

## **ANTI-FRAUD TRAINING IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE (SAPS): A STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE**

**J. T. Mofokeng**

Tshwane University of Technology, South Africa

E-mail: mofokengjt@tut.ac.za

**I. de Vries,**

Tshwane University of Technology, South Africa

E-mail: VriesID@tut.ac.za

### **—Abstract —**

Since after the democratic dispensation in 1994, South Africa became a global community that directly or indirectly, attracted transnational organised crime networks as an emerging democratic country. As a result, legislative mandates and public expectations have heightened the necessity to hitherto define the South African Police Service's (SAPS) officials, especially the investigation officials' responsibility for detecting fraud during the performance of their duties. A mixed method approach was utilised in this study, in which one of the strategic components in the SAPS, namely anti-fraud training, was tested by, inter alia, determining the relevancy, adequacy and appropriateness of the detective curriculum in comparison with their day-to-day performance. An open-ended section allowing for general comments, was also included in the questionnaire in case respondents wish to highlight a particular point not addressed in the questionnaire. The stratified random sampling technique was used from the population of 20 000 general detectives deployed across 1116 stations in the nine provinces of South Africa. A representative sample of 1920 general detectives and Detective Commanders across the rank structure was drawn from a staff compilation list obtained from the SAPS Division Personnel Services. From each selected station, an attempt was made to ensure that at least ten per cent of the population participated in this study. The sample realization was 1198 (62.4%) of the respondents who returned the questionnaire. The findings indicated that the detectives were not properly trained and not all the detectives attended the DLP. The findings also revealed that to some detectives, training is not possible due to huge workload at the local police stations and to those who managed to attend the

training, could not be provided with refresher training in the area(s) such as corruption and fraud related investigation, statement taking and report writing, to enhance their detective skills.

**Key Words:** *Fraud, detective, training, skills*

**JEL Classification: L84**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Law enforcement agencies (LEAs) have implemented various strategic interventions to improve the levels of safety through initiatives that, among others, decrease crime and opportunities for criminality (Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (MISTRA, 2013:4). While various institutions and researchers elsewhere have, in the recent past, evaluated police programs to determine if they work for the purpose of improving service delivery (Bykov, 2014; Sparrow, 2015), none have done so with the intention to conduct an empirical study that discusses, from a strategic point of view, the appropriateness of the detective curriculum in South Africa. Mofokeng (2012:89) points out that until recent years, the perceived performance of the general detectives in South Africa received a lot of critics from journalistic reports due to perceived unmanaged workload and withdrawal of cases in courts.

This gap regarding the appropriateness of the curriculum necessitates that a strategic assessment is conducted. The strategic objectives of the SAPS are: (i) crime prevention, (ii) investigation of crime, (iii) support to the investigators of crime, and (iv) crime intelligence (SAPS, 2011:1). It remains unclear, based on the perceived poor performance of the general detectives, how the SAPS integrates Detective Academy training to its day-to-day activities in order to address its priorities as determined as per section 206 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Or put differently, it is unclear if the Detective Academy training is appropriate to empower the general detectives to effectively investigate and prosecute fraud related crimes. Therefore, this paper documents the views of the detectives regarding the appropriateness or the effectiveness of DLP to empower general detectives to detect and investigate commercial crime.

The findings of the study conducted by Mofokeng (2012:89) highlighted that the Judicial System in South Africa consisted of the Quality Assurance Officers, Senior Presiding Officers, Presiding Officers, Senior Prosecutors and Prosecutors considered the SAPS general detectives as not adequately trained thus affecting negatively on the performance the greater Criminal Justice System (CJS). However, Redpath (2002:1-2) argues that that the performance of the Detective Service as a whole, and of the specialised investigation units in particular, is difficult to measure accurately. The available data tends to indicate that the performance could be substantially improved. Measured as a ratio of cases sent to court and of cases recorded, low conviction rates are the norm. There is, however,

considerable variation between provinces. Poor performance is a function of several factors, such as uncertain career paths to becoming a detective, inappropriate promotion policies, insufficient training, the unmanageable workload, and the skills drain (Redpath, 2002:1-2).

## 2. BACKGROUND

The police station based Crime Investigation Units, the provincial and national Specialised Investigation Units, the Forensic Science Laboratory and the Criminal Record Centres are all responsible for the investigative outcomes which include withdraw-al before the criminal case reaches court, untraceable criminal incidents, unjustified reporting, guilty, not guilty, withdrawn in court and alternative completion (MISTRA, 2013:15). SAPS uses the detection and conviction rates to measure the performance of the Detective Services. Fewer conviction rates are a source of public discontent with the SAPS (Mofokeng, 2012; **Statistics South Africa**, 2011). The objective of the Detective Service is to “contribute to the successful prosecution of crime by investigating, gathering and analysing related evidence and thereby increasing the priority crime detection rate” (MISTRA, 2013:15).

This objective has three components. The first component is: “contribute to the successful prosecution of crime”. The component clearly stipulates what the detectives define as their roles: ‘contributors to successful prosecution’. They distance themselves from the societal expectations of the investigation outputs, which is the prevention of crime and conviction of offenders. Their contribution is restricted to specific investigative products or outputs, namely gathering and analysing relevant evidence to enable prosecution. The unstated but most important detective outputs are the arrest of the offenders and the gathering of good evidence. There can never be a successful prosecution without an arrest and adequate evidence that links the arrested offender to the crime. The third and last component of the objective is about the measurement of investigation, which is the detection rate (MISTRA, 2013:15). Underperformance of the general detectives contribute to the long-turn around in the finalisation of cases and eventually a drop in detection rate of cases at police stations. The lack of finalisation of cases is a biggest concern in the work of the detective services as it hampers service delivery (Public Service Commission, 2012:96).

The prevalence of victimisation in the area of commercial related crime seems to be increasing in South Africa. According to MISTRA (2013:45), commercial crime (fraud and corruption) has doubled, from 10% recorded during 2003/04 to 20% in 2010/11, as a percentage of an index constituting a serious crimes category. Crime incidents dependent on police action have increased during the period under review. With higher rates of commercial recorded crime compared to the clearance rate, the objectives of the SAPS therefore need to be bold with specific emphasis on the reduction of commercial crime, through effective investigation and prosecution that would discourage the commission of such crimes. MISTRA (2013:4) argues that the choice of verbs contributes to making the SAPS a passive instead of an active role-player in the reduction and investigation of crime. The SAPS is a professional institution whose core business is crime prevention and detection. There is therefore an expectation that the curriculum make a specific impact on the activities of the general detectives. If not, effort needs to be investigated to determine causal relationships between detective training attended and its impact on the daily activities of the general detectives.

Successful detection and prosecution of fraud or economic-related crimes reported by victims at police station level in South Africa may mean the difference between whether perpetrators avoid prosecution or are brought to justice. In most cases, successful prosecution is directly and primarily dependent upon the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the general detectives who perform the investigative work at police station level in South Africa. The Report by Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC), Global Economic Crime Survey 2016, indicated that economic crime remains a serious challenge to business leaders, government officials and private individuals in South Africa. The survey found that the trend has remained unchanged from 2014, with 69% of South African respondents indicating that they had experienced some form of economic crime in the 24 months preceding the survey. When compared to the global statistic of 36%, it becomes clear that South Africa is faced with the stark reality that economic crime is at a pandemic level (PWC, 2016:8). This means that, the demand for entry-level detectives to be equipped with relevant and adequate training in economic crime investigation is inevitable. The Police Detective Academy and stakeholder organisations that provide education in this field are faced with a number of questions regarding the nature, extent, and format of a worthwhile curriculum.

### **3. MATERIAL AND METHOD**

In this study, a mixed methodological approach combining qualitative and quantitative methods has been utilised. Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007:120) postulate that: “Mixed methods research is the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study or set of related studies.” This approach was followed with an attempt of trying to reduce the weaknesses and the problems linked to mono methods, to ameliorate the validity and reliability of the results and to enrich the comprehension of the studied phenomenon and the emergence of new dimensions regarding the appropriate of the curriculum and its impact on the performance of the general detectives. The following research techniques were employed: a literature review and a survey questionnaire. The questions had options to which the respondents were expected to identify the responses that best matched their views and open-ended questions were also included. The open-ended questions were included in instances where the options for responding varied or were unpredictable.

#### **3.1 Design and Sampling**

The respondents were general detectives working at community service centres (police stations) in the nine provinces of South Africa, including Head Office in Gauteng Province. The stratified random sampling technique was used and the population at the stations was divided into male/female and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) and commissioned officers (COs), as the strata. NCOs are those members with the rank of Constable up to Inspector. COs are those members with the rank of Captain up to Senior Superintendent. Brigadiers often referred to as Directors were excluded from the study because their limited numbers would compromise their anonymity. A representative sample of 1920 investigating officers and detective commanders across the rank structure was drawn from a list obtained from the SAPS Division Personnel Services.

From each selected station, an attempt was made to ensure that at least ten per cent of the population participated in this study. The sample realisation was 1198 (62,4%). Based on the research population, the authors view the sample to be representative of the SAPS general detectives deployed at police stations in the nine provinces of South Africa. Eighteen fieldworkers were trained and assisted by the first author with the distribution of the questionnaire in the provinces. Of

the 1116 police stations excluding satellite or mobile stations in the nine provinces of South Africa, 580 stations with a staff compilation of 10 or more detectives were selected as units of analysis. Fieldworkers were divided into six groups with each group comprised of three researchers with an attempt to cover targeted stations within a reasonable time. The fieldworkers managed to cover around 489 stations. Out of the population of 580 police stations, a total of 91 stations were due to variety of reasons such as but not limited to dilapidated roads and remote areas. To be able to gather data from these stations, prior arrangements were made to fax copies of the questionnaire whereby current and former postgraduate students of the Tshwane University of Technology assisted as coordinators to facilitate the survey administration. Lists of the officers randomly selected to participate from target stations were faxed to all these 91 stations.

The stations selected to participate also assisted by providing copies of shift schedules so that research teams could determine which detectives would be at a given roll call. The survey was administered to respondents immediately following their station meetings or roll calls, prior to going out with investigations. On average, it took about 15 minutes for respondents to complete the survey (with all respondents being assured of their anonymity). It is worth mentioning that for the purpose of this paper, only the views of the detectives who attended the Detective Learning Program (DLP) course (789) are discussed. Thus, 409 respondents who did not attend are excluded.

## **4. RESULTS**

### **4.1 Variables**

The data consisted of a comprehensive range of variables. In this study, the dependent variable 'Training' or 'Curriculum' was analysed via a statement: 'Fraud cases handled by me and referred to court resulted in successful convictions since attending the DLP course'. A five-point rating was used to assess the level of transformation currently taking place in the training culture within SAPS detective academy: (5 = Strongly Agree 4 = Agree, 3 = Neither, 2 = Disagree and 1 =Strongly Disagree). For the purpose of this paper, twelve (12) statements related with curricula are discussed hereafter. Pecuniary variables were not hypothesised to influence how investigators felt about training culture within their detective academy. Rather, a diversified range of non-pecuniary variables was included in the analysis.

## 4.2 Opinion about the appropriateness of the curriculum

The satisfaction of respondents with the training process is measured by means of a standardised evaluation sheet handed out immediately after training courses. This process provides initial indications of the quality of the training course as well as of the performance of the lecturers. Due to the fact this feedback occurs upon course completion respondents are unable to extrapolate the effectiveness or transfer to an operational environment. Based on this reality and the need to ensure the successful transfer of basic DLP, this study sought to ascertain the appropriateness of the DLP application in everyday work situations. In order to implement this approach the researchers developed 12 (12) statements to test the level of appropriateness. (See Table 1.)

**Table 1: Opinion about the appropriateness of the curriculum**

Variable	N	Mean	Std Dev	Median	Range
The Detective Learning Programme (DLP) deals adequately with a crime of fraud	789	3.18	1.2651	3.00	4
The DLP course adequately equipped me to identify elements of fraud	789	2.96	1.3986	2.00	4
The quality of statements taking by me has improved since I attended the DLP course	789	2.40*	1.3509	2.00	4
I am more confident to investigate fraud related cases since attended DLP course	789	2.92	1.2937	3.00	4
I consider the DLP course relevant to my day-to-day functions	789	1.94*	1.0905	2.00	4
Fraud cases handled by me referred to court resulted in successful convictions since attending the DLP course	789	3.01	1.3460	3.00	4
Adequate practical exercises are being done to link with a theoretical aspect during training	789	3.29	1.3342	4.00	4
It is worth being absent from home to attend DLP course.	789	2.79*	1.4369	2.00	4
DLP course contents did meet my level of expectation	789	2.75*	1.3898	2.00	4
The duration of the DLP course is adequate	778	2.20*	1.1909	2.00	4
Longer detective courses should be considered rather than the current DLP course	788	2.23*	1.2286	2.00	4
The development of detective course should not be outsourced to an external agency	783	3.05	1.4181	3.00	4

(\* denotes the least rated statements)

Source: Own research N = 789



The findings as depicted in Tables 1 and 2 reflect overall level of agreement that the DLP appropriateness as perceived by the respondents. The following statements as depicted in Table 1 rated the least: It is worth being absent from home to attend DLP course. (mean = 2.79), DLP course contents did meet my level of expectation (mean = 2.75), The quality of statements taking by me has improved since I attended the DLP course (mean = 2.40), Longer detective courses should be considered rather than the current DLP course (mean = 2.23), The duration of the DLP course is adequate (mean = 2.20) and I consider the DLP course relevant to my day-to-day functions (mean = 1.97).

The above findings indicated that the DLP did not provide general detectives with the basic investigation competencies, especially in the area of commercial crime. This might also meant that the DLP did not adequately incorporated separate special modules or courses related to commercial crime. The fact that the respondents indicated that it was not worth being absent from home to attend DLP course, was evident through continued poor investigation as the quality of statements did not improve. Therefore, based on the analysis, detectives lacked self-confidence to handle commercial related cases, possessed poor detection and investigation skill abilities, and might have tendencies to avoid investigating commercial related cases or if they do, they would attempt to look to others for assistance, particularly those officials they would be comfortable to share their frustrations with. Furthermore, it is likely that the detectives can easily be overwhelmed by occupational stress. Research indicates that the detective's goal is to elicit a persuasive account that successfully incriminates the suspect and leads to his conviction (Leo, 2009:337). Thus, the DLP was not considered to be appropriate to improve the performance of the respondents to enable them to better investigate and prosecute the economic crime.

The implications for the SAPS Top Management are that extensive research should be conducted in the form of a needs analysis and the design and development of a detective curriculum. Detective Commanders need to provide solutions as to how the transfer of knowledge can be applied to routine work situations. Good detective training and mentoring in the workplace can yield dividends in terms of improved work performance, efficiency, increased impact, and a safe community due to reduced crime rate. Training is not a quick fix but rather goes a long way on a basis for sustained development of human capital within the SAPS. Therefore it should be linked to learning needs and the context in which the training takes place. Poor training is a waste of time and money.

**Table 2: Satisfaction level on the appropriateness of the curriculum**

Statement	Agree		Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		No Comment/Blank	
	No	(%)	No	(%)	No	(%)	No	(%)
The Detective Learning Programme (DLP) deals adequately with a crime of fraud	300	38.4	382	48.0	107	13.6	0	0.0
The DLP course adequately equipped me to identify elements of fraud	408	51.7	314	39.8	63	8.0	4	0.5
The quality of statements taking by me has improved since I attended the DLP course	520	65.9	197	25.0	69	8.8	3	0.4
I am more confident to investigate fraud related cases since attended DLP course	356	45.1	309	39.2	99	14.7	7	0.4
I consider the DLP course relevant to my day-to-day functions	636	80.7	98	12.4	48	6.0	7	0.9
Fraud cases handled by me referred to court resulted in successful convictions since attending the DLP course	335	42.4	348	44.1	99	12.6	7	0.9
Adequate practical exercises are being done to link with a theoretical aspect during training	284	36.0	412	52.2	86	10.9	7	0.9
It is worth being absent from home to attend DLP course	422	53.5	301	38.1	55	7.0	11	1.4
DLP course contents did meet my level of expectation	412	52.2	301	38.2	44	5.6	32	4.1
The duration of the DLP course is adequate	557	70.6	133	16.9	88	11.2	11	1.4
Longer detective courses should be considered rather than the current DLP course	581	73.6	149	18.9	58	7.4	1	0.1
The development of detective course should not be outsourced to an external agency	315	39.9	366	46.4	102	12.9	6	0.8

Source: Own research N = 789

Responses regarding *statement 1*, majority of respondents (48.0%) did not agree with the statement compared with thirty eight percent (38.4%) who agreed. Thirteen percent (13.2%) of the respondents did not comment. We can safely

assume that most respondents were of the view that the DLP content on the issue of commercial crimes is inadequate. In the open-ended section (*statement 13*) where respondents could make general comments, one of the respondents offered the following statement:

*“Basic fraud and law courses [are] not dealt with adequately ... fraud course wasn't in detail, yet it is difficult to solve ... fraud investigation must be included in the DLP course ... fraud investigators from commercial branch are more equipped as they attend courses relating to this ... the detectives should be trained on [sic] all courses related to their field”.*

Basic DLP training curricula must include practical skills relating to fraud investigation to enhance the skills of the detectives. Developed professional skills equip detectives to meet and respond more automatically to typical challenges and situations by consistently using proven techniques. These skills also prepare them to follow a reasonable course of action in the investigation of economic crime related cases. For the findings on *statement 2*, more than half (51.7%) of the respondents did agree, compared with approximately forty percent (39.8%) of those who disagreed. Eight percent (8.0%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. Almost one percent (0.5%) of the respondents gave no answer to this question in the questionnaire (left a blank space).

Regarding *statement 3*, an overwhelming majority of the respondents (65.9%) did agree with the statement compared with twenty five percent (25.0%) who disagreed. Approximately nine percent (8.8%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement whereas less than one percent (0.4%) gave no answer to this question (left a blank space). There seemed to be contradictory opinions regarding the usefulness of the DLP training curricula in terms on the following *statements*; 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. As highlighted earlier in this paper, respondents indicated a low level of satisfaction on *statements 3* and *5* respectively.

Responding on *statement 7*, thirty six percent (36.0%) of the respondents agreed to with the statement compared with fifty percent (52.2%) who disagreed. Eleven percent (10.9%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed whereas one percent (0.9%) of the respondents supplied no answer to this question (left a blank space). It is disturbing, although not really surprising, to note that the majority of the respondents (52.2%) were of the view that the DLP lacked practical exercises

to link with theoretical aspects during training. In the first authors' personal experience as a police officer in training, and in later engagements with colleagues regarding the adequacy of practical training during police training courses, it has become evident that not enough is done to incorporate practical tasks that link with theoretical aspects.

At station level in South Africa and elsewhere, it is a known fact that detective commanders should screen out crimes which in their opinion have low solvability potential. Fraud-related crimes, amongst others, that are allocated to detectives who have attended DLP training will, in most instances, have already been through this sifting process and those that come through it are, presumably, above the solvability threshold. Yet if not enough practical exercises were done during the DLP course, the new or inexperienced detective will find it challenging, if not impossible, to ensure successful conviction. In the open-ended section (*statement 13*) for general comments, some of the respondents made the following comments based on this statement:

*“Training should come with practical equipment, more practical, less theoretical ... proper evaluating processes of detectives’ progress of up to one year should be implemented... more practical examples...more practical exercises, to empower inexperienced learners... more practical training, more involvement from NPA... trainers need experience... practical practice is necessary”.*

These comments suggest that respondents were of the view that not enough practical exercises are being done when detectives are attending DLP training. The opinion of the respondents regarding *statement 8*, were that, more than half percent (53.5%) of the respondents agreed with the statement compared with thirty eight percent (38.1%) who disagreed. Seven percent (7.0%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement whereas one percent (1.4%) of the respondents supplied no answer to this question (left a blank space). It was encouraging to observe that the majority of respondents (53.5%) valued their development in such a way that they would be prepared to spend time away from their loved ones. They obviously felt it was worth the sacrifice as attending a DLP would offer them enlargement of their personal capacity.

The respondents' views might be that their reliance on individual professional commitment would most immediately be apparent because of their readiness to sacrifice their time and space, resulting in maximum ownership of personal and

career growth. Based on the responses, it could be assumed that respondents were aware that the quality of their performance would depend on skill, motivation and professional pride. Motivation is very important as a catalyst to learning. Intrinsic motivation is like a pulling factor; people like to learn because they like learning. Extrinsic motivation acts like a pushing factor; people are pushed into learning. Only when people are intrinsically motivated, will learning happen (European Police College, 2010:S.a). For *statement 9*, more than half percent (52.2%) of the respondents agreed whereas thirty eight percent (38.2%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Nearly six percent (5.6%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Four percent (4.1%) of the respondents supplied no answer to this question. It is encouraging to note that more than half (52.2%) of the respondents agreed to the statement that the DLP course contents did meet their level of expectation. This was consistent with respondents' views in statements 3 and 5. The common denominator regarding the views in these three statements (statements 3, 5 & 9) is that the DLP is relevant to respondents' day-to-day activities. In the open-ended section (*statement 13*) for general comments, one respondent made the following statement:

*“A computer operating course should be included ... detectives should be trained on how to operate computers ... there should be a shooting practice during the last week of the DLP course”.*

The views of the respondents were consistent with the previous research findings traced in the literature. Scheepers (2008:99) refers to an observation made regarding the expectation of learners in terms of the DLP and Resolving of Crime course contents in the Western Cape. It was clear that subjects needed to be added or removed from the two courses. Regarding what procedures should be followed to ensure relevant course content, Djuric and Meško (1996:1-11) assert that the organisers must conduct a needs analysis first and prepare the content of the programme accordingly. They should pay attention to the everyday problems that candidates have at work. The organiser and implementers should take care of the individualisation of the content. It can be easily done by adjusting the goals of the course to the expectations of participants in the beginning and during the course. Taking into consideration that the participants already have certain background knowledge, organisers and implementers could avoid duplication and boring repetition of some topics.

The findings regarding responses to *statement 10*, indicated that nearly seventeen percent (16.8%) of the respondents disagreed compared with overwhelming majority, seventy one percent (70.6%) of the respondents who agreed. Eleven percent (11.2%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed whereas one percent (1.4%) of the respondents provided no answer to this statement. The fact that nearly seventy one percent (70.6%) of the respondents agreed with the statement is a clear demonstration that respondents felt that the duration of the course was not too long when equating the demands of the course in comparison with the allocated time to perform classroom tasks. In the open-ended section (*statement 13*) for general comments, some of the respondents made the following comments which highlighted the fact that they differed in opinion regarding the duration of the DLP course:

*“The course is too long. More practical will be better for the detectives ... the course should be longer than 3 months ...the training is too short for the preparation of detectives ... time for DLP is too short ... time frame is too much and stressful ... training should be longer ... the learner must be given enough time to prepare for their exams, because this results in many learners not being able to pass and it discourages them”.*

Although these comments suggest that respondents were of different views regarding the length of the DLP training, by far the larger proportion (70.6%) of the respondents viewed the duration of the DLP course as adequate. This is consistent with the views of the respondents in statements 10 and 11. Regarding the duration of the DLP course, the findings of this study differed from those highlighted in the study conducted by Scheepers (2008), as indicated in the discussion on statement 8 earlier in this paper. Regarding *statement 11*, nineteen percent (18.9%) of the respondents disagreed compared with seventy three percent (73.4%) of the respondents who agreed. Seven percent (7.4%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement whereas less than one percent (0.1%) of the respondents left the answer blank.

It is interesting to note that the views of the respondents were consistent with their responses to *statement 10*. To determine the reliability of respondents, statement 11 was presented as a follow-up; i.e. this statement determined whether their responses would differ if the same statement was simply rephrased. Based on the findings, there is no direct correlation with the literature review. As indicated in

the discussion on *statement 10*, the views of the respondents to *statements 10* and *11* regarding the duration of the DLP course differed from those highlighted in the study conducted by Scheepers (2008), as indicated in the discussion on *statement 8*. Djuric and Meško (1996:1-11) are of the view that courses, as the most frequent form of training, differ in duration (3 days to 3 months).

As for *statement 12*, less than half percent (46.4%) of the respondents did disagree compared with approximately forty percent (39.9%) of the respondents who agreed. Thirteen percent (12.9%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed whereas one percent (0.8%) of the respondents supplied no answer to this statement (left a blank space). In most responses given to *statements 1-12*, respondents indicated that the DLP is relevant to their day-to-day activities. It was no surprise when less than half of the respondents were of the view that there was room for improvement regarding the development of DLP. In the open-ended section (*statement 13*) for general comments, some of the respondents made the following statements:

*“DLP should not be outsourced... Internal trainers should be fully capacitated... external agency with the intention of competing with international standards... and should be accredited with South African Qualification Authority”.*

The purpose of the in-house learning program should enhance the skills and knowledge of the detectives in the investigation of financial crime that will ensure the successful prosecution of perpetrators. The outcomes of the program should demonstrate an understanding of the legal framework pertaining to commercial crime, interviewing of both complainants and suspects, writing of adequate statement highlighting the elements of a crime, preparing cases for court and demonstrating an understanding of court procedures. At station level in South Africa and elsewhere, it is a known fact that Detective Commanders should screen out crimes which in their opinion have low solvability potential. Fraud-related crimes, amongst others, that are allocated to detectives who have attended DLP training will, in most instances, have already been through this sifting process and those that come through it are, presumably, above the solvability threshold. Yet if not enough practical exercises were done during the DLP course, the new or inexperienced detective will find it challenging, if not impossible, to ensure successful conviction.

## **5. RECOMMENDATIONS ON TRAINING CURRICULA**

For the purpose of this paper, the following are recommended:

### **5.1 Continued research to identify gaps in detectives' skills in the area of commercial crime**

To address the demonstrated gaps in current training curricula provision for general detectives, with specific reference to fraud-related crimes, more research into developing general detectives' skills as well as commanders' management skills need to be conducted. Moreover, gaps in detectives' skills and knowledge need to be attended to by Detective Commanders, and the DLP as well as Resolving of Crime courses need to take cognisance of these challenges in the planning of their modules. A strategic, co-ordinated approach to training detectives is therefore clearly needed.

#### **5.1.1 Possible strategic approaches to improve general detectives' training curricula**

- Continuous engagement of key stakeholders to develop and implement a comprehensive Detective Service anti-fraud curriculum is required by the SAPS. A strategic plan for the training of general detectives that addresses evaluation, development and implementation that actively monitor the success and best practices of the SAPS anti-fraud offerings, delivery methods, instructors' recruitment and training techniques be developed and aligned with SAPS (institution-wide) strategic plan.
- A strategic approach is required to ensure that the vision and mission statements of the SAPS are emphasised throughout the training of the detectives, and should also be aligned with the curriculum.
- Institute mandatory training as a refresher course on fraud, computer literacy and law related modules should be instituted.
- To ensure SAPS detective curriculum is kept up-to-date with latest developments within wider criminal justice environment, the SAPS should consistently conduct research in order to benchmark with overseas counterparts for best practices and modify the curriculum accordingly. Organisations such as National Research Foundation and other external donors can offer grants to researchers or scholars in assisting the SAPS in this matter.



- A strategic approach is required to anticipate changing landscape within the wider CJS or detective programme best practices rather than the current practices whereby the SAPS develop training offerings when problems are found through training audits or through criticisms from the general public, politicians and media.
- A culture of continuous learning through formal and informal training in the area of commercial crime should be cherished and information about detectives who completed their qualifications be disseminated in SAPS journals, newsletters and Pol-TV as an attempt to encourage development within the Detective Service.
- A strategic communication plan within Detective Service is the ultimate key that should be embraced. Currently, it is not clear whether communication within Detective Service is addressed as in a strategic manner. Communications related to general detectives education and training should be viewed as a management obligation that requires systematic planning and the establishment of a framework for information flow and feedback development. This approach could holistically enable the SAPS Top Management to address perceptions of poor performance and possibly, mitigate challenges such as withdrawal of cases in a court of law.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, detective curriculum planning and implementation emphasise that learning should enable the SAPS to achieve its policing strategic objectives, namely; (i) crime prevention, (ii) investigation of crime, (iii) support to the investigators of crime, and (iv) crime intelligence. To realise that, the policy developers and implementers should therefore, ask the question if the detective curriculum really works. This strategic question could only be answered after systematic evaluations have been conducted to determine the effectiveness thereof. This this paper, demonstrated that the gap between the intended, implemented and achieved curriculum outcome of the DLP is too wide. The implications for the SAPS curriculum developers and implementers are that the success of detective training should be systematically be measured in terms of the efficiency and effectiveness of the SAPS detectives towards detection and investigation of the commercial crime.

Based on the results, the authors can safely concluded that mixed general investigative modules or content offered in the form of DLP training curricula, are not adequate, and thus, did not assist the general detectives with their day-to-day activities. In an effort to address a potential gap in technical skills, the implications for the SAPS are that the organisation ought to consider a development programme in connection with mentoring efforts, in case some experienced detectives decided to leave the organisation. A capacity development and mentoring programme beyond internal courses ought to focus on the development of potential detectives, as well as the support the inexperienced detectives' investigative competencies. These strategies towards capacity building should provide support, resources, information and learning opportunities that will systematically target and improve desired performance and behaviours.

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