Employee Perceptions Survey
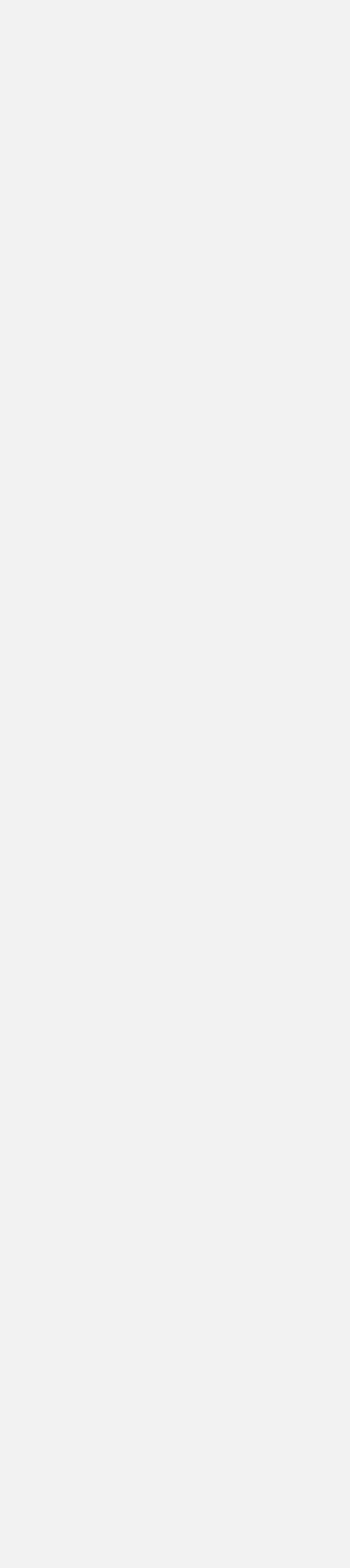
September 30, 2015

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

1.1 Background:

The Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT) introduced by government in 2012 after adoption of the Outcomes Approach, seeks to develop a clear and transparent understanding of what effective management practise entails in four key performance areas. One of such key performance areas of MPAT is Human Resource Management and Systems (herein referred to as HRMS). Within HRSM, departments are expected to comply and implement required standards pertaining to Human Resource Planning, Human Resource Practises and Administration as well as Performance Management.

Diversity Management requirements as they appear in the operational plans of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism also necessitate the exploration of human resource perceptions on issue of gender diversity management. Inherent in the requirements of both MPAT and DM, the Human Resource Development Programme (supported by the Research & Development Subprogramme) recently administered an Employee Perception Survey. An approved copy of the questionnaire that was distributed for purposes of this survey is appended **(see Appendix A)**. This report provides an analysis of the responses of those DEDaT employees who participated in the survey.

1.2 Literature Review:

1.2.1 White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service

The vision of the White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service is for Human Resource management that will, "result in diverse competent and well managed workforce; capable and committed to delivering high quality services to the people of South Africa". The following constitutional values support Human Resource Management in the Public Service, namely; fairness, equity, accessibility, transparency, accountability, participation and professionalism. The White Paper also underlines that the Public Service should be a Career Service, providing "*opportunities for development and advancement through improved performance and career management*". It outlines the importance of ensuring that all managers within Public Service are skilled in managing people, irrespective of their position. Equally important is the need to manage cultural diversity, diversity in the context of the white paper goes beyond gender, race and disability, and includes age, marital status, rural and urban differences etc. It further states that cultural diversity requires the existing organisational culture to change according to the differences of those employed within the organisation.

In terms of promotion the White Paper stipulates that an employee is promoted when he or she applies for a vacant position at a higher level in competition with others. In addition performance

management is described as a tool that ensures; employees know what is expected, managers know if employee performance is delivering the required objectives of organisation and lastly poor performance is identified and improved, while good performance is rewarded. Overall the Performance Management System should be based on the following principles; Training and Development, results oriented, rewarding good performance, managing poor performance and lastly openness, fairness and objectivity (Department: Public Service and Administration, Republic of South Africa, 3 December 1997).

1.2.2 Performance Management and Development Policy

According to the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) Policy (Northern Cape Provincial Administration, 2011), the objectives of PMDS are:

- o A framework to manage performance in a consultative manner, outlining responsibilities clearly.
- o A guideline for setting performance standards for components and individuals.
- o A guideline on career pathing.
- o A guideline for rewarding performance and dealing with poor performance.
- o To ensure a continuous cycle of planning, coaching and feedback.
- o To identify and manage employees training and developmental needs.
- o To ensure employees are evaluated on a fair, objective and transparent system.
- o To provide information on which salary and promotion decisions can be based.
- o To assist Public Service to move towards a results and service oriented culture.
- o Link the objectives of the department with individual performance.
- o To ensure support and empowerment.
- o To enhance responsibilities of managers/supervisors for performance.

Overall the Performance Management Development System should focus on open and continuous communication, the system should be managed in a transparent manner and be developmental in nature enhancing outstanding performance and dealing with poor performance.

1.2.3 Guide for Employment Equity Compliance

The aim of the Employment Equity Act is to promote equal opportunities for all employees through fair and just administrative process, through implementation of affirmative action measures and removing barriers to access, specifically those historically designated disadvantaged groups. In essence the act requires employers to ensure that discrimination is eliminated in the workplace and to promote equality, efficiency and development in the workplace.

The Guide for Employment Equity further emphasises that all employment equity initiatives need to be accompanied by the efficient management of diversity, revision of organisational culture and the

necessary human relation initiatives (Department of Public Service and Administration, Republic of South Africa, 2010, p. 3). In addition four key elements are outlined for employment equity compliance, namely, equality, broad representation, valuing diversity and equal opportunity (ibid, 6).

1.2.4 Code of good practice: Key aspects on the Employment of people with disabilities

The code is issued in respect of section 54(1) (a) of the Employment Equity, Act No.55, 1998. According to the code people with disabilities can be defined as; having a mental or physical impairment, either recurring or long term, and which noticeably limits their prospects of entry and or advancement in employment. Employers are required to "reasonably accommodate the needs of people with disabilities", in this instance accommodation relates to reducing "the impact of the impairment of the person's capacity to fulfil the essential functions of the job" (Department of Labour, Republic of South Africa, 2002, p. 9).

1.2.5 Gender Equality Strategic Framework, for Public Service

The objective of the Strategic framework is to encourage the development of an enabling environment that would facilitate the development of strategies and mechanisms by government departments to achieve the objectives of women's empowerment and gender equality. Some of the principles as outlined in the framework are; the need for non-sexism and non-racism, the protection of equality and that women's rights are seen as human rights, ensuring the development of affirmative action plan and other measures that facilitate women empowerment as well as training to improve knowledge in gender mainstreaming, gender analysis and gender responsive research and budgeting (Department of Public Service and Administration, Republic of South Africa, 2006).

1.2.6 Bursary Policy

The DEDaT bursary policy serves as a departmental strategy to develop human resources by delivering on four broad objectives, namely, providing bursary opportunities within both the departments' goals and employee development plans; enhancing morale amongst the employees and improved performance; ensuring properly skilled staff compliment as well as rethinking the notion of competence and recognition of vocational learning on NQF level. . Well within application requirements the department has made an effort to ensure the objectives are met. This is seen in the scope of the bursary which is wide enough to cover all permanent and transferring employees, pursuing studies on either part-time or full time basis, studies at both under or post graduate levels, at institutions both nationally and internationally and so on.

2. Purpose

The main objective of the survey is to comply with both MPAT and Diversity Management requirements through uncovering opinions of the organisational staff on key and specific departmental human resources' policies. the following aspects were covered in the questionnaire for purposes of this survey :

- o   Employment Equity
- o   Training and Development
- o   Performance Management Development System
- o   Promotion

3. Methodology

Research Methodology

A hybrid of research methods were used in crafting the report, namely, primary and secondary research methodologies. Secondary research on journals, human resource policies and other relevant research reports informed the Literature Review of the report. Primary data was collected using a questionnaire developed by the Research and Development and Human Resources, which was presented to the Senior Management Advisory Council (SMAC) for inputs and approval.

Data Collection Instrument

Directives from SMAC pointed towards a deductive approach for ease of analysis. As such the questionnaire presented a total of 18 questions, 11 of which were posed to respondents as statements. Respondents had to express opinions on the statements using a five point interval scale (1-5), the lowest being strongly disagree, while the highest signified strongly agree. **Appendix A** is a copy of the finalised questionnaire that was the survey collection tool.

Data Collection Process

The questionnaire was electronically distributed to all staff members for completion via both the departmental intranet as well as GroupWise. A covering letter explaining the purpose, importance of participation and administration process of the survey was attached to the correspondences. Staff were requested to complete the questionnaire and submit to furnished boxes which were allocated to all reception areas within the various departmental buildings. Extra questionnaires were left at the box collection stations. The due date to submit questionnaires was the 31 July 2015.

A reminder to complete questionnaire was sent to departmental staff a week before due date. After due date, the Employee Health and Diversity Management unit, assisted with fieldwork, by physically distributing questionnaires to officials at their respective offices and collecting them afterwards, this was done in an attempt to improve the initial response rate after the said closing date.

Sample selection and participation

All staff within the Department of Economic Development and Tourism were targeted for this particular survey. As at August 2015, staff in the department totalled one hundred and sixty one (161), with 75 male and 86 female staff members. This total includes the 24 interns which have been appointed recently. For purposes of this survey however, the interns' responses were disregarded as such the complete sample totals 137.

A total of 58 staff members responded to the survey translating to a response rate of 42.3%[1]. Furthermore, given the nature of the survey, which is perceptions on policies', it is safe to undertake that the targeted population is mainly non senior management staff (that is salary levels 12 and below). Given this, and the low participation of SMS members in the survey, it makes sense to exclude the SMS population totalling 26 from the 137 total population of DEDaT staff. This would imply a participation rate of 52.3%[2]

> **Comment [S1]:** Were any respondents senior/executive managers, if not, then even better. If that's the case then the targeted population can be regarded as managers and low levels staff. The response rate can thus be the number of respondents as a proportion of the total population of managers & lower level staff. This should increase the response rate.

The method of sampling used was the **non-probability technique called Convenient Sampling**. Whilst both 42.3% and 52.3% response rates can generally be regarded as a low response rates, the method of sampling used has no rules regarding sampling size and therefore the findings despite the response rate remain useful and reliable. Thence the survey response rate of either 42.3% or 52.3% is sufficient to be interpreted as concluding on the opinions of staff members in the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. Non-probability technique

The following figure illustrates the response per the respective office buildings where DEDaT employees are stationed:

Fig.1 Percentage respondents per office building.

---

[1] Excluding the interns who had no more than a month or two when the survey was administered and therefore had limited or no knowledge of most human resource policies.
[2] 137 less 26 SMS members at the time of the survey =111 total staff. 58/111 then translates to 52.3% response rate.

Respondents per office building
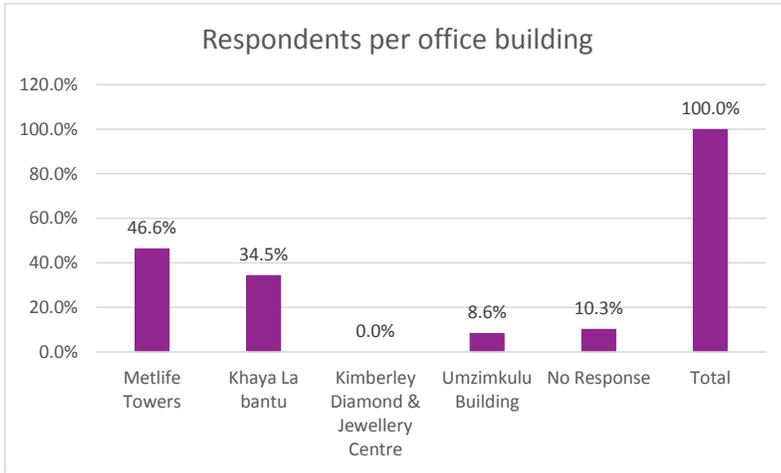
The majority of responses were collected from the MetLife Towers and Khaya La Bantu offices, with 46.6% and 34.5% respectively. None of the staff members situated in the Kimberley Diamond and Jewellery Centre[3] participated in the survey.

Data Analysis

A database was created on Microsoft Excel, after which data was captured. The questionnaire consists of Likert-type data, which was analysed by means of frequencies and the calculation of the median and mode. Bar graphs were created to display the responses for the various statements.

---

[3] On the collection date, the box left at KIDJA was empty.

4. The Survey Findings

Fig.1 Respondents per Programme
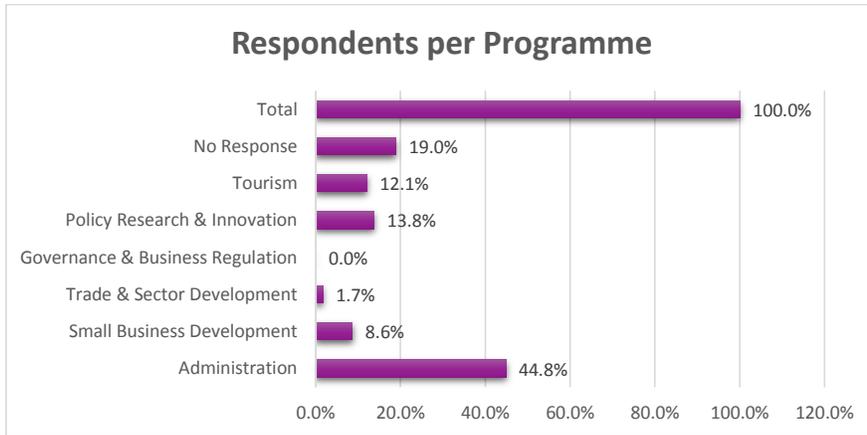
The above figure indicates the percentage distribution of completed questionnaires per each of the six Programmes within the department. Majority of responses were received from Programme 1 (Administration) 44.8%, followed by Programme 5 (Policy Research and Innovation) 13.8 % and Programme 6 (Tourism) at 12.1%. Programme 3 (Trade and Sector) can be said to have had the least responses given that Programme 4 (Governance and Business Regulation) did not participate in the survey. On the other hand, it is important to note that 19.0 % of the respondents did not indicate their relevant Programmes. [4]

Fig.1.1Salary level per respondent

---
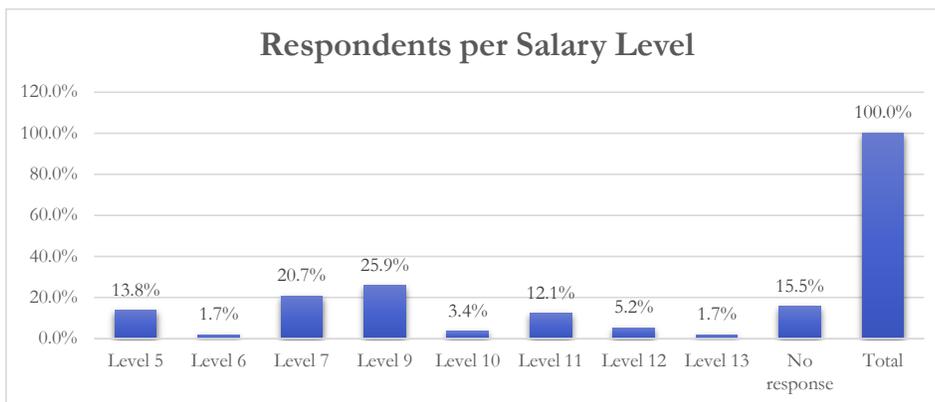
[4] It must be considered that participation per programme analysis is based on the indicated responses, and participation at programme level could possibly vary considering the percentage of questionnaires with no Programme indicated.

The majority of respondents at 25.9 % indicated that they are on salary level nine (9), followed by 20.7% respondents on salary level seven (7) and 13.8 % on salary level five (5). Several of the respondents, amounting to 15.5% did not indicate their salary levels. Only 1.7% of the participants in the survey indicated being SMS members.

Fig1.2 Gender of Respondent
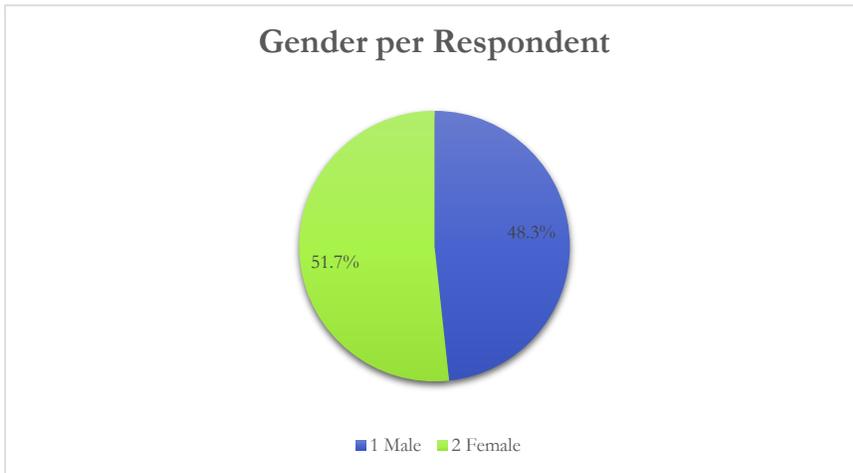
The questionnaire provided for respondents to indicate their gender. Participation in the survey can be said to be female led as the majority of female respondents was 51.7%. The female level of participation is 3.4% in excess of the 48.3% male participants.

Fig. 1.3 Disability per respondent
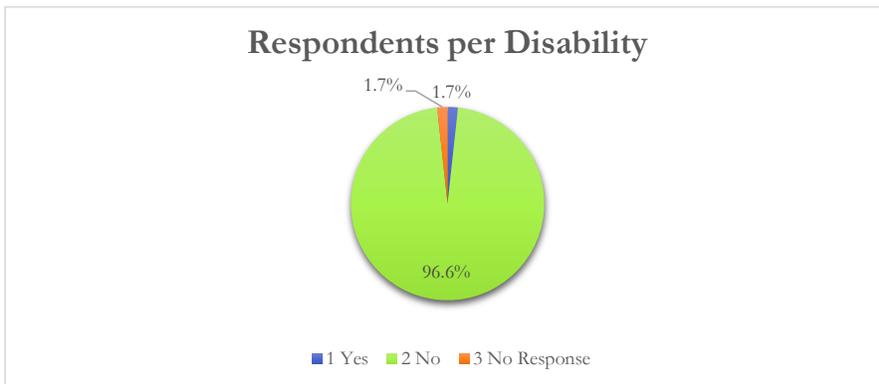
Almost all the respondents (96.7%) indicated they did not have any disability with merely 1.6% indicating being disabled, whilst 1.3% did not respond to the question.

Fig.1.4 Years worked per respondent
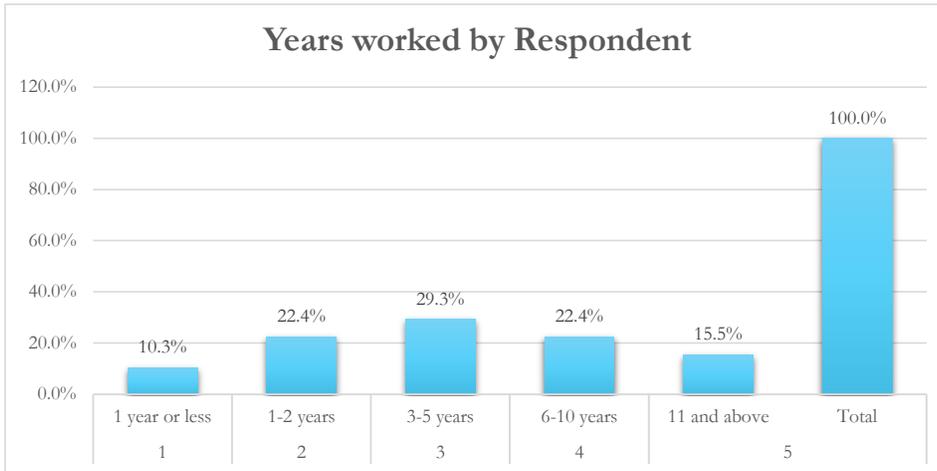
Concerning the number of years worked, the majority of those who participated in the survey, at 29.3% have been employed in the department for 3-5 years, followed by 22.4% who have been working for the department for 1-2 years and 22.4% for 6-10 years. The percentages of the number of years worked in the department by the participants worked out evenly, which is very important in gauging employee perceptions.

Employment Equity

Fig. 2 Recruitment sensitive to Gender Equity
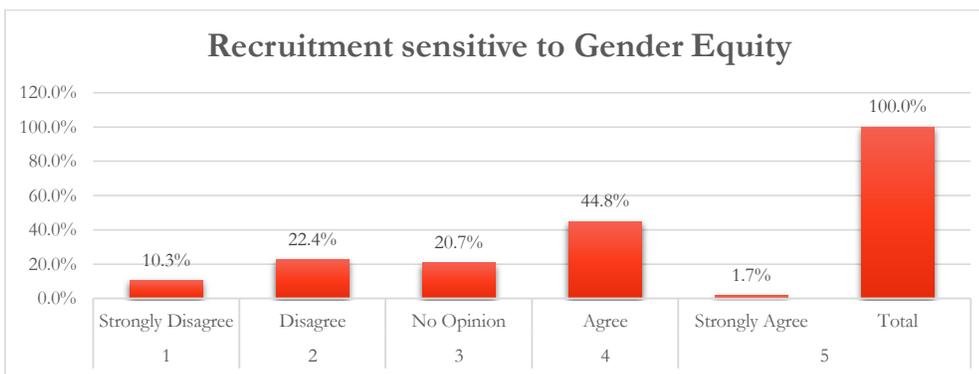
On a level of dis/agreement from 1 to 5, participants had to indicate their opinion on the whether the recruitment processes in the department are sensitive to gender equity. Majority of respondents totalling 55.5% agreed (44.8% who agreed and 1.7% who strongly agreed) with the statement, while

22.4 % disagreed with the statement and 20.7% of the participants expressed they did not have an opinion on the matter.

Fig.2.1 Women represented at Management level
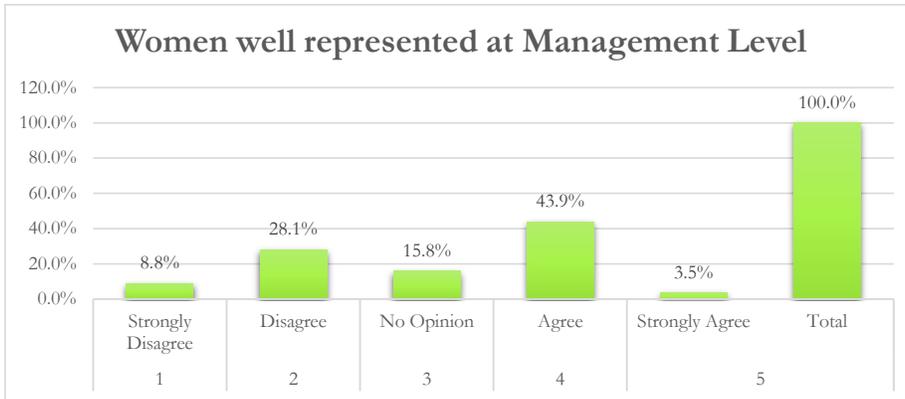
On a level of dis/agreement from 1 to 5, participants had to indicate their opinion on the whether women are well represented at management levels. Whilst 47.4% were in agreement with the statement (43.9% agreed and 3.5% strongly agreed), 36.9% of the participants disagreed. 15.8% of the survey participants expressed no opinion.

**Fig.2.2 Women Adequately exposed to Management/leadership training**
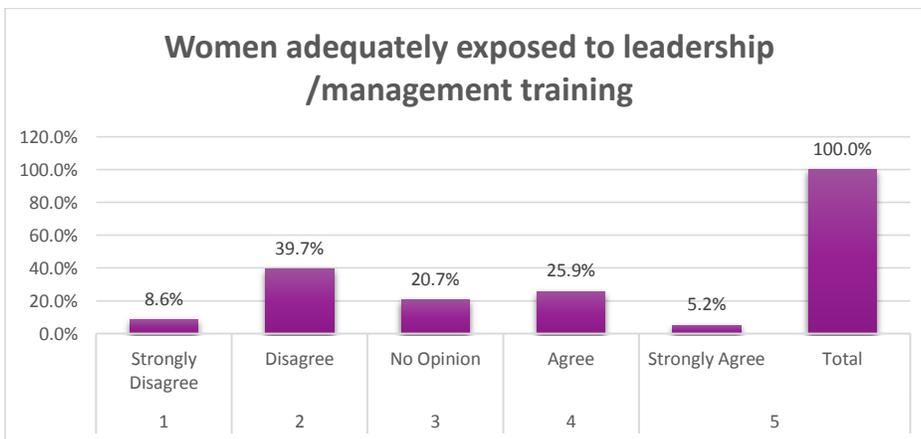
Respondents were also asked to indicate their opinion on whether women in the department are adequately exposed to management and leadership training. Despite the fact that majority of respondents indicated that women are well represented at management level, the general sentiments

expressed that the women in the department are not empowered. This is seen in how majority of responses were in disagreement with the assertion on women exposure to leadership and management training. Forty eight percent (48.3%) of the respondents believe that women in the department are not adequately exposed to management and leadership training, whilst 31.1% agreed with the statement. In addition 20.7% of the respondents had no opinion to express.
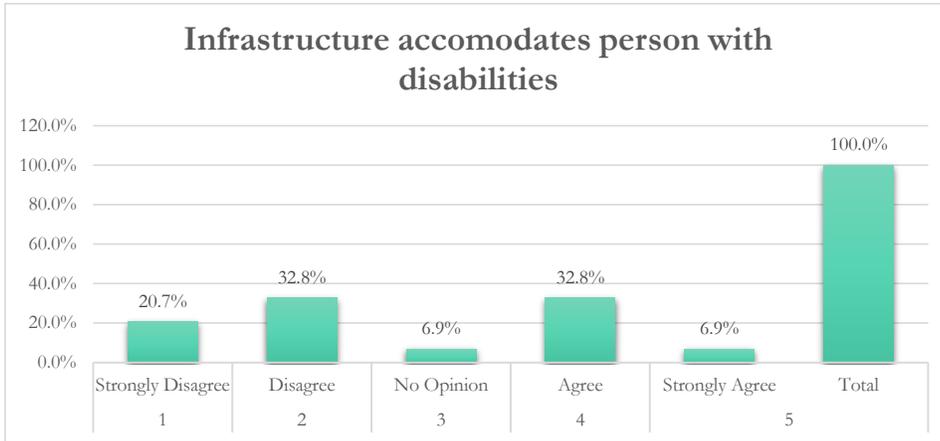
Disability

Fig.2.3 Recruitment sensitive to persons with disability
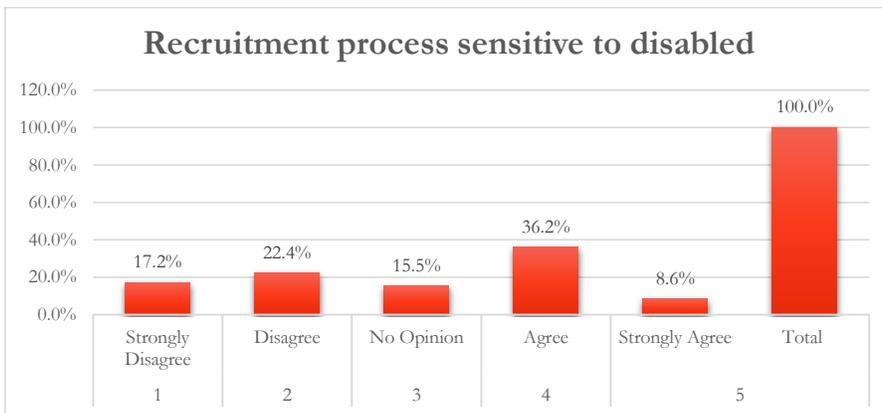
Posed with the statement on the sensitivity of recruitment processes to the disabled, majority of respondents (44.8%) agreed with, 39.7% disagreed with, and 15.5% expressed no opinion to the statement.

Fig.2.4 Infrastructure accommodates persons with disability

Infrastructure accomodates person with disabilities

Respondents were further asked to express opinions on whether infrastructure in the buildings occupied by the department accommodates employees with disability. Majority of responses were on the disagreement scale. Over half of the participants (53.4%) disagree with the statement that the infrastructure in the office buildings occupied by DEDaT is disability friendly, whilst 32.8% agreed, and 6.9% expressed no opinion. An important point to consider along the responses expressed with the statement is the reality that most of the participants expressed they had no disability with less than 2% indicating disability.
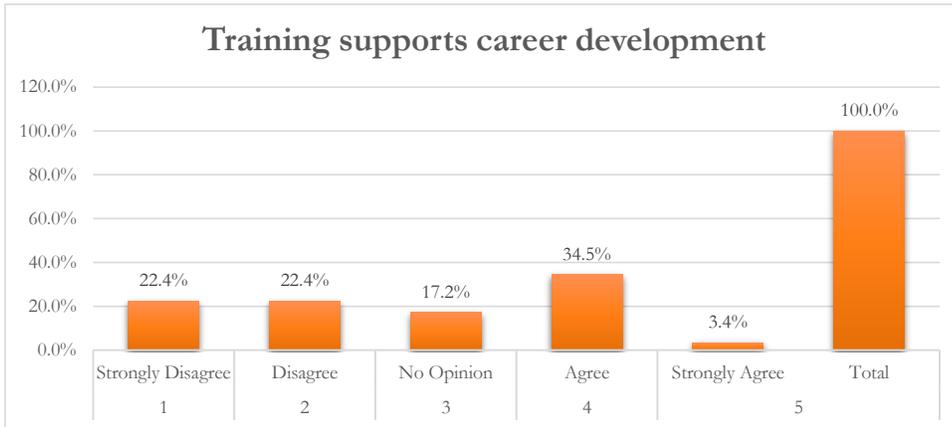
Training and Development

Fig.3 Training supports workplace performance

Training supports workplace development
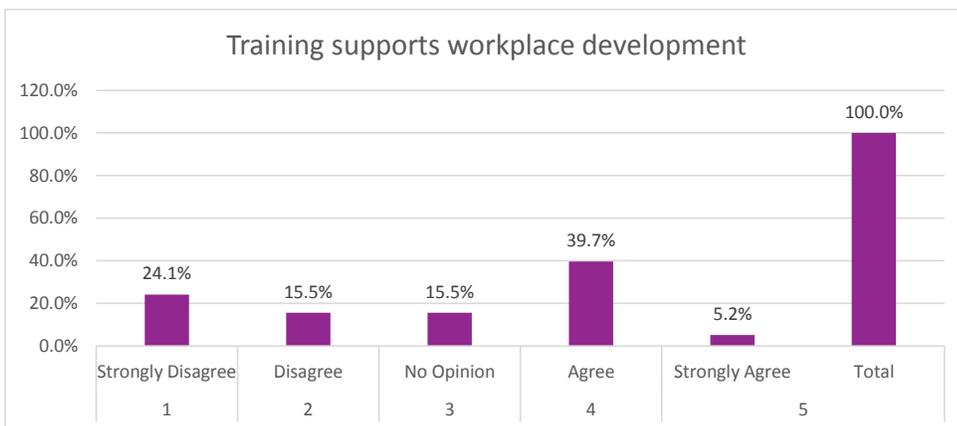
Posed with the statement that training supports workplace development within the department, majority of respondents (44.8%) agreed, 39.7% disagreed, and 15.5% had no opinion.

Fig.3.1 Training supports Career Development

Training supports career development

Respondents were further asked to express opinions on whether training supports career development. Despite the fact that majority of respondents agreed that training supports workplace development, respondents however expressed that training does not support career development. Majority of respondents (44.8%) disagreed with the statement, 37.9% agreed with statement, and 17.2% expressed no opinion.

Bursary Policy

Fig.4 Employees familiar with Bursary Policy

Employees familiar with bursary policy
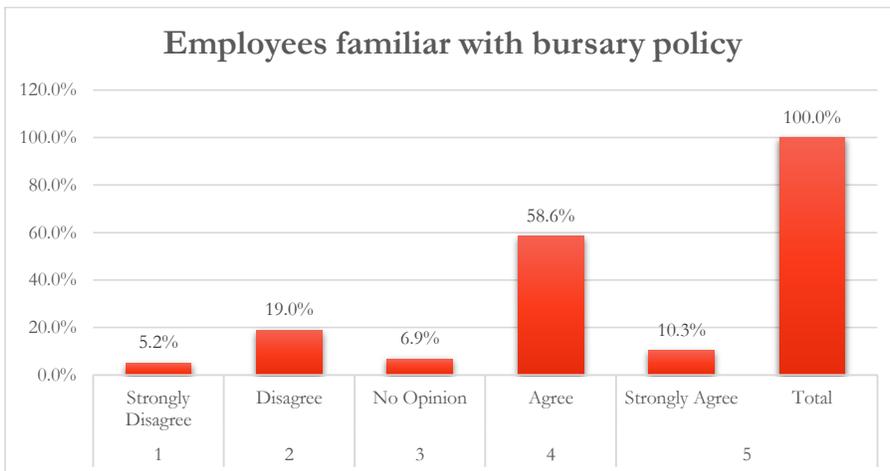
Employees generally expressed agreements with the statement that they are familiar with the bursary policy. Almost 70% of the respondents stated they are familiar with the bursary policy, whilst 24.2%

indicated they were not familiar with the bursary policy. Again, 6.9% expressed on opinion on the subject matter.

Fig.4.1 Bursary Policy caters to employee needs

Bursary Policy caters to employee needs
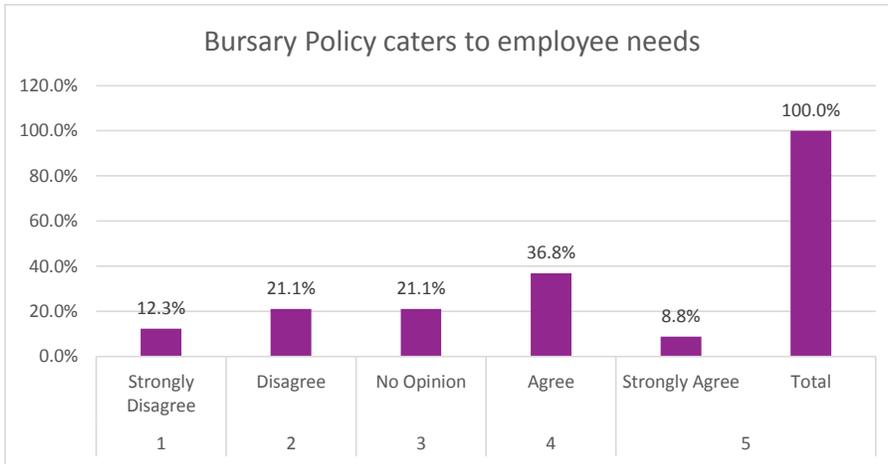
Respondents generally expressed an agreement to the statement that the bursary policy caters to employee needs. The majority of respondents (36.8%) agreed that the bursary policy supports employee needs, with a considerable number of respondents (33.3%) also in disagreement. And 21% of the respondents expressing no opinion.

Performance Management Development System (PMDS)

Fig.5 PMDS facilitates individual development

PMDS facilitates development of performance
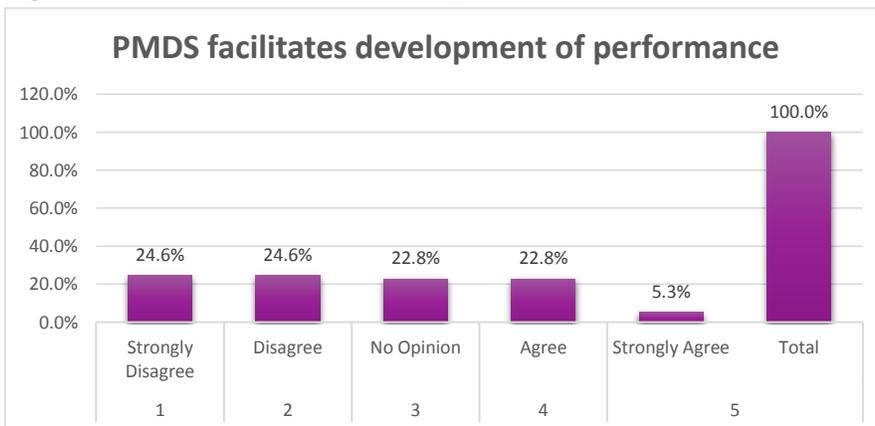
Respondents were asked to give their opinion on the Performance Management and Development system and its role in developing performance. Close to fifty percent of the respondents (49.1%) disagreed with the e statement, 25.1% agreed with the statement and (22.8%) expressed no opinion on the matter.

Fig.5.1 Opportunities for promotion are available
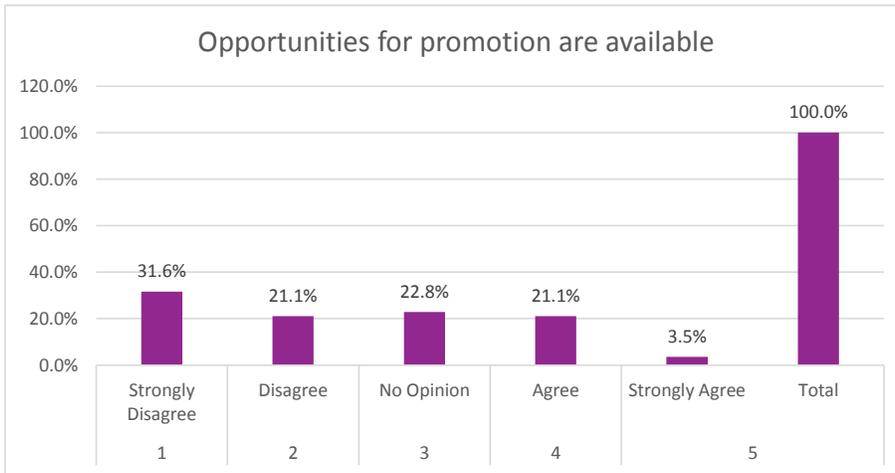
Respondents had to express an opinion on the availability of promotion opportunities in the department, a significant number of respondents (52.6%) expressed disagreement with the statement, and 24.6% agreed that there are promotion opportunities whilst 22.8% expressed no opinion on the subject matter.

5. Conclusion

There were eleven statements contained in the questionnaire that respondents had to either agree, disagree or express on opinion to[5]. Two things worth noting, the number of years participants have been employed in the department is well spread between short, medium and long term periods, essentially crucial in gauging perceptions. The same however cannot be said about the salary levels of the respondents as there was poor participation at the SMS level. Secondly, the method of sampling used has no rules regarding sampling size and therefore the findings despite the response rate remain useful and reliable.

Overall, respondents agreed in majority to six, whilst they also disagreed in majority to five of the statements posed. Majority of respondents agreed that the departmental recruitment processes are sensitive to both gender equity and the disabled persons; there is a well representation of women in management levels; training opportunities support workplace development; there is familiarity with the bursary policy which caters to employee needs.

Majority of disagreements were expressed towards exposure of women to leadership/ management training; disability friendliness of infrastructure in the office buildings occupied by the department; training in support of career development; PMDS facilitating performance development as well as availability of promotion opportunities.

6. Recommendations

The Employee Perceptions Survey was administered in compliance of MPAT and Diversity Management requirements. Whilst it may be concerning that there was generally poor participation in the survey, particularly so at the SMS level, the administration of the survey provided invaluable lessons to the Research and Development team. It is such lessons learnt that in inform the recommendations as follows:

i. There is a need to alter the method of administration of this survey. Given that this survey is expected to be a standing/frequent output, it is recommended that HRD consider physically administering the questionnaires at a Programme Level. Administration at Programme Level will limit the challenges presented by the different office buildings currently housing the DEDaT employees. The proposal for an interactive administration approach will not only assist with improving participation levels in the survey but will possibly enhance the quality of the responses. There are numerous disadvantages of using an electronic method to administer the questionnaire, such as some buildings being offline, employees simply ignoring the correspondences (not treating is as a priority), those officials

---

[5] Excluding those general questions on office building, programme, salary level, gender, disability, years of employment etc.

who are not listed or connected to the departmental official mailing list possibly being excluded in the survey and so forth. It is believed that physical administration will afford employees a level of engagement and or clarity with some of the questions. Also, physical administration of the questionnaires will ensure that the survey is treated with the necessary importance by both Programme 1 and the employees within the department. The current level of participation or disinterest in the survey is a concern.

ii.   Consideration must also be given to the modification of the questionnaire to exclude the option of no opinion. Majority of the questions posed to respondents were expressed no opinion to, possibly because the questionnaire allows for such. The option of no opinion is almost the same as one indicating that they are Neutral, which may be possibly ineffective. Hence the recommendation that the option be excluded as it serves no purpose in the current state.

Bibliography

Castro, M. L., & Martins, N. (2015, August 13). The Relationship between Organisational Climate and employee satisfaction in a South African information and technology organization. *South African Journal of Industrial Psychology, 36*, 1-9. Retrieved August 13, 2015, from http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?pid=S2071-07632010000100006&script=sci_arttext

Cilliers, F., & Kossuth, S. (2002). The relationship between Organisational Climate and salutogenic functioning. *South African Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 8-13.

Department of Labour, Republic of South Africa. (2002). *Code of Good Practice: Key aspects on the Employment of People with Disabilities.* Pretoria: Republic of South Africa.

Department of Public Service and Administration, Republic of South Africa. (2006). *A Strategic Framework for Gender Equality within the Public Service 2006-2015, Consultation document.* Pretoria: Department of Public Service and Administration, Republic of South Africa.

Department of Public Service and Administration, Republic of South Africa. (2010). *Guide for employment equity compliance in the public service.* Pretoria: Republic of South Africa.

Department: Public Service and Administration, Republic of South Africa. (3 December 1997). *Human Resource Management in the Public Service.* Pretoria: Republic of South Africa.

Martins , N., & von der Ohe, H. (2003). Organisational Climate measurement- New and Emerging dimensions during a period of transformation. *South African Journal of Labour Relations*, 41-59.

Nair, R. (2006). Climate studies and associated best practices to improve climate issues in the workplace. *2006 WEPAN Conference* (p. 8). Pennsylvania: WEPAN-Women in Engineering Programs and Advocates Network. Retrieved August 18, 2015, from https://journals.psu.edu/wepan/article/viewFile/58471/58159

Northern Cape Provincial Administration. (2011, May 20). *Performance Management and Development System.* Retrieved from Department of Economic Development and Tourism, Northern Cape Province , Republic of South Africa: http://econ.ncape.gov.za/index

Sempane, M., Rieger, H., & Roodt, G. (2002). Job Satisfaction in relation to organisational culture. *South African Journal of Industrial Psychology* , 23-30.