The importance of workplace learning in the safety and security sector: *A Case study on selected SASSETA learnerships.*

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The importance of workplace learning in the safety and security sector: *A Case study on selected SASSETA learnerships.*

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[1] This disclaimer informs readers that the views, thoughts, and opinions expressed in the text belong solely to the author, and not necessarily to the author's employer, organization, committee or other group or individual.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSA	National Skills Act
NSDP	National Skills Development Plan
SASSETA	Safety and Security Sector Education and Training Authority
SDLA	Skills Development Levies Act
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authorities

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Learnerships programmes play an essential role between the education system, versus what is needed by the labour market including employers. Learnership programmes contribute to skills development. The following study sought to investigate the importance of workplace learning which entails learnerships within the safety and security sector. Furthermore, it aimed to understand the approaches that employers and obstacles encountered during these programmes.

The research study was based on qualitative research design was found to be the most suitable method to collect data which was essential for the study. Telephonic semi-structured interviews were conducted using the purposive sampling method. Eight employers who implement the SASSETA learnership programmes were interviewed. A thematic content analysis of the relevant document as outlined was conducted.

Findings of the study reveals the set of skills learners need to obtain for the general security practices, paralegal, public administration, occupationally directed education & training plus the national key point learnership. In addition, all employers used the same assessments in their approach when executing learnership programmes. Their approach consisted of theoretical and practical assessments. Results show that employers experienced challenges learners dropping out, learners possessing poor communication skills, inability to learn new things, employed learners missing their lessons and issuing of certificates being delayed by SASSETA.

Based on the findings of the study, recommendations are made SASSETA should monitor these learnership programmes and start preparing certificates as soon as learners complete, mentoring of the learnership more closely, the introduction of induction programme for learners and suggestion for training interventions need to be carried out to improve the soft skills, basic writing and reading skills.

1. CHAPTER ONE:

GENERAL ORIENTATION AND PROBLEM FORMULATION

1.1.   Introduction

Scares and critical skills remain one of the challenges of the 21st century in South Africa.[2]. Workplace learning is designed to enhance skills and better prepare students for the world of work[3]. Workplace learning programs allow students to participate in a variety of programs designed to expose them to a realistic world of work, as well as provide them a wealth of knowledge in career development[4].

Skills cross sectors such as customer handling, problem solving, team-working, and communication, critical thinking, leadership, and management are key to learners' development[5]. Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) facilitates skills development and of workplace learning interventions driven by the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP), consisting of learnerships amongst others[6]. Outcome 4.2 in the NSDP highlights the importance of linking education and the workplace. The NSDP recognises the importance of workplace-based learning in achieving the policy objectives of the post school education and training system[7]. Furthermore, the placements of graduates in the labour market to address occupations in high demand and priority occupations[8].

Learnerships have become avenue to address unemployment by providing theoretical education as well as practical experience that should ideally improve employability[9].The long-term objective of the learnerships is to create opportunities for the learners to acquire practical skills and facilitate the employability of the learners upon completion of the programme[10.] These interventions promote more effective relationships between education and training programmes and skills development for the labour market.

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[2] Ndlovu, T.P. and Mofokeng, N.E.M., 2018. The value of workplace learning in attaining discipline-specific skills for ecotourism employment. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, *7*(4), pp.1-13.
[3] Ndlovu, T.P. and Mofokeng, N.E.M., 2018. The value of workplace learning in attaining discipline-specific skills for ecotourism employment. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, *7*(4), pp.1-13.
[4] Kiriri, P.N., 2019. An Assessment of the Quality of a Work-Integrated Learning Internship Program in Kenya. *International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning*, *20*(3), pp.257-271.
[5] Mabiza, J., Mahlalela, P. and Mbohwa, C., 2017. Reducing unemployment rate in south africa through establishment of graduate internship programmes (GIP). In *Proceedings of the International MultiConference of Engineers and Computer Scientists* (Vol. 2, pp. 15-17).
[6] Moganedi, J. and Sithole, S.L., 2020. An evaluation of the National Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998 as amended in 2008 (Act 37 of 2008) as a tool against unemployment and poverty alleviation in the Republic of South Africa (RSA). International Conference on Public Administration and Development Alternative (IPADA).
[7] Department of Higher Education and Training, 2019. National Skills Development Plan, 2030.
https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201903/42290gon375.pdf
[8] Ibid
[9] Maririmba, P., 2018. Legislative backing of the SETA learnership contracts: a myth or reality (Doctoral dissertation, University of Pretoria).
[10] Mathenjwa, I.L., 2011. *An evaluation of the implementation of the learnership programme within the Public Service Commission* (Doctoral dissertation, Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch).

1.2.   Problem statement

The problem identified is that workplace learning opportunities, are not effectively governed, and supervised, pose risks for assuring the quality of student standards of practice[11]. The following study aims to investigate the importance regarding workplace learning intervention looking at learnership programmes.

1.3.   Aim and objectives of the study

1.3.1. Aim of the study

The aim of this study is to discover the importance of workplace learning (learnership). Furthermore, investigate the challenges of workplace learning in the safety and security sector.

1.3.2. Objectives of the study

This study seeks to:

- Understand the employer's approach in implementing workplace learning in the safety and security sector.
- Investigate the challenges encountered in workplace learning within the safety and security sector.

1.4.   Research questions

The study will ask the following research questions:

i.   What are the employers' approach in implementing workplace learning in the safety and security sector?
ii. What are the challenges in workplace learning within the safety and security sector?

1.5.   Summary

Chapter one: Orientation, overview and problem formation. This chapter consists of the introduction and background to the study. It includes also includes the statement of the problem research objectives and questions. Chapter two: Literature review. This chapter presents an in-depth and comprehensive literature review on the subject area on workplace learning and learnership. This chapter further focuses on the theory of learnership training in relation to skills development forms the basis for understanding the effectiveness of learnership programmes and what hinders how they are executed. In addition, look into the theoretical framework of skills development in South Africa.

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[11] Henderson, A. and Trede, F., 2017. Strengthening Attainment of Student Learning Outcomes during Work-Integrated Learning: A Collaborative Governance Framework across Academia, Industry and Students. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education*, *18*(1), pp.73-80.

Chapter three: Research methodology, this chapter details the research design and methodology of the study. It includes detail of the purposive sampling method and collection of data and a plan for organising and analysing the data. Chapter three presents limitations the researcher encountered during the study.

Chapter four: Presentation and discussion of the findings. Chapter four focuses on the analysis and interpretation of data. The main findings of the study are presented and summarised in this chapter. Chapter five: Recommendations and Conclusion, this last chapter of the study presents recommendations and conclusions based on the findings and propose future research.

2. CHAPTER TWO:

EMPERICAL PERSPECTIVE (LITERATURE REVIEW)

2.1 Introduction

The following literature review consists of the legislative and policy framework. It entails an understanding of workplace learning and a learnership programme. Furthermore, this chapter presents the importance of workplace learning and learnerships including challenges experienced in learnership programmes.

2.2 Legislative and Policy Framework

An effective legislative and policy framework for skills development programmes. This chapter is an overview of the legislative framework that regulates the implementation of learnerships.

2.2.1 The Skills Development Act (No. 97 of 1998)

The Skills Development Act of 1998 is a vehicle for addressing high unemployment rates, scarce and critical skills in South Africa. In the context of learnerships, the Skills Development Act of 1998 is aimed at providing workplace learning formalised by an accredited education and training provider[12].

The Act articulate the intention to provide an institutional framework to formulate and implement national, sector, and workplace strategies to develop and improve the skills of the South African workforce by empowering, up-skilling, and re-skilling new entrants into the labour market[13]. By including learnerships, the SDA assists in skills development by allowing learners who participate gain both the skills and the experience that would allow them to be absorbed into the labour market.

2.3.2 The Skills Development Levies Act (No.9 of 1999)

A levy payment system is used to fund skills development programmes. The Skills Development Levies Act (SDLA) governs the levy to be paid by employers and claim a portion for training. The levy grant system in South Africa is managed by the National Skills Authority (NSA), which is the primary source of funding for skills development in South Africa, via the SETA's[14].

SETAs play a role in evaluating workplace skills plans, as well as registering learnerships including managing and administering the grants received through the skills development levy[15]. The overall aim of the SDLA is to ensure that the skills of South African citizens are improved.

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[12] Mudau, L.A., 2019. *An assessment of the skills development monitoring and evaluation strategies at the selected organisations of SANParks in the northern region* (Doctoral dissertation).
[13] Jacobs, A., 2020. An exploratory case study in a rural municipality in the western cape: Local government skills development.
[14] Ibid
[15] Ibid

2.2.3 National Skills Development Plan 2030

The National Skills Development Plan (NSDP) 2030 seeks to ensure that South Africa has adequate, appropriate, and high-quality skills that contribute towards economic growth, employment creation and social development[16]. There should be an investment in skills development to achieve the vision set in the NSDP of an educated, skilled, and capable workforce for South Africa to address economic growth and unemployment[17].

Outcome 2 in the NSDP aims to link education and training as well as the workplace since it recognises the importance of workplace-based learning in achieving the policy objectives of the post school education and training system[18].In relation to the Learnership Programme, this policy framework highlights the importance of providing quality training in the workplace to ensure an opportunity to acquire the skills needed to enter the workforce.

2.3 Understanding workplace learning

Vocationally oriented programs have been praised for their success in easing school-to-work transitions. Workplace learning is an important dimension of vocationally oriented programs, along with a strong specialisation and a stronger focus on specific instead of general skills. Workplace learning stems from the field of educational research which focuses on the improvement of conditions and practices of learning and instruction in work settings[19].

Workplace learning as mentioned combines academic learning with practical work experience. The combination of the two enhances the capacity of students and grooms them to be more productive and innovative within their work environments. University students stated that their university studies provided a general although limited, basis for workplace learning. On the other hand, employers stated that theoretical education as an important source of competence for giving employees basic knowledge from the area in which they are working[20].

However, students face challenges in applying what they have learnt from college to workplace. Universities of technology are obliged to establish strategies for improving students' workplace learning[21]. This strategy is used to improve workplace learning to be significant in order to assist students when they go for placement in various work environments[22]. Part of the workplace experience should include appropriate assessment of learners to evaluate and ensure that learners are competent and are able to perform the specific tasks and skills that are acquired.

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[16] Department of Higher Education and Training., 2019. National Skills Development Plan 2030. Available at: https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201903/42290gon375.pdf

[17] Ibid

[18] Ibid

[19] Hordern, J., 2018. Knowledge, practice, and workplace learning. *Handbook of Vocational Education and Training. Online: Springer*.

[20] Dandira, T., Maphosa, C. and Nsubuga, Y., 2017. Students' workplace learning experiences: How do Clothing Fashion Design Students Apply Knowledge and Skills Gained at University to the Workplace. *Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, *6*(1).

[21] Mudau, L.A., 2019. *An assessment of the skills development monitoring and evaluation strategies at the selected organisations of SANParks in the northern region* (Doctoral dissertation).

[22] Dandira, T., Maphosa, C. and Nsubuga, Y., 2017. Students' workplace learning experiences: How do Clothing Fashion Design Students Apply Knowledge and Skills Gained at University to the Workplace. *Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, *6*(1).

2.4 The importance of workplace learning

The demands of the complex and changing economy, characterized by complex technologies, general rise in skills requirements of jobs also necessitates the need for innovativeness and improved level of applied competence. A skilled workforce is essential for the growth of a country's economy and training therefore becomes increasingly important. Workplace learning improves the employability of graduates by providing practical experiences related to the learners' courses, as well as facilitating the transition from college to the workplace.

Workplace learning programmes allow students to participate in a variety of programs designed to expose them to a realistic world of work, as well as provide them a wealth of knowledge in career development[23]. Skills development supports the approach that South Africa needs to recognize the importance of integrating education, training, and skills development as a way of creating an enabling environment for the country to develop workplace competence and stimulate growth for the country[24].

2.5 Understanding learnerships

A learnership is described as a work-based learning combined with education and training (theory and work experience) to obtaining a qualification. In addition, a learnership must be a qualification registered by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Learners participating in a learnership programme attend classes at a college or training centre to complete classroom-based learning then complete on-the-job training in a workplace. The purpose of this study is to explore the approaches used when implementing learnership programmes in the workplace.

Characteristics of a Learnership Programme[25]:

- The programme is driven by demand.
- It caters for any profession in which on- the-job learning opportunities are viable.
- The programme targets a wide group of learners covering all sectors and professions.
- The programme combines theoretical learning and skills training both during learning and assessment.
- The focus of the programme prepares the learners to obtain a qualification, skills and competencies for future profession.
- The programme culminates into a recognised qualification made of 120 credits achievable within a period of 12 months.

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[23] Kiriri, P.N., 2019. An Assessment of the Quality of a Work-Integrated Learning Internship Program in Kenya. *International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning*, *20*(3), pp.257-271.

[24] Aigbavboa, C., Oke Ayodeji, E. and Mokasha Mpho, D., 2016. Implementation of skill development act in the South African construction industry. Available at: http://www.socioeconomica.info/xmlui/handle/11171/212

[25] Mathenjwa, I.L., 2011. *An evaluation of the implementation of the learnership programme within the Public Service Commission* (Doctoral dissertation, Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch).

Two types of learnerships can be distinguished[26]:

- Employed learners: term is used for full time internal employees employed at a company while being placed on a learnership, and

- Unemployed learners: term represents unemployed individuals who are employed for the period and the purpose of the learnership.

Learnerships are aimed at equipping both the employed and unemployed with the skills and knowledge required to perform their duties. The learnership system caters for 44, 000 to 55, 000 learners per year and the governments targets set to enrol both employed and unemployed participants have consistently been met and surpassed over the years.[27]

Learners do not pay anything to participate in learnerships but receive an allowance to cover the costs of transportation, meals and for attending the training and work experience sessions[28]. A formal agreement must be signed by the three main parties involved in its implementation which are the training institution, the employer, and the learner[29]. This implies that learners are enrolled for theoretical learning with a training provider and with an employer for practical training.

2.6 The role of learnerships

learnerships are learning programmes established and are administered by SETAs and which demand the collaboration and cooperation of government in the form of the Department of Labour, employers and training providers[30]. The Learnership Programme was designed to address the gaps that exist in the provision of education and training with the aim of responding to the needs and demands of the labour market[31].

The learnership system fosters skills development and employment in the formal economy. There has been a debate as to whether the priority for the system should be to function as a demand to fill the need for critical and scarce skills, or as an employment-creation mechanism, and it is possible to do both effectively[32].

It is argued that a learnership should be designed in such a way that it meets the needs of the learner to attain the specific skills. learnerships should not only be on enhancing the skills of a learner through training, but that the learnership should provide skills that are also essential to the economy. However, the transition from education and training to the labour market a serious

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[26] Mbonambi, D., 2014. *The effectiveness of leadership programes in promoting skills development* (Doctoral dissertation).

[27] Dlamini, Z.F.S., 2020. *An exploration of the youth unemployment challenge within the Umgungundlovu District Municipality* (Doctoral dissertation).

[28] Zwane, F.N., Du Plessis, E. and Slabbert, E., 2017. Learners' and employers' perceptions of vocational training in the South African tourism industry. *African Journal for Physical Activity and Health Sciences*

[29] Kiriri, P.N., 2019. An Assessment of the Quality of a Work-Integrated Learning Internship Program in Kenya. *International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning*, *20*(3), pp.257-271.

[30] Ibid

[31] Mathenjwa, I.L., 2011. *An evaluation of the implementation of the learnership programme within the Public Service Commission* (Doctoral dissertation, Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch).

[32] Hampson, V., Best, P. and Kavanagh, M., 2012. Is the community better off? An assessment of outcomes based performance management. *The Business Review, Cambridge*, *19*(2), pp.43-50.

policy concern in several countries[33]. Learnerships are important in that they are meant to be suitably flexible to changing needs. outcomes and practical use of skills that have been taught.

Implementing learnerships is beneficial because it helps in the production of a better-skilled workforce. Skilled learners can contribute to the economic growth and the development of the country. The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) learnerships study found that learners who completed their learnership programme reported enhancement of skills levels, particularly soft skills such as teamwork and confidence[34]. In addition, findings confirmed that completion of a learnership was a strong indicator of employment as a successful impact[35].

Communication skills is another common skill acquired in learnership programmes. Learners doing a road construction learnership, fire and rescue operation learnership, horticulture, disaster management, human resources management support, or local economic development, learners expressed that they could now appreciate different methods of communication in the workplace[36].

Learnerships also help increase the pool of skilled employees who can be retained at the respective institution after the learnership. This increase in the number of learners has a positive effect on institutions because a better-skilled and qualified workforce[37]. This allows the employer to attain a learner to meet the needs of the education sector and for the learner to gain the training opportunities. The main motive of enrolling in a learnership programme is to improve skills, gain work experience and a formal qualification.

2.6 Challenges encountered implementing learnership programmes

2.6.1 Skills development

Skills mismatch can cause long delays in the availability of occupationally directed qualifications, lack of articulation and progress as well as limited range of training programmes being offered[38]. High-level performance of an employee is determined when their skills such as effective communication or problem solving are developed in a lengthy process of practice, in demanding and realistic situations [39].

Skilled people in the workplace are acquired through practice and exposure to complex tasks which enhances the learners' problem-solving skills, and that learners develop cognitive and

[33] Wildschut, A, Kruss, G., Visser, M., Meyer, T., & Tele, A. (2017). Institutionalising Tracer Studies to Assess the Impact of Workplace-based Training: Reflections on Feasibility
[34] Ibid
[35] Ibid
[36] Kanyane, M., Pophiwa, N., Wentzel, M., Mdlongwa, T., Zikhali, T., Raseala, P., Radebe, T. and Ngungu, M., 2017. A review of the implementation and impact of learning interventions in the local government sector: focus on learnerships, internships, skills programmes, work-integrated learning, apprenticeships, bursaries, adult education and training. https://repository.hsrc.ac.za/bitstream/handle/20.500.11910/11680/10184.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
[37] Mohlamme, L.J., 2019. *Perceptions of Learnerships and Internships as Tools for Skills Development of Youths in the Sedibeng District Municipality, Gauteng*. University of Johannesburg (South Africa).
[38] Aigbavboa, C., Oke Ayodeji, E. and Mokasha Mpho, D., 2016. Implementation of skill development act in the South African construction industry. Available at: http://www.socioeconomica.info/xmlui/handle/11171/212
[39] Plant, K. and Padotan, R., 2017. Improving skills development in the South African public sector: an internal audit perspective. *Southern African Journal of Accountability and Auditing Research*, *19*(1), pp.35-48.

practical skills through guidance in the form of coaching and scaffolding[40]. The influence of technology such as social media, trade in the marketplace, and increased the skills requirements of employees in most occupations has put pressure on and, changed the context in which work is performed globally[41]. Hence, learnerships have a positive impact on skills development.

2.6.2 Lack of communication between the workplace and the education institutions

Another challenge is the lack of communication between the workplace and the institution, however recent studies in vocational education have shown that theory and practical integration are key to raising competency levels[42]. The enrolment of learners has not automatically resolved the technical skills crisis at the intermediate skills level, because many learnerships are in non-technical fields and at NQF levels far lower than those skills required[43]. National enrolment targets for learnerships are typically met, these targets do not match well with firms demand need for post-school education and training opportunities at all skills levels.

2.6.3 Implementation of learnerships

There are challenges noted regarding the implementation of learnerships. For example, the roll-out of learnerships has been an enormous task from an operational point of view, as they are time-consuming and difficult to implement[44]. Accredited training providers must then be obtained which can take a long time with resource-intensive[45]. It seems at policy level, an evaluation of the learnership system is needed to find out if it is adequately addressing both demand-side and supply-side needs. Workplaces do not always understand current practices with regard to education and training and assessment; and workplaces are unclear on roles and responsibilities as a workplace hosting a learnership.

2.7 Link between the workplace and learnerships

Employers are held the responsibility for equipping their learners with the necessary and relevant knowledge and skills which enabled learners to perform effectively at their specific at the work environment. Workplace learning can be cultivated by ensuring that all workers are equipped with the knowledge and skills which enable individual workers to function effectively at work. However, employers have been accused of displaying a lack of commitment towards strategic objectives of skilling the nation and, consequently, impact directly on implementation and success of learnership programmes[46].

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[40] Ibid
[41] Vollenhoven, G., 2016. *Workplace learning experiences of TVET College candidates in learnership programmes: An exploration of the workplace learning environment.*
[42] Vollenhoven, G., 2016. *Workplace learning experiences of TVET College candidates in learnership programmes: An exploration of the workplace learning environment.* https://etd.uwc.ac.za/handle/11394/4953
[43] Zwane, F.N., Du Plessis, E. and Slabbert, E., 2017. Learners' and employers' perceptions of vocational training in the South African tourism industry. *African Journal for Physical Activity and Health Sciences (AJPHES)*, *23*(1.1), pp.90-116.
[44] Schnitzler, M., 2020. The political economy of disability in South Africa, between social grants and job-creation programmes. *Review of African Political Economy*, *47*(165), pp.432-448.
[45] Schnitzler, M., 2020. The political economy of disability in South Africa, between social grants and job-creation programmes. *Review of African Political Economy*, *47*(165), pp.432-448.
[46] Kiriri, P.N., 2019. An Assessment of the Quality of a Work-Integrated Learning Internship Program in Kenya. *International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning*, *20*(3), pp.257-271.

On the contrary, learnership programmes are seen as a skills development initiative that would be more prone to positive perceptions of benefits of implementing learnerships as a developmental tool for employees and be aware of concomitant benefits for the organisation. There is debate as to whether the priority for the learnership system should be to function as a demand-led formal labour market tool to fill the need for critical and scarce skills, or as an employment-creation mechanism, and whether it is possible to do both effectively[47].

2.8 Sector Education and Training Authorities role in learnerships

Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) are referred to as a body that is established under the Skills Development Act, 97 of 1998 with the main purpose of contributing to the improvement of the skills in South Africa through achieving a more favourable balance between demand and supply and by ensuring that education and training are taken into consideration. The SETA is tasked with registering, promoting, and implementing learnerships, identifying workplaces for practical work experience, as well as the quality assurance of training providers offering registered qualifications.

As the custodian of skills development, the Safety and Security Sector Education and Training Authority (SASSETA) has to ensure quality provision of skills development and qualifications in the safety and security sector through effective and efficient partnerships. To achieve this, they enable unemployed workers and learners to be assisted to enter learning programmes as well as access scarce skill training in the form of discretionary grants[48]. These funds include grants for learnerships, bursary grants, internship grants including the support to learners acquiring basic entry, intermediate and high-level scarce skills identified as scarce in the sector[49].

The SASSETA Learnership programme was designed to incorporate the integration of theory and practice by allowing participants to apply their new acquired skills in their work environment (SASSETA,2018). In relations to this study, the objectives are to explore the approaches used when implementing learnership programmes within the safety and security sector. Furthermore, examine the challenges experienced in learnership programmes administrated by the SASSETA.

2.9 Summary

This chapter presented a discussion based on the legislative framework such as the SDA, SDLA and the NSDP 2030. Moreover, the chapter reviewed the concept on workplace learning which consisted of learnership programmes. A learnership was defined and outlined their importance in skills development for employed and unemployed learners. Lastly, it explained SETA's purpose and responsibilities when it comes to learnership programmes.

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[47] [47]Naidu, K., 2019. *Learners' experiences of learnership programmes in an information technology organisation* (Doctoral dissertation).
[48] Halabi, A.K., Sartorius, K. and Arendse, J., 2013. An investigation of the efficiency of South Africa's sector education and training authorities (SETA's). *South African Journal of Business Management*, *44*(2), pp.1-9.
[49] Ibid

3. CHAPTER THREE:

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This Chapter presents the description of the research process. It provides information concerning the method that was used in undertaking this research as well as a justification for the use of this method. The Chapter also describes the various stages of the research, which includes the selection of participants, the data collection process, and the process of data analysis. The Chapter also discusses the limitations of the study.

3.2 Research approach

The qualitative research approach was utilised in this study. Qualitative research methods allow the researcher to better understand the experiences of participants; and provide us with a detailed insight, personal experiences, attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs related to the topic of interest[50]. This approach was applicable to this study because this aims to get an in-depth understanding of the various approaches' employers use during the implementation of the learnership programmes and investigate the challenges they experienced from the employer and learners' perspective.

3.3 Sampling method

The purposive sampling method was used to select the participants. Purposive sampling identifies and selects individuals or groups of individuals that are knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest[51]. 8 employers who execute learnerships in their workplace within the safety and security sector were interviewed and the initial plan was to also interview 4 learners in each organisation. The aim for this sampling method was to be able to increase the credibility of findings related to various participants experiences. This study wanted to entail an in-depth understanding of learners' experiences and perceptions of learnership programmes. Hence, employers and learners can provide rich information to accomplish the objectives of this study.

3.4 Data collection methods

Semi structured interviews contain open-ended questions, and discussions may diverge from the interview[52]. Semi structured interviews were appropriate to achieve the aim of this study by asking open-ended questions, to explore participant thoughts, feelings and perceptions about the implementation including issues experienced by employers including learners. The researcher will develop an interview guide for collecting data. An interview guide consists of a short list of guiding questions with follow-up and probing questions depending on the interviewee's

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[50] DeJonckheere, M. and Vaughn, L.M., 2019. Semistructured interviewing in primary care research: a balance of relationship and rigour. *Family Medicine and Community Health*, *7*(2).
[51] Palinkas, L.A., Horwitz, S.M., Green, C.A., Wisdom, J.P., Duan, N. and Hoagwood, K., 2015. Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and policy in mental health and mental health services research*, *42*(5), pp.533-544.
[52] Naidu, K., 2019. *Learners' experiences of learnership programmes in an information technology organisation* (Doctoral dissertation).

responses[53]. The list of questions of topics to be covered during the conversation in an order. The interview method allows the researcher to seek clarity and probe for deeper understanding.

Data was collected utilising telephonic interviews and some employers received an email with the interview guide to answer. The use of telephonic and emails was to ensure the safety of both the researcher and participants of this study in observing the Coronavirus 19 (COVID-19) government regulations. In addition, using telephonic and emails interviews were beneficial for the researcher because it was less time consuming and cost efficient.

3.5 Data analysis

Interviews were transcribed then apply thematic analysis. Thematic analysis refers to the drawing together of codes from one or more transcripts to present the findings of qualitative research in a coherent way[54]. The researcher coded the information by identifying similar concepts and categorise participants responses based on the interview questions. When the findings were organized for presentation, each theme became the heading of a section and each theme will be the codes, examples from the transcripts[55].

3.6 Ethical consideration

It is important to ensure that each participant consents. The study explained to all participants in detail, including the permission to conduct the interview. To ensure confidentiality, participants' full names and surnames were not to be disclosed. The intention is to protect their identity and keep their participation confidential.

Participants therefore must willingly participate in the study after they were approached by the researcher and the research purpose and process were explained to them. The purpose of the research was explained to the participants and the participants were told that should they wish to withdraw at any point during the interview they could do so.

3.7 Limitation of the study

One of the biggest limitations of the study was not being able to interview learners who were part of these learnership programmes. The researcher had requested contact details of learners who were doing their learnership with employers. However, there was no response and cooperation even after doing a follow-up. As a result, this hindered the intention of investigating learners' perspectives and encounters during their workplace experience.

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[53] DeJonckheere, M. and Vaughn, L.M., 2019. Semistructured interviewing in primary care research: a balance of relationship and rigour. *Family Medicine and Community Health*, *7*(2).
[54] Sutton, J. and Austin, Z., 2015. Qualitative research: Data collection, analysis, and management. *The Canadian journal of hospital pharmacy*, *68*(3), p.226.
[55] Sutton, J. and Austin, Z., 2015. Qualitative research: Data collection, analysis, and management. *The Canadian journal of hospital pharmacy*, *68*(3), p.226.

3.8 Summary

This Chapter outlined how the research was conducted, the process used to select the participants, the method used to collect data as well as the approach that was used in analysing the raw data. Semi-structured interviews were conducted. It required the participants to express their views and thoughts and also helped the researcher to get extensive data about the topic. Lastly, it covered the limitation of the study and ethical issues whereby permission was asked from each participant and given an informed consent letter to sign for their participation.

4. CHAPTER FOUR:

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

Rapid change, competition between domestic and international organisations, and the apparent skills deficit of employees, have led many organisations to consider the role of their workforce, and how they can be assisted in meeting the new demands being placed upon them by the ever changing work environment.

This chapter presents the data collected by the researcher from employers implementing the learnership programme. Furthermore, the chapter provides some insight into the skills learners need to have acquired in various learnership Programme and the researcher's continues to present the findings of the study.

4.2 Presentation of the findings of the study

The findings of the current study will be presented according to the following themes as guided by the research questions:

- Outcomes of the learnership programme.
- Skills learners are expected to acquire during this learnership programme.
- Challenges encountered imparting skills to learners.
- Challenges experienced when implementing learnership programme.

Additional comments related to the study:

4.3 Approaches the learnership programme?

- Formative assessments (Open book/Assignment)
- Summative assessments (closed book)
- During the learnership, learners were assessed in formative and summative assessment such as completing assignments, tasks and test to meet qualification unit standard requirements.
- Practical application to build skills and gain work experience. Learners do site visits. They receive get lock books, access control and customer. They are assigned.

He posits that skilled performances in the workplace are acquired through practice and exposure to complex tasks which will enhance learners' problem-solving skills, and that learners develop cognitive and practical skills via expert guidance in the form of coaching, modelling and scaffolding mentors during their practical's[56].

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[56] Vollenhoven, G., 2016. *Workplace learning experiences of TVET College candidates in learnership programmes: An exploration of the workplace learning environment.*

4.4 Outcomes of the learnership programme.

Table 1: Outcomes of the learnership programme for unemployed and employed learners

Learners	Outcome
Unemployed learners	• Numbers of dropout because of stipend • They do not do practical's. • They find other jobs • Enables better employment opportunities Learners become knowledgeable • Learners were able to articulate in English and confident enough to voicing ideas during learning practicals.
Employed learners	• They are upskilled • They get exposed and they stay • Improves job performances • Learners were able to apply for different job opportunities and become more creative.

There are two categories of learners that take part in learnerships as mentioned in the literature review. Employed learners referring to internal employees of a company or organisation being placed on a learnership; and unemployed learners referred to as unemployed individuals who are employed just for the duration and the purpose of the learnership[57].

There is an opportunity to constantly upgrade and widen skills sets and knowledge. It makes excellent business sense for the employee and employer. Employers may enter existing employees into the learnership or recruit learners specifically for the learnership. Employed learners learn new skills and knowledge that are applied in the workplace, which means improved standards, productivity and quality of work for companies.

4.5 Skills learners are expected to acquire during this learnership programme.

Table 2: Type of learnership programmes and skills required

Learnership programme	Skills
General Security Practices	• Guarding & Patrolling • Monitoring access at entry points • Writing reports • Ability to learn effectively • Critical thinking and problem solving • To adapt and collaborate with other learners • Communication skills • Build learners confident and communicate in English.
Occupationally directed education training & development practices	• Assessing Files • Moderation of Files • Plan a learning event • Prepare a learning environment • Compile report • Monitor a project

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[57] Grewe, M., Ukpere, W. and Rust, A., 2012. The performance of employed and unemployed learners on learnership programmes. *African Journal of Business Management*.

Paralegal Practices	- Excellent Communication skills - Draft correspondence, pleadings, discovery, motions, briefs, legal memorandums and other documents - Transactional paralegals draft resolutions, agreements, contracts and related documents - Teamwork is another fundamental paralegal skill. - Research skills
Public Administration	- The ability to influence, guide and inspire people to achieve a common goal - The ability to organize and negotiate evaluating a situation - Ability to conceive ideas and concepts and presentation skills - Ability to work independently, be a team player - Ability to create original ideas or recognize good ideas presented - Planning and working to deadlines at scheduled time - Decision making - Share the workload and responsibilities
National key point	- Guarding & Patrolling malls, airports and large organisations - Monitoring access at entry points (malls, airports and large organisations) - Writing reports
Access control	- Communication skills - Customer care - Listening skills
Patroller	- Communication skills - Firearm training - Report writing - Ability to identify uncertainties
Control room	Monitor a workplace through cameras installed in a building

Table 4.2 presents findings of various learnership programmes and the different types of skills they expect learners to acquire during their workplace experience. The aim of learnerships is to increase the current labour markets' educational levels as well as the future new recruits entering the world of work.

Furthermore, it is to address the skills shortage discovered by the Department of Labour when they implemented the Skills Development Act in order to develop the skills of the South African workforce and to increase the levels of investment in education and training in the labour market and to improve the return on that investment[58].

4.6 Challenges encountered imparting skills to learners.

4.6.1 Unemployed learners

- Difficultly of being open minded (behaviour affects their ability to be taught).

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[58] Grewe, M., Ukpere, W. and Rust, A., 2012. The performance of employed and unemployed learners on learnership programmes. *African Journal of Business Management*.

- Lack of communication due to language barrier. Most students have a challenge understanding English particularly in the general security officer learnership.
- Learners challenge their facilitators during training sessions. The think they know everything.
- Some learners were illiterate and have poor communication which affects their theory aspect of the learnership.
- Many learners were not taking charge of their learning during the learnership.
- Most of learners end up dropping out of the programme.

4.6.2 Employed learners

- The challenges are number of dropouts of a learners especially on the employed programmes. They fail to complete a 1-year project.
- Employed learners have a challenge of managing and being able to attend classes. They sometimes have to miss lesson because of work.

4.6.3 Delay in certificate distribution

Some participates expressed themselves with the complaint that SASSETA takes a while to give their issue certificates when learners have completed their learnership programme.

4.7 Challenges experienced when implementing learnership programme.

- "We usually do not encounter issues with unemployed learners however, employed learners become lazy to complete a 1-year project which might be influenced by their work."
- The challenges of recruiting the right learners. This means finding learners who will be committed to complete the entire programme.
- Challenges with learners who cannot read and write.
- Unemployed learners enrolling for the sake of getting stipends and then drop out as soon including changing workplaces.
- People do not understand what is a learnership. They are unaware of the programmes expectations and outcomes.
- Employed learners expect stipends and salaries. They need to understand the difference.

4.8 Additional comments related to the study

- "We urge SASSETA to accumulate funds for other courses like Environmental Practices, Early childhood development & paralegal practices plus ward committee."
- "Learners were able to acquire working skills, and some end up employed in different security industries."
- "SASSETA must improve on issuing certificates for learners. People take too long to get their certificates."

- "Imvula Quality protection proposed that they are willing to assist with internships programmes for other learners such as Information Technology, construction, artisans, CCTV, health. Logistics, finance."

4.9 Summary

The findings shows that workplace learning, despite recognition of the need to improve employee skills, the issue of workplace learning is surrounded by confusion and indecision. Workplace learning is extremely complex and involves more than simple training and development issues.

The nature of the work environment and the pace of change and influence of technology necessitate the workplace learning and if it done correctly, it will cultivate a thriving work culture that values employee growth and sets your entire organization up for long-term success.

5.   CHAPTER FIVE:

RECOMMENDATIONS CONCLUSION

5.1.   Introduction

This section presents the conclusion and recommendations based on this study by focusing on the categorisation and verification of the study the objectives. Recommendations consisted of the findings of the study which were informed by the study objectives.

The following objectives guiding the study were met through the qualitative research approach:

- To understand the employer's approach in implementing workplace learning in the safety and security sector.
- To investigate the challenges encountered in workplace learning within the safety and security sector.

5.2 Conclusion

The findings are presented according to themes; namely, approaches employers used for the programme, outcomes from the learnership programme, skills learners should obtain for the duration of their course, challenge encountered when imparting skills including other issues experienced. The current study has revealed the role of the SASSETA Learnership programmes has in assisting skills development for both unemployed and employed learners.

5.3 Recommendations

- The study has brought to light that many learners are not receiving their certificates on time. Issuing of certificates should not be delayed. SASSETA should monitor these learnership programmes and start preparing certificates as soon as learners complete. Follow-up procedures need to be adopted to ensure receipt by learners.

- The introduction of induction programme when learners start their programme. This will help them have a better understanding of what a learnership is, what is expected from them and how they can grow themselves including increased career opportunities.

- The training interventions need to be implemented to improve the soft skills of learners, such as confidence and communication skills. Moreover, improve levels of basic reading and writing skills observed by employers, filling the gaps often experienced when hiring employees with a matric qualification.

- Future studies should include learners from a sizeable number of different employers to investigate and understand their experiences when doing their learnerships.

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