the internship programme.

MENTORSHIP

Of the respondents 60% expressed the view that LEDET has a serious problem of mentorship. Mentors appointed by the department are junior employees and not trained for the mentoring of graduate interns. This practice is not in line with the determination made by the DPSA. The DPSA guide (2006:23) says that internships should be the function of relevant managers, supervisors, mentors, heads of human resource development, and management.

The DPSA guide (2006:16) requires trained mentors who meet the criteria established for mentorship, and that line managers must supervise the intern. The LEDET Internship policy (2015:13) expects mentors to play the following roles;

- Enter into written contracts with the graduate interns,
- Oversee training of graduate interns,
- Provide a supportive environment to interns by playing a facilitative and mediating role to ensure proper development,
- Conduct on-going monitoring and assessment of the interns, and

- Compile and submit quarterly reports on interns' performance to the Human Resource Development directorate.

The supervisory process within an internship also constitutes an important part of the intern's learning experience. Garcia (2008) highlights the role of the supervisor as being one who guides and advises the learner, helping the learner to resolve issues or raising important questions. Thus the supervisor is seen as an experienced individual in the field who is able to convey knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for becoming a professional. Through the internalisation of the attitudes observed, students could follow their advisor's example and this becomes a model to be emulated (Garcia, 2008).

Chief Director C says that, *"the problem is that mentorship take place at the lower levels of the organisation. Mentors are not devoting much time to the mentoring and coaching of Graduate Interns in the Department"*.

Chief Director D said that, *"shortcomings in terms of mentoring have been identified and we are in a process to train a significant number of mentors through the National School of Government in the coming financial years"*.

LACK OF PSIP MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Of the respondents 57% reported that the implementation of the PSIP is not part of the departmental monitoring and evaluation process.

The DPSA guide (2006:23) says that "a system for monitoring, evaluating and supporting the internship programme must be put in place". This includes monitoring the effectiveness of supervisors, mentors and their line managers responsible for the internship programme.

According to the UNDP (2009:8), monitoring can be defined as the on-going process by which stakeholders obtain regular feedback on the progress being made towards achieving their goals and objectives. Evaluation is a rigorous and independent assessment of either completed or on-going activities to determine the extent to which they are achieving stated objectives and contributing to decision making. Evaluations, like monitoring, can apply to many things, including an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector or organisation.

The monitoring and evaluation of performance should be done on a regular basis to detect weaknesses as soon as possible (Munzhedzi, 2011:99). Monitoring is used in the public

service to collect and analyse data against set indicators related to a particular programme or project, while evaluation is used to assess the performance of the programme or project with regards to its effectiveness, efficiency and impact.

The study found that government programmes are monitored and evaluated on a quarterly basis by LEDET's Strategic Operations unit. Unfortunately the unit is not monitoring or evaluating the implementation of the PSIP and as a result there are no monitoring and evaluation reports on the PSIP. The Executive Management and Senior Management are not discussing the implementation of the PSIP, they only note the number of graduate interns that have been appointed every financial year.

LACK OF OFFICE SPACE

Of the respondents 57% raised the lack of office space where they can properly learn and gain practical work experience related to their qualifications.

Assistant Director A said that, "some offices are too small to cater for two or more people. The Department must ensure there is enough office space before allocating Graduate Interns to mentors." Director B said that, "Mentors do not want to share offices with the Graduate Interns, which then robs the Graduate interns of a chance of experiencing the finer details of the work done within the Directorate. Graduate Interns end up sharing one office being four or five."

The prime purpose of internships is to provide interns with a meaningful experience that enhances their employability and skills (CIPD, 2015: 2).

INTERNS USED FOR NON –OFFICIAL DUTIES BY MENTORS

Of the respondents 42% explained that some mentors are not effectively and efficiently utilising and developing Graduate Interns.

The finding is in line with Koma (2010:48-64) who found that 100% of mentors are giving interns administrative duties and that when interns are exposed to mainly administrative duties in the department, their learning, in terms of experience required to enter the labour market, is limited.

"We have situations where interns are used to do the work of permanent employees, especially where the Department is understaffed, Graduate Interns used as Personal

Assistants and used to make tea, photocopying and administrative work not in line with their qualifications”, said one Director.

Deputy Director B says that, *“in few instances graduate interns are not used optimally because they do merely administrative work and they are not involved in the real work that is done by Units.”* Director C said that, *“LEDET is understaffed and therefore depends on the Graduate Interns to do the job supposed to be performed by permanent employees”.* Director D said that *“Graduate Interns stand in for Senior Managers Personal Assistants, Administration Officers and Administration Clerks.”*

PSIP DURATION NOT SUFFICIENT FOR THE TRAINING OF INTERNS.

Of the respondents 40% complained that the PSIP duration is not enough for the proper training of Graduate Interns about the Public Service. This finding is in line with Koma (2010:56-57) who identified that the current term of internship is not enough to allow for gaining meaningful experiential training and that it should be extended to 24 months. He further argued that the duration of the Internship Programme is important when analysing the implementation processes, as it measures the perceptions of how long the experiential training should be offered for to render the implementation of this programme effective, and that the purpose of the Internship Programme is to make available a cadre of dedicated public service employees and to facilitate employment of graduates, but if there is no means to ensure that this happens, the goal will not be attained.

NON- APPOINTMENT OF GRADUATE INTERNS BY LEDET IN VACANT POSTS

Of the respondents 38% raised the non–appointment of Graduate Interns in vacant positions within LEDET. The research finding is confirmed by Koma (2010:58) who state that *“there are no formal ways of mainstreaming interns in the Public Service labour market”* as well as Jackie Orme (2009:3) who said that, *“We know times are tough for business, but times are tough for graduates too and internships are a great way to meet in the middle. Internships help young people gain employability skills, such as team working and project management that will be invaluable in their future careers”.*

According to Koma (2010:1), the main contributor to the high levels of graduate unemployment is the lack of experience, and training of young people leaving institutions of higher learning. The problem is further aggravated by employers who require experience from prospective employees, as is the case in the current South African labour market.

Koma (2010:58) explains that the purpose of the Internship Programme is to make available a cadre of dedicated public service employees and to facilitate employment of graduates but if there is no means to ensure that this happens the goal will not be attained.

Director E said that, *“Graduate Interns have an expectation that the Department will absorb them during or after completing their PSIP and this leads to frustrations as days and months pass without their being permanently employed by LEDET or the Public Service.”*

Director F said that, *“Units or Directorates are not allowed to absorb Graduate Interns despite the availability of vacant positions within the Department to deal with the question of understaffing.”* Mentor B responded by saying that, *“the Public Service is not having mechanisms to appoint or simply to absorb Graduate Interns who have completed the PSIP, and this is a challenge to all of us, it is not like we unilaterally decide not to appoint or absorb them in our Department, it is a policy matter which must be addressed by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA).”*

The DPSA guide (2006:22) maintains that departments should not promise interns posts on completion of the programme.

BUDGET CONSTRAINTS

Thirty three percent (33%) of respondents raised budgetary constraints as one factor hindering the training of Graduate Interns in the Public Service. One Director said that, *“we always have more applications than we can accommodate and train as a Department”*. Another Director said that, *“There are no incentives to motivate Graduate Interns to perform optimally within the Department, especially because they are not considered in terms of performance bonuses”*.

The LEDET 2015/2016 budget indicates that R7 390 262-00 has been spent to pay stipends for the 2015/2016 Graduate Interns within the department. The Department is spending a lot of money on this programme; the fact is that there are a large number of unemployed graduates who need this experience and exposure to be employable within the public service and in the private sector.

Mbeki (2002) says that, *“We will have to attend to the improvement of the state machinery on a sustained basis so that it is both responsive to the needs of the people and accessible to the masses.”*

ACCESS TO DEPARTMENTAL MEETINGS AND FUNCTIONS

Seventeen percent (17%) of the respondents were not happy that Graduate Interns are not allowed to attend Directorates', Chief Directorates', Branches', Senior Managements' and Executive Management's meetings. Graduate Interns are there to learn and therefore part of the learning process is to attend Departmental meetings including the Executive Management meetings. One Chief Director said that, "*Graduate Interns are not attending Directorates, Chief Directorates, Branches and Executive Management meetings because they are not invited.*" One Deputy Director General said that, "*I attended all meetings and functions during my internship time with very senior members of the organisation and this enabled me to understand my job, the workplace and its environment within a short space of time. Graduate Interns must be invited to attend departmental meetings and functions, as this will enhance their learning process.*"

The prime purpose of internships is to provide interns with a meaningful experience that enhances their employability and skills (CIPD, 2015:2).

Munzhedzi (2011:99) argues that good communication and relations between subordinates, supervisors, and management should be facilitated.

The attendance of departmental meetings by Graduate Interns is part of their learning process as this has a great potential of unlocking knowledge and understanding of how the public service operates. They will learn how to listen to the presentation of various reports, how to make official presentations and how to develop and implement government policies.

ACCESS TO PERSAL SYSTEM BY THE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT GRADUATE INTERNS.

Of the respondents 10% raised a concern that Graduate Interns are not given access to the PERSAL system, despite the fact that those working in the Finance and Supply Chain have full access to the Basic Accounting System (BAS). The PERSAL system is used to capture government employees' salary and leave matters. The BAS system is used to capture requisition orders and to effect payments to government service providers.

The finding is supported by the CIPD report (2015:2) which says, "the prime purpose of internships is to provide interns with a meaningful experience that enhances their employability and skills".

Graduate Intern F says that *“I have a BCOM degree in Human Resource Management, and one key requirement for appointment in the Public Service is the training and access to the PERSAL System, unfortunately Graduate Interns are not allowed any training and access to the PERSAL System in LEDET and the result is that my twelve months internship programme as a human Resource staff is just null and void”*.

4.4 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

The summary of the main findings are derived from the three research objectives stated in chapter one. The following is the summary of the main findings;

4.4.1 OBJECTIVE ONE: EMPLOYABILITY OF GRADUATES

- The research finding confirmed that Graduate Interns are obtaining the necessary and relevant skills that will make them employable after completing the PSIP.
- The PSIP Imparts Graduate Interns with skills that contribute to the employability of Graduates.
- The PSIP instils confidence and provides exposure and experience to Graduate Interns to have competitive advantages during job interviews in the public service and the private sector.
- The PSIP is a very useful programme that must be supported and encouraged in the public service as it assisted many to get jobs and reduce the rate of graduate unemployment in South Africa.
- The PSIP is relevant, useful and necessary to deal with the unemployment of Graduates. Of the respondents sampled 97% responded that the PSIP is relevant, useful and necessary for the employment of graduates in the Public Service.
- The PSIP is successful and must be promoted. Of the respondents 92% explained that the LEDET PSIP is successful as most Graduate Interns are employable during and after the completion of the programme.

4.4.2 STUDY OBJECTIVE TWO: MEASURES PUT IN PLACE BY LEDET TO ENSURE THE EMPLOYABILITY OF INTERNS AFTER THE COMPLETION OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE GRADUATE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

- The Department conduct induction workshops for Graduate Interns at the beginning of the programme, however such is not done for mentors and other stakeholders. All (100%) the respondents agreed that induction workshops are conducted by the Departmental Human Resource Development Directorate to all newly appoint Graduate Interns at the beginning of the PSIP to explain the role and functions of all stakeholders involved with the implementation of the programme.

- LEDET does not appoint mentors to supervise the graduate interns based on competency and experience. Of the respondents sampled 81% responded that appointment of mentors is not based on competency and experience, and that this is done by the line functions. Directorates are allocated interns based on their needs and approved requisitions. The appointment of mentors is based on the approved interns requisition made by sub-directorates and not related to competency and experience.

- LEDET does not train its mentors for the implementation of the PSIP as only 5% of them are trained through PALAMA (The National School of Government). Of the respondents sampled 89% indicated that mentors are not trained by LEDET to mentor Graduate Interns.

- LEDET does not conduct exit interviews prior to the Graduate Interns exiting the programme. Of the respondents 88% responded that one-on-one exit interviews are not conducted by LEDET to get Graduate Interns' views and feedback at the end or at the completion of the PSIP.

4.4.3 STUDY OBJECTIVE THREE: CHALLENGES FACED BY LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM IN MAKING THE PUBLIC SERVICE GRADUATE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME EFFECTIVE

- LEDET does not appoint its mentors in writing; they are only expected to sign a contract with the Graduate Interns. Mentors are not involved in the recruitment and appointment of graduates to be mentored. Mentors are not trained nor paid for mentoring graduates interns. Sixty percent (60%) of the respondents sampled expressed the view that LEDET has a serious problem with mentorship.

- The work done by mentors is not part of their performance agreements signed by mentors and their supervisors. Of the respondents 59% indicated that there is no formal agreement that is signed by the mentor and his or her supervisor on PSIP deliverables and this leads

to the lack of supervision by supervisors of the mentors on the implementation of the PSIP in the Department.

- The PSIP implementation is not taken seriously by LEDET as there is no monitoring and evaluation of this work, despite the fact that all government programmes are monitored and evaluated on a quarterly and on an annual basis. Fifty seven percent (57%) of respondents reported that Government programmes are monitored and evaluated on a quarterly basis by LEDET Strategic Operations unit; unfortunately the unit is not monitoring nor evaluating the implementation of the PSIP, and as a result there are no monitoring and evaluation reports on the PSIP. The Executive Management and Senior Management are not discussing the implementation of the PSIP; they only note the number of Graduate interns that have been appointed every financial year.

- There is no clear plan to appoint or absorb Graduate Interns participating on the LEDET PSIP, despite the fact that the department has a high vacancy rate. Of the respondents 38% raised the non-appointment of Graduate Interns in vacant positions within LEDET.

- Graduate Interns are used for non-official duties by their mentors like making tea, photocopying and to do administrative duties which are not related to their qualifications and jobs. Forty two percent (42%) of respondents explained that some mentors are not effectively and efficiently utilising and developing Graduate Interns

- LEDET does not provide Graduate Interns with offices that are conducive for them to effectively and efficiently do their internship duties. Of the respondents 57% raised the lack of office space where they can properly learn and gain practical work experience related to their qualifications.

- Graduate Interns in the Human Resource Management and Development have no access to the PERSAL system and this renders their training and experience useless, especially as this is very important to governmental Human Resource and Development functions. Ten percent (10%) of the respondents raised a concern that Graduate Interns are not given access to the Personnel Salary (PERSAL) system, despite the fact that those working in Finance and Supply Chain have full access to the Basic Accounting System (BAS).The PERSAL system is used to capture government employees' salary and leave matters. The BAS system is used to capture requisition orders and to effect payments to government service providers.

- The Department does not invite Graduate Interns to their major meetings like the Executive Management, Senior Management, and some Chief Directorates and their Directorates exclude them from their staff meetings and related functions. Of the respondents 17% were not happy that Graduate Interns are not allowed to attend Directorate, Chief Directorate, Branch, Senior Management and Executive Management meetings. Graduate Interns are there to learn and therefore part of the learning process is to attend Departmental meetings including the Executive Management meetings.
- The budgetary constraints impede the public service to train a great number of unemployed graduates, and this frustrates many of them who are unable to be appointed due to several factors like the accessibility to job adverts and the lower number that departments can accommodate due to the nature of their approved budget. Thirty three percent (33%) of respondents raised budgetary constraints as one factor hindering the training of Graduate Interns in the Public Service. One Director said that *“we always have more applications than we can accommodate and train as a Department.”*
- The PSIP’s 12 month’s duration is not enough to train graduates, about the diverse and complex nature of the South African Public Service. Forty percent (40%) of respondents complained that the PSIP duration is not enough for the proper training of Graduate Interns about the Public Service.
- LEDET PSIP mentors regard the mentoring and coaching of Graduate Interns as an extra workload which is not adding any value to their performance as it is not recognised for performance bonus and other incentives. Of the respondents 80% view the supervision of Graduate Interns as more workload for them, especially because it is not part of their performance Agreements with their supervisors.

4.5 CONCLUSION

The research findings have been presented and analysed using content analysis and confirmed by the relevant literature from chapter two. A detailed summary of the main findings have been done. The next chapter will analyse the main findings of the research and make informed recommendations and suggestions for further research studies.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The current chapter will outline the summary of all preceding chapters to link them with the research findings, provide the summary of the main findings, make recommendations to the management of LEDET, and make suggestions for future research studies.

5.2 SUMMARY OF ALL PRECEDING CHAPTERS

5.2.1 CHAPTER ONE

Chapter one provided the background of the study, the research problem, the aim, research objectives and questions.

•THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The primary aim of this study was to determine if the Public Service Internship Programme implementation by the LEDET leads to the employability of interns.

The empirical findings of this study show the PSIP implemented by LEDET leads to the employability of Graduate Interns.

•PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problem statement of this study was based on the fact that the South African government introduced the PSIP as a response to the high rate of youth unemployment in the country, but despite the introduction of the PSIP, the South African Graduates Development Association (SAGDA) final report on the Internship baseline study (2013:22) estimates that between 300 000 and 600 000 graduates are unemployed in South Africa. It is upon this premise that this study is aimed at investigating if the PSIP leads to the employability of graduates in the Public Service using the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment, and Tourism (LEDET) as a case study. The study will therefore find out if the PSIP as implemented by LEDET leads to the employability of graduates.

The researcher believes that the problem statement has been answered or resolved based on empirical evidence provided by the study.

•RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives as outlined in chapter one were as follows;

- ✓ To describe if the interns at the end of the Public Service Graduate Internship Programme have acquired the necessary and relevant skills that will enable them to be employed;
- ✓ To determine if LEDET has put measures in place that will ensure the employability of interns from the PSIP;
- ✓ To determine if there are challenges that make the PSIP ineffective and provides possible solutions.

All the above mentioned research objectives have been met by this study.

5.2.2 CHAPTER TWO

Chapter two provided a critique of the related literature on this study, to ensure that there is no duplication of research studies as well as find out what other scholars are saying in investigating a similar research problem.

5.2.3 CHAPTER THREE

Chapter three explained the research methodology used and the type of data analysis. The study used the qualitative research method as well as the content analysis to analyse collected data from the 80 research respondents.

5.2.4 CHAPTER FOUR

Chapter four presented the research findings and analysis using content analysis as a method used to analyse qualitative studies in the social sciences. The study focused on the presentation and analysis of data provided by the 80 respondents sampled on the current study.

5.2.5 CHAPTER FIVE

This chapter provided the summary of the main findings, recommendations and suggestion for future research studies. Recommendations were made to assist the management of LEDET in the improvement and enhancement of the PSIP Implementation.

5.3 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

The summary of the main findings are derived from the three research objectives asked in chapter one. The following is the summary of the main findings;

5.3.1 OBJECTIVE ONE: EMPLOYABILITY OF GRADUATES

- The research finding confirmed that Graduate Interns are obtaining the necessary and relevant skills that will make them employable after completing the PSIP.
- The PSIP Imparts Graduate Interns with skills that contribute to the employability of Graduates.
- The PSIP instils confidence and provides exposure and experience to Graduate Interns to have a competitive advantages during job interviews in the public service and the private sector.
- The PSIP is a very useful programme that must be supported and encouraged in the public service as it assisted many to get jobs and reduced the rate of graduate unemployment in South Africa.
- The PSIP is relevant, useful and necessary to deal with the unemployment of Graduates. Of the respondents sampled 97% responded that the PSIP is relevant, useful and necessary for the employment of graduates in the Public Service.
- The PSIP is successful and must be promoted. Of the respondents 92% explained that the LEDET PSIP is successful as most Graduate Interns are employable during and after the completion of the programme.

5.3.2 STUDY OBJECTIVE TWO: MEASURES PUT IN PLACE BY LEDET TO ENSURE THE EMPLOYABILITY OF INTERNS AFTER THE COMPLETION OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE GRADUATE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

- The Department conduct induction workshops for Graduate Interns at the beginning of the programme, however such is not done for mentors and other stakeholders. All (100%) of respondents agreed that induction workshops are conducted by the Departmental Human Resource Development Directorate to all newly appoint Graduate Interns at the beginning of the PSIP to explain the role and functions of all stakeholders involved with the implementation of the programme.

- LEDET does not appoint mentors to supervise the graduate interns based on competency and experience. Of the respondents sampled 81% responded that the appointment of mentors is not based on competency and experience, and that this is done by the line functions. Directorates are allocated interns based on their needs and approved requisitions. The appointment of mentors is based on the approved intern requisitions made by sub-directorates and is not related to competency and experience.

- LEDET does not train its mentors for the implementation of the PSIP as only 5% of them are trained through PALAMA (The National School of Government). Of respondents sampled 89% indicated that mentors are not trained by LEDET to mentor Graduate Interns.

- LEDET does not conduct exit interviews prior to the Graduate Interns exiting the programme. Of the respondents 88% responded that one-on-one exit interviews are not conducted by LEDET to get Graduate Interns' views and feedback at the end or completion of the PSIP.

5.3.3 STUDY OBJECTIVE THREE: CHALLENGES FACED BY LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM IN MAKING THE PUBLIC SERVICE GRADUATE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME EFFECTIVE

- LEDET does not appoint its mentors in writing; they are only expected to sign a contract with the Graduate Interns. Mentors are not involved in the recruitment and appointment of graduates to be mentored. Mentors are not trained and paid for mentoring graduates interns. Of the respondents sampled 60% expressed the view that LEDET has a serious problem with mentorship.

- The work done by mentors is not part of their performance agreements signed by mentors and their supervisors. Of the respondents 59% indicated that there is no formal agreement that is signed by the mentor and his or her supervisor on PSIP deliverables and this leads to the lack of supervision by supervisors over the mentors on the implementation of the PSIP in the Department.

- The PSIP implementation is not taken seriously by LEDET as there is no monitoring and evaluation of this work, despite the fact that all government programmes are monitored and evaluated on a quarterly and on an annual basis. Of the respondents 57% reported that Government programmes are monitored and evaluated on a quarterly basis by LEDET Strategic Operations unit, unfortunately the unit is not monitoring and evaluating the

implementation of the PSIP, and as a result there are no monitoring and evaluation reports on the PSIP. The Executive Management and Senior Management do not discuss the implementation of the PSIP; they only note the number of Graduate interns that have been appointed every financial year.

- There is no clear plan to appoint or absorb Graduate Interns participating on the LEDET PSIP, despite the fact that the department has a high vacancy rate. Thirty eight percent (38%) of respondents raised the non-appointment of Graduate Interns in vacant positions within LEDET.

- Graduate Interns are used for non-official duties by their mentors like making tea, photocopying and to do administrative duties which are not related to their qualifications and jobs. Of the respondents 42% explained that some mentors are not effectively and efficiently utilising and developing Graduate Interns

- LEDET does not provide Graduate Interns with offices that are conducive for them to effectively and efficiently do their internship duties. Of respondents 57% raised the lack of office space where they can properly learn and gain practical work experience related to their qualifications.

- Graduate Interns in the Human Resource Management and Development have no access to the PERSAL system and this renders their training and experience useless, especially as this is key to government Human Resource and Development functions. Ten percent (10%) of the respondents raised a concern that Graduate Interns are not given access to the Personnel Salary (PERSAL) system, despite the fact that those working in Finance and Supply Chain have full access to the Basic Accounting System (BAS). The PERSAL system is used to capture government employees' salary and leave matters. The BAS system is used to capture requisition orders and to effect payments to government service providers.

- The Department does not invite Graduate Interns to their major meetings like the Executive Management, Senior Management, and some Chief Directorates and their Directorates exclude them from their staff meetings and related functions. Seventeen percent (17%) of the respondents were not happy that Graduate Interns are not allowed to attend Directorate's, Chief Directorate's, Branch's, Senior Management's and Executive Management's meetings. Graduate Interns are there to learn and therefore part of the

learning process is to attend Departmental meetings including the Executive Management meetings.

- The budgetary constraints impede the public service to train a great number of unemployed graduates, and this frustrates many of them who are unable to be appointed due to several factors like the accessibility to job adverts and the lower number that departments can accommodate due to the nature of their approved budget. Of the respondents 33% raised budgetary constraints as one factor hindering the training of Graduate Interns in the Public Service. One Director said that *“we always have more applications than we can accommodate and train as Department.”*

- The PSIP’s 12 month’s duration is not enough to train graduates about the diverse and complex nature of the South African Public Service. Forty percent (40%) of respondents complained that the PSIP duration is not enough for the proper training of Graduate Interns about the Public Service.

- LEDET PSIP mentors regard the mentoring and coaching of Graduate Interns as an extra workload which is not adding any value to their performance as it is not recognised for the performance bonus and other incentives. Of the respondents 80% view the supervision of Graduate Interns as more workload for them, especially because it is not part of their performance Agreements with their supervisors.

5.4. OVERALL CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

The following conclusions based on the empirical research findings are drawn;

LEDET PSIP imparts Graduate Interns with skills that contribute to the employability of Graduates. The study found that the PSIP as implemented by LEDET imparts graduates with skills that contribute to their employability.

The following skills are provided by the LEDET PSIP: Conceptual skills which concentrate on improving the thinking capacity of the graduates; Interpersonal Skills which concentrate on modelling the graduates to be better people by improving their social behaviour; team work; conflict resolution; and the promotion of diversity; Technical skills which concentrate on work related and a specific way of doing things in the public service like capturing invoices using the BAS system; and Econometric skills for economists.

The PSIP instils confidence and provide exposure and experience to Graduates Interns to have competitive advantages during job interviews in the public service and the private sector. The PSIP is a very useful programme that must be supported and encouraged in the public service as it assisted many to get jobs and reduce the rate of graduate unemployment in South Africa. The PSIP is relevant, useful and necessary to deal with the unemployment of Graduates. Of the respondents sampled 97% responded that the PSIP is relevant, useful and necessary for the employment of graduates in the Public Service. The PSIP is successful and must be promoted. Of the respondents 92% explained that the LEDET PSIP is successful as most Graduate Interns are employable during and after the completion of the programme.

LEDET Graduate Interns are now working in several government departments including LEDET, North West Provincial Treasury, North West Department of Tourism, The South African Presidency, and Limpopo Office of the Premier and the Northern Cape office of the Premier. The study found that some interns are now working in government State Owned Agencies like South African Reserve Bank, Statistics South Africa, ESKOM, and the Independent Electoral Commission. Some of LEDET Graduate Interns are working in the private sector like the South African Taxi Alliance, LANCET Laboratory, ABSA, Shoprite/Checkers, and many more.

The study further found the following weaknesses in the implementation of the LEDET PSIP;

- The non-appointment of graduates in some vacant positions within the department, as this disadvantages the graduate interns who have been trained by LEDET.
- The lack of mentor training, the appointment of junior employees who are not competent and experienced to mentor graduates. The department does not include the mentoring of graduates on the mentors' performance through the Performance Management and Development System.
- There is general lack of monitoring and evaluation of the PSIP implementation within the department, and this makes it impossible if not difficult for the executive and senior management to intervene and make management decisions on the PSIP.
- The assignment of non-official duties to the Graduate Interns by some supervisors, thus defeating the intent and purpose of the programme.

- The lack of office space experienced by some interns, as well as the refusal by some mentors to share offices with their interns, is making the Graduate Interns' learning process difficult and weak.
- The study found that budget constraints make it difficult for the department to appoint more interns on the programme and this leaves many unemployed graduates outside the programme.
- The Graduate Interns' service conditions are not aligned with the Public Service Collective Bargaining Council's resolutions and this disadvantage the interns on leave matters.
- The government is currently training the Graduate Interns over a period of 12 months only. The 12 month PSIP duration is not enough to train graduates to fully understand the dynamics of the Public Service.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made based on the research findings:

5.5.1 INDUCTION OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS AND ASSIGNING SUPERVISORS TO OVERSEE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PSIP

The empirical evidence showed that LEDET is only inducting Graduate Interns, and neglecting mentors and other stakeholders on the implementation of the PSIP. It is recommended that LEDET must prioritise the implementation of the PSIP and ensure that mentors, supervisors and all relevant levels of management must be inducted on this important government programme for them to clearly understand the role and functions.

5.5.2 THE TRAINING AND APPOINTMENT OF MENTORS

The researcher probed this variable to determine if mentors are being trained or not and the evidence is that only 5% of mentors were trained on mentoring and coaching by the National School of Government. It is recommended that all mentors must be trained prior to mentoring for them to fully understand their role. The current relationship between LEDET and NSG must be strengthened to ensure that the training of mentors is seamless.

The department must consider assigning members of the Middle Management and Senior Management the role of mentoring Graduate Interns, as opposed to the current practice

where in some instances Graduate Interns are supervised by very low level employees without the relevant qualifications and experience.

5.5.3 LINKING MENTORING WITH PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

LEDET PSIP mentors regard the mentoring and coaching of Graduate Interns as an extra workload which is not adding any value to their performance as it is not recognised for performance bonus and other incentives. Eighty percent (80%) of the respondents view the supervision of Graduate Interns as more workload for them, especially because it is not part of their performance agreements with their supervisors.

It is recommended that LEDET must link the function of mentoring Graduate Interns with mentors' Performance agreements as this will motivate mentors to excel, knowing that the department will evaluate their individual performance on a quarterly basis. It must be recommended that those who excel on the implementation of the PSIP must be encouraged in line with the PMDS policy. The recommendation is in line with the directive of the DPSA. The DPSA guide (2006:25) says that Heads of Departments must appoint an internship committee, monitor and evaluate progress of the internship programmes, and integrate internship programmes into the performance agreements of relevant managers.

5.5.4 MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE PSIP

The research findings revealed that there is a general lack of monitoring and evaluating of the PSIP within the department. It is recommended that the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit must monitor and evaluate the implementation of the PSIP and such reports must be presented to the Executive Management and Senior Management on a quarterly basis for noting and decision making in order to improve and enhance the implementation of the programme. The recommendation is supported by the DPSA (2006), the United Nations Development Programme (2009), and empirical evidence provided by Munzhedzi (2011). The DPSA guide (2006:23) says that "a system for monitoring, evaluating and supporting the internship programme must be put in place. This includes monitoring the effectiveness of supervisors, mentors, and their line managers responsible for the internship programme.

According to the UNDP (2009:8), monitoring can be defined as the on-going process by which stakeholders obtain regular feedback on the progress being made towards achieving their goals and objectives, whereas evaluation is a rigorous and independent assessment

of either completed or on-going activities to determine the extent to which they are achieving stated objectives and contributing to decision making. Evaluations, like monitoring, can apply to many things, including an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector or organisation.

The monitoring and evaluation of performance should be done on a regular basis to detect weaknesses as soon as possible (Munzhedzi, 2011:99). Monitoring is used in the public service to collect and analyse data against set indicators related to a particular programme or project, while evaluation is used to assess the performance of the programme or project with regards to its effectiveness, efficiency and impact.

5.5.5 PROPER ALLOCATION OF DUTIES TO GRADUATE INTERNS

Empirical evidence shows that 42% of respondents explained that some mentors are not effectively and efficiently utilising and developing Graduate Interns. It is recommended that Graduate Interns be allocated specific duties related to their equalisations and careers and not administrative duties, as it is currently done. The proper allocation of duties to Graduate Interns will make the programme effective and relevant.

5.5.6 INVITATION OF GRADUATE INTERNS TO MANAGEMENT MEETINGS

It is recommended that LEDET must consider inviting graduate interns to their management meetings, as this will enhance their learning process. It is really prudent that Graduate Interns interning for Executive Managers must be allowed to observe Executive Management meetings, and those interning for Senior Management must be allowed to observe Senior Management Meetings. It must be emphasised that such attendance must be on invitation only as the logistics may not cater for all Graduate Interns at the same time.

5.5.7 PERSAL ACCESS TO HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT GRADUATE INTERNS

Graduate Interns in the Human Resource Management and Development have no access to the PERSAL system and this renders their training and experience useless, especially as this is key to government Human Resource and Development functions.

LEDET must find a way of ensuring that Graduate Interns are trained on PERSAL, just as those under financial Management that have access to BAS.

It is recommended that the department must train all Human Resource and Management Graduate interns on the basic PERSAL courses like PERSAL Users and PERSAL Revisers which will allow them to capture the approved departmental posts and job descriptions as per the organogram into the PERSAL system, the capturing of employees approved leave days, capturing of employees grievances and disciplinary cases on the system, and to compile job descriptions of employees on the system, as well as to identify training needs of employees

5.5.8 EXIT INTERVIEWS TO OBTAIN FEEDBACK ON PSIP IMPLEMENTATION

LEDET is not conducting exit interviews prior to the Graduate Interns exiting the programme. Eighty eight percent (88%) of the respondents responded that one-on-one exit interviews are not conducted by LEDET to get Graduate Interns' views and feedback at the end or completion of the PSIP.

It is recommended that exit interviews be conducted to get feedback about the implementation of the PSIP in the department. Exit interviews are standard practise within the public service and therefore it must be prioritised by the Human Resource Management and Development.

5.5.9 ALLOCATION OF OFFICES

LEDET is not providing Graduate Interns with offices that are conducive for them to effectively and efficiently do their internship duties. Of the respondents 57% raised the lack of office space where they can properly learn and gain practical work experience related to their qualifications.

The ideal situation would be that the Graduate Intern must share an office with his/her mentor for the two to be able to share experiences and interact freely as opposed to the situation where mentors do not want to share their offices with their mentees.

5.6 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The present study used a qualitative approach to probe the implementation of the PSIP by LEDET focusing on the employability of LEDET Graduate Interns. A quantitative study is recommended to investigate the total number of LEDET Graduate Interns who secured permanent jobs in both the public service and the private sector to provide a clear picture as to the effectiveness of the programme.

LEDET must conduct a study to determine the value of the PSIP.

It is suggested that LEDET conducts a study on the impact of its skills development programmes like PSIP, training and development, bursaries and registration fees, especially, because it spent R11 000 000-00 per annum on these programmes.

The DPSA as the custodian of the government transversal policies must investigate the possibility of increasing the duration of the PSIP from 12 to 24 months as the current 12 months period is not enough for the effective training of future civil servants in South Africa.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE A: REQUEST TO CONDUCT A STUDY

University of Limpopo

Private Bag X756, Fauna Park, 0787, South Africa

Tel: (015) 290 2842, Fax: (015) 290 2842, Email: pauline.moeketsi@ul.ac.za

Enquiries: Motene K.J

CELL: 082 8860244

TO: THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM

P/BAGX 9484

POLOKWANE

0700

SIR

RE: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO CONDUCT A STUDY IN YOUR DEPARTMENT

1. PURPOSE

To request the Head of Department to grant permission to conduct a study on the Public Service Internship Programme as implemented by the Department.

2. BACKGROUND

I applied and registered to study for a Master's Degree in Public Administration (MPA) with the University of Limpopo, at the Turf loop Graduate School of Leadership. My Supervisor is Professor Phago K.G.

My research topic is: Employability of Graduates on the Public Service Internship Programme (PSIP):
The case of the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism.

3. I will appreciate if approval can be granted to conduct the study.

With kind regards;

K.J MOTENE

STUDENT

DATE : 17 /03/2016

ANNEXURE B: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A STUDY



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
ENVIRONMENT & TOURISM**

TO : ALL EMPLOYEES

FROM : THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

DATE : 22 MARCH 2016

RE : APPROVAL TO CONDUCT STUDY

1. This serves to confirm that approval has been granted to Mr. Motene K.J to conduct a study on the employability of Graduates on the Public Service Internship Programme in our Department.
2. Mr. Motene K.J is a student at the University of Limpopo, Turfloop campus, and he has registered for the Master of Public Administration (MPA) Degree.
3. A copy of the research report will be provided by Mr. Motene K.J to the Department once the study has been completed.
4. You are kindly requested to cooperate with him during the research project.
5. With kind regards;

DATE: 22/03/2016

N.S KGOPONG

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

ANNEXURE C : RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR LEDET MANAGEMENT

(EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT, SENIOR MANAGEMENT, MIDDLE MANAGEMENT AND JUNIOR MANAGEMENT)

NAME :

GENDER :

RANK :

CHIEF DIRECTORATE :

1. PUBLIC SERVICE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

1.1. Do you think the Public Service Internship Programme (PSIP) is relevant, useful and necessary for the employment of graduates in the Public Service?

1.2. Do you think the PSIP implemented by LEDET is successful?

1.3. Do you think the PSIP instils the required confidence in the graduates and provides exposure and experience relevant to the dynamics of the Public Service for them to have a competitive advantages during job interviews?

1.4 What are the minimum requirements for the appointment of employees in the Public Service?

1.5 In your opinion do you think the PSIP as implemented by LEDET imparts Graduate Interns with skills that contribute to their employability?

1.6 Do you think LEDET PSIP is successful?

2. MEASURES PUT IN PLACE BY LEDET TO IMPLEMENT PSIP

2.1 Does the Department conduct induction programmes at the beginning of the PSIP to explain the role and functions of all the stakeholders?

2.2. Does LEDET appoint competent and experienced mentors to supervise the graduates?

2.3. Do you think mentors are adequately trained for the successful implementation of the PSIP?

2.4 Does the Department conduct exit interviews at the end of the PSIP to get the views and feedback of the Graduate Interns?

3. CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY LEDET DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PSIP

3.1. What are the challenges experienced by the Department during the implementation of the PSIP?

ANNEXURE D : RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR LEDET MENTORS

NAME :

GENDER :

RANK :

DIRECTORATE :

QUESTIONS FOR LEDET PUBLIC SERVICE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME (PSIP)

1. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT TO ENSURE THE EMPLOYABILITY OF GRADUATE INTERNS

1.1. Do you think the graduate Interns under your supervision are provided with the necessary confidence, experience and independence to have a competitive advantages over other candidates during job interviews in the Public Service?

1.2 Do you think the graduates that you are supervising will be employable after completing the LEDET PSIP?

1.3 In your opinion, do you think the PSIP as implemented by LEDET imparts Graduate Interns with skills that contribute to their employability? Please outline such skills if any?

1.4 Graduate Interns are trained to be able to promote service delivery in the Public Service, and therefore need more technical skills.

Do you train graduate Interns on technical skills? Tell what is still lacking?

1.5 Does the PSIP impart interpersonal skills to help graduates to work with other Public Servants and the public?

1.6 Does the PSIP impart conceptual skills to the graduates? What are you doing to ensure they broaden their conceptual skills?

1.7 Do you think LEDET PSIP is successful?

2. MEASURES PUT IN PLACE BY LEDET TO IMPLEMENT PSIP

2.1 Did the Department induct you and all other stakeholders at the beginning of the PSIP to explain your role and functions?

2.2 Do you think LEDET appointed you as Mentor because of your competency and experience?

2.3. Do you think you are sufficiently trained to mentor graduate Interns?

2.4 Do you conduct exit interviews at the end of the PSIP to get the views and feedback of the Graduates?

3. CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY LEDET DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PSIP

3.1 What are the challenges experienced by the Department during the implementation of the PSIP?

ANNEXURE E : RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR LEDET GRADUATE INTERNS

NAME :

GENDER :

DIRECTORATE :

CURRENT EMPLOYER :

CURRENT POSITION :

QUESTIONS FOR LEDET GRADUATE INTERNS

1. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT TO ENSURE THE EMPLOYABILITY OF GRADUATE INTERNS

1.1. The purpose of Public Service Internship Programme (PSIP) is to expose graduates to the practical work in the Public Service to assist them to be employable.

Do you think the PSIP instilled confidence, provided exposure and gave experience to you and other graduates to have a competitive advantages during job interviews in the Public Service?

1.2. Do you think you stand a better chance to get a job after completing the LEDET PSIP?

1.3. In your opinion do you think the PSIP as implemented by LEDET imparted skills that will contribute towards your employability?

1.4 Graduate Interns are trained to be able to promote service delivery in the Public Service and therefore need more technical skills.

Do you think the LEDET PSIP exposed you to technical skills relevant to your qualifications? Tell what is still lacking on this aspect?

1.5 The LEDET PSIP trained you on conceptual skills, but how are you complementing this training to broaden your understanding?

1.6 What type of interpersonal skills did you acquire to work with other public servants and the public?

1.7 Do you think LEDET PSIP is successful?

2. MEASURES PUT IN PLACE BY LEDET TO IMPLEMENT PSIP

2.1 Did the Department induct you and other stakeholders at the beginning of the PSIP to explain the role and functions of all the stakeholders?

2.2. Do you think LEDET appointed competent and experienced mentors to supervise you and other graduates during the implementation of the PSIP?

2.3. Do you think mentors are adequately trained for the successful implementation of the PSIP?

2.4 Does the Department conduct exit interviews at the end of the PSIP to get the views and feedback of the Graduates?

3. CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY LEDET DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PSIP

3.1 What are the challenges experienced by the Department during the implementation of the PSIP?

ANNEXURE F : RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR LEDET OPERATIONAL EMPLOYEES

NAME :

GENDER :

RANK :

DIRECTORATE :

QUESTIONS FOR LEDET PUBLIC SERVICE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME (PSIP)

1. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT TO ENSURE THE EMPLOYABILITY OF GRADUATE INTERNS

1.1. Do you think the graduate Interns are provided with the necessary confidence, experience and independence to have competitive advantages over other candidates during job interviews in the Public Service?

1.2 Do you think the graduates will be employable after completing the LEDET PSIP?

1.3 In your opinion, do you think the PSIP as implemented by LEDET imparts Graduate Interns with skills that contribute to their employability? Please outline such skills if any?

1.4 Do you think LEDET PSIP is successful?

2. MEASURES PUT IN PLACE BY LEDET TO IMPLEMENT PSIP

2.1 Do you think LEDET inducts all other stakeholders at the beginning of the PSIP to explain their roles and functions?

2.2. Do you think Mentors are appointed based on their competency and experience?

2.3. Do you think mentors are sufficiently trained to mentor graduate Interns?

2.4 Does LEDET conduct exit interviews at the end of the PSIP to get the views and feedback of the Graduates?

3. CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY LEDET DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PSIP

3.1 What are the challenges experienced by the Department during the implementation of the PSIP?

