

Some Initial Thoughts on the Implementation and Management of the Public Employment Service Within Gauteng Department of Labour

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Abstract: Without a doubt, the implementation, management, and accountability of the recruitment and placement intervention – an intervention that applies to all public and private sectors of the economy – has improved with the introduction of monitoring and evaluation. However, discrepancies still linger in the Gauteng Provincial Department of Labour's recruitment and placement efforts. Unfortunately, other than persistent high unemployment in the province, there is limited evidence to show the ineffectiveness of the intervention in Gauteng. This paper provides some initial thoughts towards conceptualising research that consequently should interrogate the implementation and management of the recruitment and placement intervention in Gauteng Department of Labour. Generally, the paper employs a summative thematic content analysis of literature around this issue focussing focuses on (i) the research physical context or setting, (ii) the research problem, and (iii) past and current studies that have attempted to evaluate this intervention or any other similar interventions. Further, to interrogate the research problem, this paper makes use of the problem tree, trend analysis, and the theory of constraint to provide a structure that allows us to appreciate the extent of the problem. In all, this interrogation provides for effectively stating the research problem that an evaluation on the implementation and management of recruitment and placement intervention in Gauteng Department of Labour should be pursuing as well as the accompanying research purpose and the research questions. We then use this detail to propose the appropriate research strategy, design, procedure and methods as well as an interpretive framework that we can use to interpret our anticipated empirical research results.

Keywords: Implementation, Management, Research conceptualisation, Research context analysis, Research problem analysis, Recruitment and placement

1. Introduction

Unemployment should be addressed as it is a problem that amongst others results in inequalities and poverty even though the economic growth rate has not been favourable (Sithole, 2011; Thulo, 2014; Department of Labour, 2015; Public Service Commission, 2015). The fight against it should be expedited. As a result, the interventions in addressing it should be conceptualised from empirical evidence so that their effectiveness and efficiency can be realised. Once conceived and articulated there will be adequate management and accountability of the intervention and subsequently the implementation. However, the five-year performance report by the Gauteng Department of Labour indicated the following, 660 767 work-seekers registered, 77 295 work, and learning opportunities registered but approximately only 16 501 work-seekers (21 per cent rate) were placed into work or learning opportunities (Gauteng Department of Labour, 2019). Clearly, there is limited evidence to indicate

the effectiveness and efficiency of the intervention also with Statistics South African (2017:117) reporting a rapid increase of the unemployment rate from "24.9 per cent in 2014 to 29.6 per cent in 2017". Therefore, there is a discrepancy between the high number of registered work as well as opportunity and the low number of placements in those jobs and learning opportunities can be closely attributed to the implementation process and management of the intervention.

Whilst with the introduction of monitoring and evaluation; the implementation, management, and accountability of the recruitment and placement intervention has improved (National Treasury, 2007; Public Service Commission, 2012) there is still room for further improvement to make this intervention effective and efficient. In general, this research intends to interrogate the implementation and management of the recruitment and placement intervention in Gauteng Department of Labour. Before then, this paper focuses on adequately

conceptualising such research and employs a summative thematic content analysis of literature on this issue. This approach, proposed in Wotela (2019), provides for interrogating literature on (i) the research physical context, (ii) research problem in the research context, and (iii) studies that have attempted a similar studies and evaluations. The interrogation of the research problem also makes use of the problem tree, trend analysis, and the theory of constraint. Such an approach helps us appreciate the research problem and to adequately establish the knowledge gap on this research (Wotela, 2019).

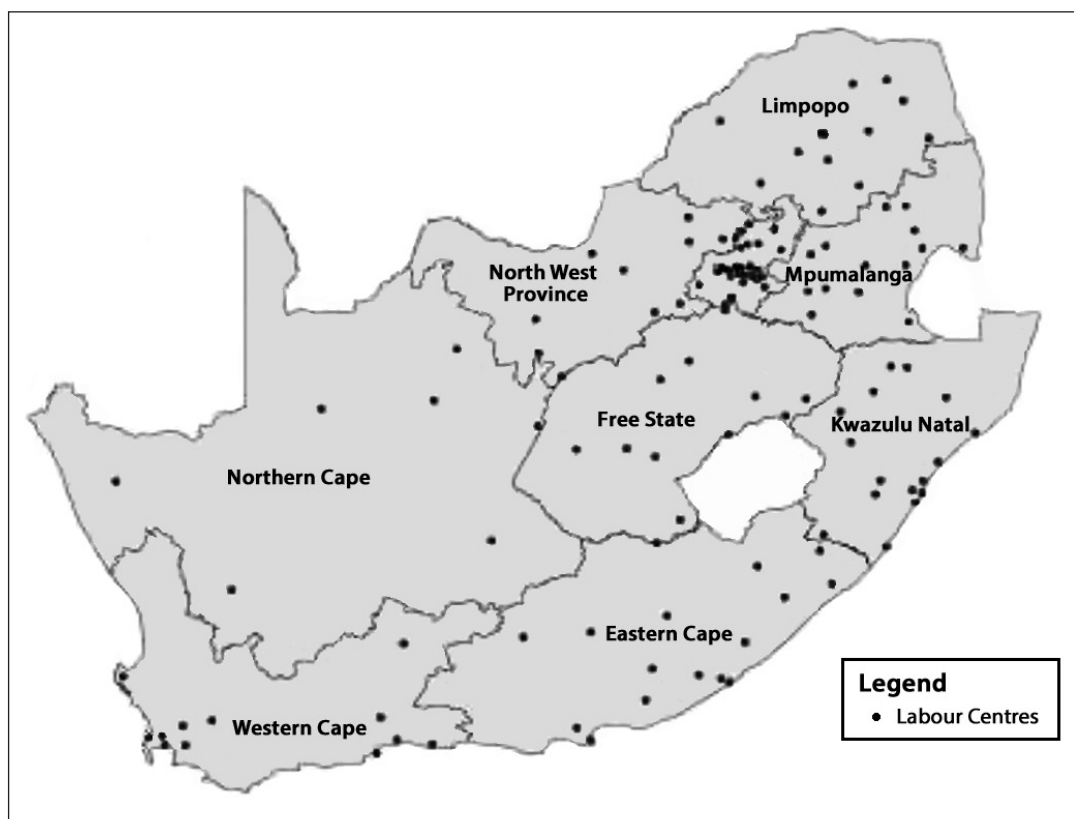
First (Section 2), the paper sets out the physical context of this research, that is, the Gauteng Department of Labour. Second (Section 3), interrogates research problem by detailing the symptoms, root causes, and consequences of the recruitment and placement intervention. Third (Section 4), the paper reviews empirical or primary studies that have attempted to research about this subject. Consequently, with the knowledge garnered in Sections 2 through 4, in Section 5 we conceptualise this research by proposing: (i) the research problem

statement, (ii) research purpose statement, and (iii) research questions as well as accompanying research hypothesis. We then proceed to propose (iv) the research strategy, design, procedure, and methods for such a research and lastly (v) a framework that we think would be appropriate to interpret our anticipated empirical research results.

2. The Gauteng Department of Labour; History and Description

Figure 1 shows the geographical demarcation of South Africa after apartheid governance (Arends, Chabane & Paterson, 2015) and the accompanying Labour Centres in all the nine provinces. The constitution provides for governing the Democratic Republic of South Africa through the Parliament, the Executive, and the Judiciary as well as the three spheres, that is, national, provincial and local government (Juta Law, 2011). The Department of Labour is within the national sphere headed by a member of the national executive (Minister) and its administration is headed by Director-General (Juta Law, 2011; Department of Labour, 2017).

Figure 1: The Republic of South African Map Showing the Department of Labour's Offices and Their Distributed (Labour Centres)



Source: Arends et al. (2015:8)

Furthermore, Figure 2 below illustrates the three metropolitan municipalities, that is, Ekurhuleni, Johannesburg, and Tshwane as well as the other local municipalities within the West Rand and Sedibeng municipalities (Landau & Gindrey, 2008; Mubiwa & Annegarn, 2013). Our focus province, Gauteng province, occupies approximately 1.4 per cent of the total South African land area. It is resident to approximately 13.5 million people (23.7 per cent of the South African population) and is serviced by 26 Labour centres (Stats South Africa, 2011; Department of Labour, 2015). Therefore, whilst Gauteng is the smallest it is the most populous province and the economic as well as the employment hub of South Africa (Stats South Africa, 2011; Stats South Africa, 2016).

Figure 3 also illustrates the chain of accountability within the Department. The Gauteng Department of Labour is headed by Chief Director: Provincial Operations (CD: PO) who accounts for all the departmental constitutional mandates in the province including the Public Employment Service (PES) intervention (Department of Labour, 2015). Before

1994, the provision of protected employment was governed by race (Clarke, 2004; Department of Labour, 2018). The apartheid labour market was characterised by inequality and discrimination (Clarke, 2004). However, after the 1994 elections, the government through the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa that is Chapter 2, which is the Bill of Rights Sections 9, 10, 23, 24 and 27 mandates the Department of Labour to regulate the labour market (Department of Labour, 2015). The change was necessitated by the fact that the newly elected government was addressing the unfairness previously suffered by the majority of the people of South Africa (Clarke, 2004; Department of Labour, 2015). This necessitated the Department of Labour to develop effective mechanisms aimed at ensuring the realisation of reduction of the unemployment rate, inequalities and poverty (Department of Labour, 2018; Vettori, 2018).

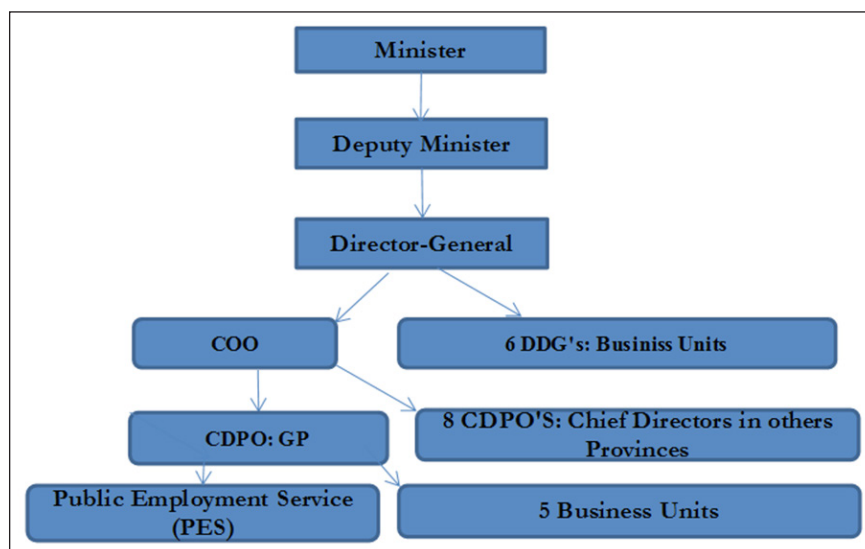
The mandate can only be realised through the development of policies and programmes in consultation with social patterns (Department of Labour, 2018). The legal framework was transformed to protect

Figure 2: Gauteng Administrative Map Showing the 12 Local Municipalities



Source: https://www.123rf.com/photo_23992319_gauteng-administrative-map.html

Figure 3: The Organogram of the Department of Labour with Core Units, Accountability Chain, and the Extension to Gauteng Province



Source: Department of Labour (2017)

vulnerable workers, to address the exploitation, the high rate of unemployment and the extreme imbalances (Department of Labour, 2015; Vettori, 2018). This required the department to conform to acceptable international standards such as decent and acceptable work for all including the achievement of the National Development Plan (NDP), 2030 (Department of Labour, 2015).

The capacity of Gauteng Department of Labour is 1580 employees who execute the departmental mandate and implement innovations through 26 Labour Centres falling within the geographical jurisdiction as displayed from Figure 1 and 2 (Department of Labour, 2015). This includes seven visiting points and one satellite office aimed at ensuring that the departmental services reach every individual or group of people within the province no matter how far they are from the main Labour Centres (Department of Labour, 2015). From 1580 employees in the province, approximately 110 employees are performing duties relating to Public Employment Service (PES) more especial registering of work-seekers, registering of work and learning opportunities and counselling just to name the few (Gauteng Public Employment Service Work plan, 2019).

Due to the rapid increase in the unemployment rate in both Gauteng and South Africa, the department was already assisting the unemployed to find employment and employers with vacancies to find suitable candidates to occupy the vacancies

(Arends et al., 2015; Stats SA, 2016). However, this was prior to the enactment of the Employment Act of 2014, which was promulgated to facilitate the recruitment and placement intervention (Arends et al., 2015). The core function of the Act is to allow the department to operate the Public Employment Services and to be able to regulate the private agencies (Department of Labour, 2015). Labour Centres provide these services free to the citizens as the department is funded through taxpayers' money.

The success of the recruitment and placement intervention depends on the local economy as the Gauteng Department of Labour through the provincial office monitors and evaluates the progress by each Labour Centre in achieving the goal (Arends et al., 2015). The Gauteng Department Labour through their Labour Centres establishes relations with the local businesses to assist with recruitment and placement.

The monitoring that is happening is through the Annual performance plan and it fails to indicate the cause-effect relationship of the inputs, activities performed, outputs and outcomes for interventions. The poor or lack of monitoring and evaluation in this regards, affects implementation and management of the intervention. The President amended the name of the department to the Department of Employment and Labour and the change is to emphasize the employment creation mandate of the department (Presidency, 2019).

3. Challenges in Recruitment and Placement, Symptoms, Root Causes, and Consequences

To appreciate the problem of inadequate in the recruitment and placement intervention in Gauteng Department of Labour, we begin by detailing the root causes and consequences (Section 3.1). Thereafter describe the results-chain, that is, the anticipated impact, outcomes, outputs, activities, and inputs as well as the accompanying results-framework, that is, the indicators, baseline values, target values, assumptions, and risks of the recruitment and placement intervention (Section 3.2). These components are vital for the implementation and management of the intervention as well as for conceptualisation of the research problem.

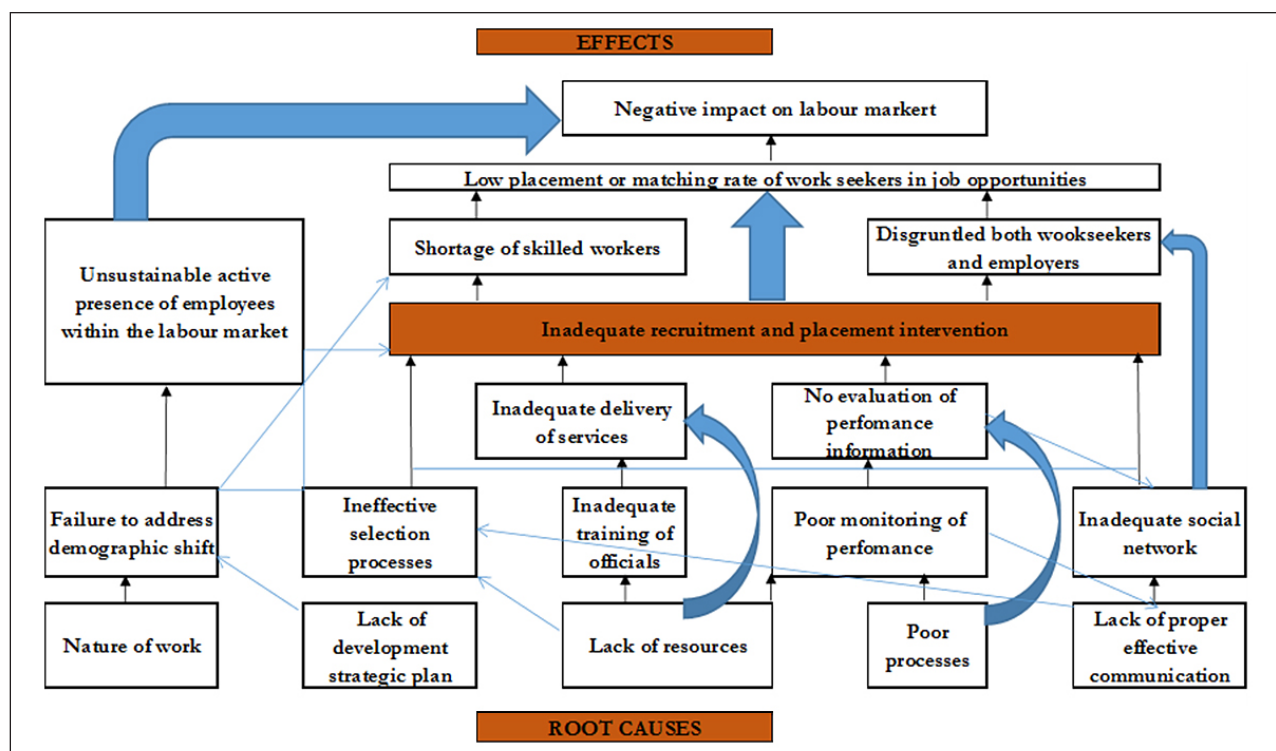
3.1 Recruitment and Placement Intervention: Root Causes and Consequences

Using both academic and non-academic literature we configure problem tree of inadequate recruitment and placement intervention in Gauteng Department of Labour. Figure 4 is the problem tree for the problem that the intervention should rectify. The lack of a strategic management plan is

the first root cause that contributes towards inadequate recruitment and placement. The failure to address the demographic shifts results in shortages of skilled workers at the same time results to the unsustainable active presence of employees within the labour market as shown in Figure 4 (Doverspike et al., 2000; Äijälä, 2001). This all results to the discrepancy relating to registered job/learning opportunities and failure by the department to make sure work-seekers are placed to those opportunities.

The change in the nature of work is the second root cause that fails to address demographic shift. The labour market feels the pinch because of inadequate recruitment and placement based on challenges of nature of work and failure to address the demographic shift. On the other hand, this requires urgent and timeous upgrading by work-seekers of their skills and methodology of job-hunting just to name a few (Trade and Industrial Policy Strategies, 2008). Doverspike et al. (2000) indicates that the sectors need to start negotiating for special arrangements to accommodate the nature of work like contractual workers and improve labour market discrimination in order for the nature of work not to affect the recruitment and placement.

Figure 4: The Problem Tree Analysis on Inadequate Recruitment and Placement



Source: Authors

The third root causes are lack of resources. Gauteng is faced with lack of resources because of the drastic increase in population, a high rate of unemployment, a high rate of corruption, the provisions of grants to those in need and failure of collecting proper revenue by organs of states. This leaves the organisation to implement cost-cutting measures that compromise service delivery. The lack of resources affects recruitment and placement due to offices not having enough self-services desk where communities can register on their own and find employment (Arends et al., 2015). There is a lack of funds to assist with training officers to be capacitated effectively and efficiently in their services, including their management capacity so that they can implement recruitment and placement policy soundly.

There is a need to create, develop processes, and procedures that enhance the effectiveness of proper recruitment and selection processes. A poor process is the fourth root causes that result in inadequate recruitment and placement intervention. This will require an implementation plan that can be monitored and evaluated to track and assess if indeed the processes are implemented effectively for one to be able to address any challenges timeously for the ultimate goal to be realised. These procedures should be transparent and consistently implemented throughout the public and private sector (Doverspike et al., 2000; Äijälä, 2001; Thebe et al., 2014).

Furthermore, the lack of adequate "tools to track referred work-seekers, the time it takes employers to provide feedback of the referral just to name the few are all indications of the poor processes that contribute to inadequate recruitment and placement" (Department of Labour, 2017:20). It results in an inadequate social network and ineffective communication methods. This is attributed to the limited sharing of information on vacancies to all work-seekers, feedback mechanisms and it all about the ineffective communication (Department of Labour, 2017; Doverspike et al., 2000).

Figure 4 shows that both the inadequate social network and ineffective selection processes occurs as results of lack of proper effective communication, both contribute to discrepancy and as a result work-seekers and employers become disgruntled. The transparent communication can address all the issues such as fairness, openness and disgruntle just

to name the few for the perception of the recruitment and placement processes can be outgrown, the communication should include the process to the selection of the best candidate based on merit and achievement (Äijälä, 2001).

The department is not informed timeously whether work-seekers they have referred to employers were successful or not, as a result it becomes a challenge to communicate effectively and be able to know what the cause of could be not being successfully placed (Arends et al., 2015). In most cases, the system will indicate that a work-seeker is placed only to find out that the work-seeker has no idea of such information, which disadvantages the work-seeker from any other job opportunities due to status not being updated properly or effectively (Govindjee et al., 2011; Arends et al., 2015). The presented root causes are an indication that if they are not properly looked at and addressed the problem of inadequate recruitment and placement will continue and the fight against unemployment rate will not succeed.

The consequence of inadequate recruitment and placement has a negative impact on the labour market and as a result, the Gauteng province appears to be failing to address the issue of unemployment. The monitoring and evaluation intervention is critical in assisting the attainment of decreasing the unemployment rate. This will assist in tracking whether all the processes are indeed implemented properly and Statistics South Africa provides a framework that can assist with inaccurate information since data is the key for future planning and decision-making processes. Gauteng needs to address these issues so that "employers and work-seekers as they are operating with imperfect information and in need assistance in determining a good match" can no longer play a part (Arends et al., 2015:1).

The unsustainable active presence of employees within the labour market is also an attributing factor to inadequate recruitment and placement as others are retiring with knowledge and experience, because of competition (Doverspike et al., 2000; Äijälä, 2001). While others based on salary are shifting with knowledge and experience from one job to another (Doverspike et al., 2000; Äijälä, 2001). This requires management of the database to be timeously updated without fail at all time. The updating of status of work-seekers information is also essential as it may affect the recruitment and

placement by defaults (Arends et al., 2015). If the above is not addressed, the province will continue to face the growing concerns about the shortage of skilled employees within the market (Doverspike et al., 2000; Äijälä, 2001; Thebe et al., 2014).

This is a contributing factor to increasing the high unemployment rate because work-seekers lack the required skills. Another great challenge is transferring of critical skills within industries (Doverspike et al., 2000). The nature of work is shifting while there is low training if any that is being provided to work-seekers and employees about actual work and even those employees who partake in the recruitment and selection processes (Arends et al., 2015; Department of Labour, 2018). To enhance personnel decision-making, human resource practitioners in the public sector must hire applicants on a meritorious basis (Thebe et al., 2014). In doing so, organizations should strive to maximize the perceived fairness, as well as the validity, of selection systems (Doverspike et al., 2000; Department of Labour, 2018). The department must find ways to address the issue of disgruntled of both work-seekers and employers, which is acceptable in their circumstance of being promised but those promises not achieved.

The failure by the department results in the inadequate recruitment and placement of work-seekers to job opportunities, it consequently led to the consistent stubborn unemployment rate that is not moved.

3.2 Recruitment and Placement Intervention: Assimilated Results-Chain and Results-Framework

This section describes the results-chain, which is impact, outcomes, outputs, activities, and inputs and the results-framework, which is the indicators, baseline values, target values, assumptions, and risks of the recruitment and placement intervention. The Public Employment Service main purpose is to promote employment, to improve access to the labour market for work-seekers, and to provide work experience opportunities to new labour market entrants.

The unemployment rate is one of the three critical societal issues that are highly critical for the country as there are given priority according to the National Development Plan 2030. The Department of Labour

(2015:19) in their strategic plan describe the "goal statement as to contribute to decent employment creation", but it also noted as an outcome in the Gauteng Public Employment Service work plan of 2019/20 financial year. However, the department does not create job but facilitate for employment. Therefore, it is submitted that the impact of the intervention is contribute to the reduction of unemployment rate for society to be employed and that will help in elevating poverty and reducing inequality (National Development Plan 2030, 2010; Department of Labour, 2015).

Ideally, the recruitment and placement intervention should have two outcomes, that is increasing employability of work-seekers and increasing placement of work-seekers into work opportunities. First, the outputs and activities that would increase work-seekers employability includes canvassing for learning and skills training opportunities and referring matched work-seekers as many as possible to those leaning and skills training opportunities. Lastly, the outputs and activities that would place work-seekers to work include canvass for work opportunities, registering those opportunities and work-seekers, conducting interview preparation and screening and referring matched work-seekers to those work opportunities.

Table 1 on the next page provides assimilated results chain and results framework for the recruitment and placement intervention.

As presented in Table 1, the impact and each outcome, output, activity and input is accompanied by indicators, based line and target values but including the assumptions and risks. The assumptions for the impact, outcomes and outputs would be (i) economic conditions will be improved, (ii) coordination amongst employers with work opportunities and those with leaning and skills training opportunities, (iii) work-seekers fully trusting the intervention, and (iv) availability of resources.

Both the results-framework and results-chain are not in place in the Gauteng Department of Labour. According to Wotela (2016:12), "the results-chain and accompanying results-framework are fundamental to an effective monitoring and evaluation of any intervention". There is no monitoring of the causality to achieve the outcome and impact and to trace if indeed the intervention is going accordingly and at the same time, no evaluation has occurred of

Table 1: The Results-Framework for Recruitment and Placement Intervention

Log Frame	Performance Indicators		
Results Chain	Indicator	Baseline Values	Target Values
Impact: (contribute in the reduction of unemployment rate)	Reduce the rate of unemployment to about 6% by 2030	25% unemployment rate in 2010	Unemployment rate of 6% by 2030
Outcome 1: (Placement of work seekers in decent employment/ Contributing to decent employment creation)	1. Contributing to additional 11 million jobs by 2030 2. Contribute to the increase of labour force participation rate to 65% by 2030	1. 1 503 work seekers placed in work opportunities in 2016/17 financial year 2. 54% Labour force participation rate in 2010	1. 2 500 work seekers placed in work opportunities by 2019/20 financial year 2. 65% labour force participation rate by 2030
Outcome 2: (Increase employability of work seekers)	Increase employability of work seekers by 2030	New indicator (1. 1 023 work seekers were placed in learning opportunities in 2016/17 financial year) (2. 34 340 work seekers provided with employment counselling)	1. Of the work seekers placed in learning opportunities at least 40% must find employment by next financial year 2. Of the work seekers provided with employment counselling at least 40% must find employment by next financial year
Outputs to outcome 1: (Registered work seekers, Registered work opportunity, Refer matched work seekers to potential employers)	1. Number of work seekers registered on the ESSA system per year 2. Number of work opportunities registered on the ESSA system per year 3. Number of work seekers referred to potential employers per year	1. 88 068 registered work seekers in 2014/15 financial year 2. 9 236 work opportunities registered in 2016/17 financial year 3. New indicator	1. 182 000 work seekers registered on ESSA system by 2019/20 financial year 2. 10 500 work opportunities registered by 2019/20 3. At least 50% of matched work seekers referred to potential employers by 2019/20
Outputs to outcome 2: (Registered work seekers, Registered learning opportunity, Refer matched work seekers to potential learning)	1. Number of work seekers provided with employment counselling per year 2. Number of registered learning opportunities on the ESSA system per year 3. Number of work seekers referred to potential learning opportunities per year	1. 41 682 work seekers provided with employment counselling in 2014/15 financial year 2. 5 947 learning and skills training opportunities registered by 2016/17 financial year 3. New indicator	1. 43 330 workers seekers to be provided with employment counselling by 2019/20 2. 7 500 learning opportunities registered by 2019/20 financial year 3. At least 50% of matched work seekers referred to potential learning opportunities by 2019/20

Source: Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (2013)

the intervention. The management should consider the implementation of the result-chain with accompanying results-framework to track the inputs, activities and outputs and be able to assess also the outputs, outcome and impacts.

This will act as a feedback mechanism to the management to understand the progress and be able to intervene where it can. This will assist the management to be accountable and transparent about

the intervention and its progress towards making a difference to the society and that is monitoring (Norad, 1999; Kusek & Rist, 2004). After some time or certain period of the intervention management should evaluate to check the effectiveness and efficiency of the intervention to conclude as to what has worked and what didn't work and why (DPME, 2007). After appreciating the research problem, we then move to interrogating past and present similar studies in the next session.

4. Methods, Data, Findings, and Conclusions of Studies on and Evaluations of Recruitment and Placement

In this section, we review the empirical or primary studies from the past and current most especially in Gauteng Department of Labour and other research settings that have attempted the implementation and management of the recruitment and placement intervention. We interrogate the research approaches, design, procedures, methods used, without leaving out the findings arrived at, and conclusions drawn by these studies. This interrogation provides for selecting the options worth pursuing to contribute to the body of knowledge on this subject.

Stefanie, Markus and Michael (2007) undertook a mixed research approach based on a survey design to determining if there is higher employment or re-employment chances for work-seekers if there is a consistent interaction between employers and caseworkers of the public employment offices. With the 84 per cent response rate from caseworkers, the indication was that networks with firms are essentially remarkable and should be maintained for the success of the innovation of recruitment and placement. However, due to unavailability of data, the study focused only on Switzerland. Nevertheless, there is a need for caseworkers while counselling work-seekers at the same time should dedicate reasonable time on employer's contacts.

The study by Larsen & Vesan (2012) included Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Slovenia and Switzerland in their semi-structured qualitative interview of non-probability selected employers. The study deviated from public employment service (PES) organisational problems, which was the main interrogated issue from literature by only focusing on the labour market. Employers are key role players in the labour market where PES works. Even though transcripts had to be translated to English from their respective national languages it was, common that PES is used as the last resort due to their past negative experience. The outcry by employers resonated around PES administrator procedure or workers referred. However, even though these services are free but are not satisfactory to the labour market.

Lastly from global is a study by Quinn (2014) who utilised a mixed-method approach to try finding

a solution to staff turnover for the manufacturing company. In answering, the research question with the view of exploring the recruitment and placement intervention a pragmatist philosophy was utilised. The researcher embarked on three collection data techniques that is the distribution of questionnaires, conducting interviews and lastly doing observation. Both employees and recruiters of the company have a common view that favouritism always prevails in the recruitment and placement process and procedures. One of the limitations of the study was that the "questionnaires were created by the researcher and the HR Manager of the manufacturing company, and were not based on previously validated scales" (Quinn, 2014:41). However, one of the issues in the recruitment and placement to name a few are the training for recruiters to do proper justice in processes and procedures.

Within the African context it is apparent that the discrepancy or inadequate recruitment and placement issue exists throughout, Adom (2009) conducted a study on National Fire Service in Ghana. Favouritism and lack of specific skills were amongst a few of the challenges in the recruitment and placement processes and procedures that emanate within internal and external of the National Fire Service. This study used the mixed method was able to make sure that the responses of the data are complete in content and there is internal consistency. The study utilised the "theoretical paradigm of descriptive survey" and employed a stratified probability sampling technique in the 502 fire personnel (Adom, 2009:36). The results could not be generalised to the Central Region of Ghana and resulted in a massive challenge of having personnel working in positions that they do not possess any skill and are misplaced.

Another empirical study from Ghana, by Birago (2014) using the same three collection methods utilised by Quinn (2014). In "assessing, the challenges associated with the implementation of the recruitment and selection policies and practices of the National Health Insurance Authority" (Birago, 2014:6). However, as the case study utilised the mixed approach research strategy with both probability and non-probability sampling techniques. Challenges for making the study national wide were due to financial constraints, time limitation and availability of data. The poor planning on the side human resource was one of the key researches finding for inadequate recruitment and placement intervention.

A study which is of more relevance in terms of the research context was conducted by Sithole (2011) in Gauteng East districts conducted a study about the appointment of teachers. One of the study's objectives is to explore the implementation of the recruitment and placement "processes and procedures as guided by legislation" (Sithole, 2011:21). A purposive non-probability sampling technique was utilized to select the four district schools that participated in the study. The qualitative strategy was based on the semi-structured interviews that included scrutiny of documents such as minute's reports just to name a few. In the process of gathering data and making sure the adherence to the completeness and quality the author had to record the interview, transcribe and look into written records and recording of the recruitment and placement minutes and asking participants to sign off. The limitation of the study was that most of the participants were principals and by default, it is expected that they have good knowledge of procedure and processes even though they ignored prescript of the legislation. This selection biasness was evident from the finding that all is in order although there are certain omission and flaws with the selections and processes.

Thulo (2014) focused on the implementation of recruitment and selection practices conducted a similar objective study in Free State Province. However, a mixed research strategy that included interviews and a semi-structured questionnaire based on purposive sampling technique were utilized. Again, the participants in the study included lower-level employees and even union representatives as they form part of the selection and recruitment processes. At least there were more participants selected who concluded that there is a lack of implementation of the recruitment and placement rules and regulations.

Thebe & Van der Walddt (2014) concluded that management intervention is the key in the recruitment and placement intervention. They utilised "an evolutionary perspective and analysis of the paradigmatic development" in interpreting the research results (Thebe & Van der Walddt, 2014:3). Their case study was based on the mixed research strategy with both semi-structured interview and questionnaire data collection tools. The purposive sampling technique resulted in 80 per cent representative of the target population for Pretoria and North West offices Department of Justice. Data analysis started

with the validation of the interview schedule and Spearman's Rank Correlation instrument was utilised for analysis.

In 2015, the Public Service Commission (PSC) conducted a study after receiving a high number of complaints or grievances about recruitment and placement intervention. The survey research design with mixed research approach was utilised, but data collection methods used were questionnaire and focus group. The target population were National and Provincial departments. The departments were not "aligned with the prescripts and this negatively impacts the employees' morale and the effectiveness of the departments" (Public Service Commission, 2015:vii). The generalisation of the research findings to the entire Public Service was impossible due to the survey methodology adopted for this study and had a major contribution to the challenges experienced. Seventeen per cent of questionnaires were incomplete and excluded from the analysis and the selection of participants was biased as it only catered those who have been complained about but that did not mean that other departments do not have similar problems.

The Public Employment Service (PES) introduced the Employment Service of South African (ESSA) system for effective and efficient service delivery. Arends et al., (2015) conducted a study, part of the issues in their study was to "know whether enterprises and work-seekers perceive ESSA as useful or not concerning their needs, and how they interact with ESSA" (Arends et al., 2015:9). The explanatory study applied a mixed-method approach with non-probability convenience sampling technique. Due to the credibility and availability of data, the targeted population had to be revised to suit the circumstances. The results were presented and the struggle with data capturing and updating of the system and the workload of Client Service Officials (CSO) were highlighted and not in compliance in most Labour Centres including Gauteng. The lack of monitoring and evaluation for the sake of quality assurance hinders the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery. However, in their findings, there was an indication that ESSA is failing to respond to the needs of their clients timeously. Even though the results and findings could not be generalised into the population was one of the limitations including the budget to conduct the study. The study could not prop further evidence per their plan due to the quality of data information that was availed.

Collectively these studies have indicated that inadequate recruitment and placement is a crisis that needs attention. Whether it is from the Public Employment Service (PES), government institutions or private sector the processes and procedures for recruitment, selection, and placement are not properly adhered to in accordance with the procedures and rules. The studies revealed that there is some form of compliance with policy; however, there are loopholes that exist due to favouritism, negative experience and administrative processes. The studies did not uncover in detail the underlying factors about the discrepancies regarding the recruitment and placement especially within the implementation of the intervention. This in itself presents a knowledge gap in this research subject.

However, even though the majority of the studies used the mixed research approach only one study checked the significance of networking with firms, which could resolve the problem, and they all failed in providing the reasons as to why the problem continues. These studies experience data and information challenges of which some of the other studies used the mixed approach to validate participant's response and available data to circumvent the situation of quality. In the interrogation of the studies, what was also common is that the use of interpretive framework or theories was not implicit and no study was focused on the discrepancy in relations to the implementation of the intervention in Department of Labour or specifically the Gauteng Department of Labour. None of the studies looked at the discrepancy in relations to the implementation of the intervention and within the context of the Gauteng Department of Labour. This is another knowledge gap in this research subject.

5. Research Conceptualisation

Introspecting on the literature we have interrogated on the research problem that is, discrepancy in the recruitment and placement intervention within its physical research context or setting Gauteng Department of Labour. We discovered the research knowledge gap that is none of the studies looked at the discrepancy from the implementation point of view including that no study was conducted in the Gauteng Department of Labour research context. This section provides for considerations on how one can conceptualise a research on implementation and management of the recruitment and placement intervention in the Gauteng Department of Labour.

Section 5.1 presents the proposed draft research problem statement while Section 5.2 presents the accompanying research purpose statement. Lastly, Section 5.3 presents the research questions as well as the accompanying research hypotheses to research on conceptualising a research in implementation and management of the public employment service within the Gauteng department of Labour.

5.1 Proposed Research Problem Statement

Based on the interrogation of the literature on discrepancy in the recruitment and placement intervention in Gauteng Department of Labour, we ascertain that the research problem should be as follows: The Gauteng Department of Labour through the Public Employment Service (PES) plays a vital role in ensuring that the supply and demand of the labour market are met. This is attained through the facilitation and referral of work-seekers to employers for work-seekers to be successfully placed in employment and learning opportunities (Arends et al., 2015; Department of Labour, 2018). This entails the dissemination of information between employers with vacancies, learning opportunities and potential work-seekers looking for those opportunities.

However, there is limited evidence to indicate the effectiveness of the intervention due to the persistent high unemployment rate, which reflects a difficult and stubborn labour market that is challenged in absorbing people to form part of the labour market. This is evident from Gauteng Department of Labour's report that looks into the previous five financial years, a total of 660 767 registered work-seekers, 77 295 registered work and learning opportunities but approximately only 16 501 work-seekers (21 per cent rate) were placed into work or learning opportunities (Department of Labour, 2019). Of the 16 501 work seekers placed into work or learning opportunities there is limited evidence as to the exact number of work-seekers that were placed into job opportunities to understand if indeed the department is making a difference in assisting with the decrease of the unemployment rate.

It is submitted that the discrepancy is due to the ineffective monitoring and evaluation (Sithole, 2011; Thulo, 2014; Public Service Commission, 2015), non-existence of stakeholder relationship (Stefanie et al., 2007), and lack of training of employees to effectively and efficiently implement procedures just to mention the few (Arends et al., 2015). However,

the increasing rate of disgruntled work-seekers and employers will continue to be a norm with low matching rate (Bent, 1999; Äijälä, 2001; Arends et al., 2015). From the interrogation of past similar studies, it is established that none of the studies looked at the discrepancy from the implementation point of view, particularly none focused on Gauteng Department of Labour. Moreover, none utilised the theoretical framework to interpret their research results.

It is further submitted that the discrepancy between the high number of both registered work-seekers and work opportunities versus the low number of placements in those jobs and learning opportunities can be closely attributed to the implementation and management of the intervention. As a result, this study conceptualises the evaluation of the operational mechanisms of the recruitment and placement intervention within the Gauteng Department of Labour by revealing the underlying reasons for the discrepancies. However, the study does not assume that the policies are adequate as it may be a significant reason for the unsuccessfulness of the recruitment and placement intervention in addition to potential problems of implementation and management.

5.2 Proposed Research Purpose Statement

To address the research problem, the research purpose of the study is to empirically establish the extent of the recruitment and placement intervention in Gauteng Department of Labour. In fulfilling the main aim of the research, first, this paper employs summative thematic context analysis of academic and non-academic literature to conceptualise a research that interrogates the discrepancy in the recruitment and placement intervention. The argument is that in conceptualising this research we have proven that there is a problem worth pursuing and that there is a knowledge gap in the literature on this problem. This resulted in giving us knowledge gap, theoretical or frameworks and approaches to consider employing in this research.

Second, we should undertake theoretical interrogation which will give us the academic home of the research including the attributes that will assist us to identify frameworks that we can use to interpret the empirical research results. Third, we will then undertake the empirical interrogation which is mainly about appreciating and justifying the research strategy, design, procedure and methods

employed including stating research strengths and weaknesses. Lastly, undertaking the empirical part of this research, which means the collecting, collating, processing and analysing of the research data. This will then allow us to present the empirical research results and findings using the frameworks by discussing the meaning and implication of our research findings.

5.3 Research Questions and Where Applicable Accompanying Research Hypotheses or Propositions

In addressing the research problem and responding to the research purpose the research will pursue the main question: which is whether the recruitment and placement intervention in Gauteng Department of Labour is being implemented as intended or conceived on paper? This research question will be answered by interrogating the following five questions and testing their respective hypothesis.

1. How do work seekers and employers describe their programme experiences?
 - H_0 : The work-seekers and employers are not satisfied with their intervention experiences.
 - H_1 : The work-seekers and employers are satisfied with their experiences of the recruitment and placement.
2. Is the recruitment and placement intervention effective in the Gauteng Department of Labour?
 - H_0 : There is no statistically significant evidence that the recruitment and placement intervention is effective in Gauteng Department of Labour.
 - H_1 : There is statistically significant evidence that the recruitment and placement intervention is effective in Gauteng Department of Labour.
3. To what extent is the programme dependent on work-seekers, employers, and employment service system for its success?
 - H_0 : There is no statistically significant evidence that the recruitment and placement intervention is dependent on work-seekers, employers and employment service system for its success.

- H_1 : There is statistically significant evidence that the recruitment and placement intervention is dependent on work-seekers, employers and employment service system for its success.
4. How suitable are employment service systems, work-seeker registration, an employer registration and matching candidates (materials or activities) for the intended participants within Gauteng Department of Labour?
- H_0 : The materials or activities are inadequate for recruitment and placement intervention within Gauteng Department of Labour.
 - H_1 : The materials or activities are adequate for recruitment and placement intervention within Gauteng Department of Labour.
5. Are the Public Employment Service procedures and processes complementing the needs of Employers?
- H_0 : The Public Employment Service procedure and processes do not complement the needs of Employers.
 - H_1 : The Public Employment Service procedure and processes are complementing the needs of Employers.

5.4 Proposed Research Strategy, Design, Procedure and Methods

The studies we review in Section 4 collectively indicate that inadequate recruitment and placement is a crisis that needs attention. This confirmed a need for this conceptualisation of this research and to be conducted for the importance of monitoring and evaluation of the intervention so that the ultimate goals can be reached. The majority of the studies used the mixed research approach with two studies using qualitative research approach only one study checked the significance of networking with firms, which could resolve the problem, and they all failed in providing the reasons as to why the problem continues. These studies experience data and information challenges of which some of the other studies used the mixed approach to validate participant's response and available data to circumvent the situation of quality.

Second, the research studies interrogated used different research design but mostly were in respect of a

survey, case study and others not explicit. These studies mostly collected data from large group of people in very short space in time using semi-structured and structured information collection instruments in form of questionnaires and interviews. Third, a non-probability sampling technique was eminent with most studies using a purposive and convenience sampling technique. None of the studies looked at the discrepancy in relations to the implementation and management of the intervention and within the context of the Gauteng Department of Labour.

Therefore, this study proposes a cross-sectional survey research design and applying a quantitative research approach to expose the extent, the significance of the discrepancy recruitment and placement intervention as the problem is persisting with high rate of unemployment. The cross-sectional design is associated with the quantitative strategy as it is applicable to research attempting to determine the relations between variables of interest. This study will also determine the underlying factors about the discrepancy in the implementation and management of recruitment and placement intervention. With that said, the study would use a fully structured self-completion questionnaire sent to probability-selected participants more especially the implementers of the intervention with different roles in the attainment of the intervention. This will allow us to generate the research to the entire department and the population within the Gauteng Department of Labour.

5.5 Proposed Interpretive Frameworks

In the interrogation of the studies, what was also common is that the use of interpretive framework or theories was not implicit and no study focused on the discrepancy in relations to the implementation of the intervention in Department of Labour or specifically the Gauteng Department of Labour. Therefore, this research proposes to utilise both the programme and implementation theory to interpret the empirical research results by indicating the discrepancies with the high number of registered work-seekers, high work opportunities in contrast to the low work placement and the significance of the discrepancy or inadequacy. The lens that the study will apply emanate from the viewpoint of the implementation field of study with its accompanying key component processes evaluation.

It provides for key quantitative research variables such as registered work-seekers, referred work-seekers,

and placed work-seekers just to name a few. These variables are from inputs, activities, outputs and to some extent outcomes, which assisted in determining if indeed there is a cause-effect relationship, and indeed implemented accordingly. This is appropriate in examining processes and procedures practised in the implementation and management of the intervention and to determine why the discrepancy is continuing in the placement of work-seekers to available job opportunities. Therefore, the programme theory will assess the effectiveness of the results framework (Weiss, 1998; Rogers, 2008), while the implementation theory explores what influences the implementation outcomes (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1973; Bardach, Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1983; Signe, 2017).

6. Summary and Conclusion

The Gauteng Department of Labour registered 77 295 jobs opportunities and only 16 501 from 660 767 work-seekers were placed into registered job/learning opportunities, that is on average of 21 per cent of placement rate during 2014/15 to 2018/19 financial years (Gauteng Department of Labour, 2019). Upon the interrogation of literature it is submitted that the discrepancy is due to the ineffective monitoring and evaluation (Sithole, 2011; Thulo, 2014; Public Service Commission, 2015), non-existence of stakeholder relationship (Stefanie et al., 2007), and lack of training of employees to effectively and efficiently implement procedures just to mention a few (Arends et al., 2015). Moreover, from the past similar studies, it is established that none of the studies looked at the discrepancy from the implementation and management point of view, particularly none focused on Gauteng Department of Labour. Moreover, none utilised the theoretical framework to interpret their research results. Therefore, the discrepancy between the high number of both registered work-seekers and work opportunities versus the low number of placements in those jobs and learning opportunities can be closely attributed to the implementation process of the intervention.

As a result, this study will evaluate the operational mechanisms of the recruitment and placement intervention within the Gauteng Department of Labour to reveal the underlying reasons for the discrepancies. In doing so, this paper posed the main research question which is whether the recruitment and placement intervention in Gauteng Department of Labour is being implemented as intended or conceived on

paper. This main research question will be answered based on the following research questions posed: How do work seekers and employers describe their programme experiences? Is the recruitment and placement intervention effective in the Gauteng Department of Labour? To what extent is the programme dependent on work-seekers, employers, and employment service system for its success? How suitable are employment service systems, work-seeker registration, an employer registration and matching candidates (materials or activities) for the intended participants within Gauteng Department of Labour? Are the Public Employment Service procedures and processes complementing the needs of Employers?

This is the approach utilised to conceptualise this research and this is the focus of this paper. However, we are not assuming that the policies are adequate as the study takes cognizance of the fact that there might be a possibility of inadequacy in the development and viability of the policy on recruitment and placement intervention. However, we hope that seeing this research through will help us figure out the implementation and management that is effective and the implementation of the monitoring and evaluation system for the intervention.

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