

**FACTORS INFLUENCING STAFF PERFORMANCE DURING THE
PROBATION PERIOD IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF NAMIBIA: A CASE
STUDY OF OSHANA REGIONAL COUNCIL**

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Abstract

The study investigates why the probation process has become a mere formality in the public service institutions in Namibia. It particularly evaluates the existing probation process, identifies factors and challenges of probation in the Oshana Regional Council (ORC): Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture (DOEAC). A questionnaire and interview guide were designed to collect primary data on factors influencing staff performance during probation in the public service institutions in ORC- DOEAC. Previous studies were done on theories of performance, motivation and probation. Using a purposive or judgmental sampling method a sample of 196 permanent employees from the population of DOEAC's workforce was selected. Content analysis and the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) were used to analyse data. The study concluded that the probation process is crucial in public service administration, since it allows new employees to familiarise themselves with their job and organizational culture. Training and communication emerged as crucial factors to improve performance during probation and various challenges, such as absenteeism, poor communication and improper training period or process. It is evident that managing probation was not a smooth task, since there was scarcity of resources. The recommendations are that OPM should revisit the probation process, documents and guidelines, revive and emphasise training and induction programmes for supervisors and probationers and at the same time find suitable ways of motivating stakeholders in probation.

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Acronyms and abbreviations

AG	Army General
DOEAC	Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture
HR	Human Resources
HRM	Human Resources Management
IFMS	Intergrated Financial Management System
KPA	Key Performance Area
MOEAC	Ministry of Education, Arts & Culture
O/M/As	Offices, Ministries or Agencies
OCB	Organisational Commitment Behaviours
ORC	Oshana Regional Council
PAR	Performance Appraisal Review
PA	Performance Appraisal
PM	Performance Management
PMS	Performance Management System
PSC	Public Service Commission
PSM	Public Service Motivation
PSRI	Public Service Reform Initiatives

PSSR	Public Service Staff Rules
NAC-	Nevada Administrative Code
QPR	Quarterly Probation Reports
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
VET	Vroom Expectancy Theory

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Long live my angels.

Declarations

I, Hildebert Ndawanapo T. Shisaande, hereby declare that this study is my own work and is a true reflection of my research, and that this work or any part thereof has not been submitted for any degree at any other tertiary institution. I further declare that sources used in this thesis are acknowledged by means of references.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

In response to the growing concerns over effective service delivery, various institutions continuously develop strategies aimed at enhancing performance and improving effective service delivery. The government of Namibia through the Office of the Prime Minister, took initiatives to design administrative strategies. The probation was part of government reform strategies, as specified by the Public Service Act 1995 (Act No 13 of 1995). The general intent of the probation process was to prepare the new employed or promoted employees to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to perform excellently with, or without supervision.

However, there are details provided by some local media that Namibian public institutions fail to perform, due to a lack of management of employee performance. “The public service institutions have people employed and paid to perform their management functions. These people are permanent secretaries, under-secretaries, chief executive officers, directors, deputy directors” (Mwange, 2009, p.1). Due to widespread complaints from the public in various media, effective service delivery has of recent come under the spotlight in most work places in Namibia. It is in this light that interest is drawn to the probation process. Apart from tertiary education, recruited personnel get empowered to deliver service effectively during a probation period.

One of the essential functions of Human Resources Management (HRM), formerly known as Personnel Management in organisations, was to establish staff development

programmes that prepare employees to help the organisation meet its goals. It is important that HRM attract, develop and retain a competent workforce. According to Bowman, West and Beck (2015) every government has developed a set of competencies to guide hiring, training and employee evaluation efforts. There are primary sets of competencies applicable to all public servants such as: technical expertise, ethical behavior and leaderships characteristics. The presence of all traits at the same time would mean excellence. The HRM is responsible for facilitating acquisition of the above mentioned competencies during probation.

The study focus is to discover factors that affect the successful completion of the probation process or the employee's performance during the probation period. Moreover, it is directed at the Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture (DOEAC).The DOEAC is functioning under the umbrella of the Oshana Regional Council (ORC). It is one of the directorates that has been delegated from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to the Oshana Regional Council through the decentralisation process.

The probation has been defined differently by various authors nevertheless definitions bound to agree. "The probation period can be valued as the most valid determinants of job performance and seen as the last step in the selection process" (Privott, 1999, p.2). Therefore it assists in reducing inappropriate placements, in order to determine whether the employee can be permanently appointed or not. The common interest is to see how best the probation process can reach the quality output.

In Namibia, probation periods are set out to be performed in twelve calendar months or such lesser period as may be approved by the Prime Minister on recommendation of the Public Service Commission (Public Service Act 1995, Act No 13 of 1995). The evaluation of staff members shall be done internally on a quarterly basis through progress reports, with the objective of monitoring performance during the probationary period. The aim is to help managers to confirm, extend or terminate the permanent retention of the staff members. The probation period would also be extended to cover the number of days that the staff was on leave of any nature. It is then spelled out that only an employee who has completed his/her probation cycle would qualify for promotion, since a probation confirmation letter needs to be attached to any application for promotion.

As Privott (1999) noted, probation was developed to instil and promote excellence in the public sector. Hence, it is critical that employees on probation are rigorously and thoroughly evaluated during the twelve months probation period in order to achieve the objectives of probation. Failure to do this may result in appointing of employees who could put the quality of organisational performance in jeopardy. Could this be the reason why the quality of service delivery and performance is inadequate in the public sector currently in Namibia? It may also be the reason why it is assumed that Namibia has unprecedented pressure in the public sector towards improving its service.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Since Namibia's independence in 1990, the Public Service Commission (PSC) has embraced Public Service Reform Initiatives (PSRI) in areas of public service appointments. In most Namibian Offices, Ministries or Agencies (O/M/As), probation has become merely a formality, the cause being unknown. Poor service delivery in the government is the order of the day. Baloyi and Crafford (2006) revealed that the lack of an official policy to regulate probation makes it hard for probationers or supervisors to know their expectations. There are always misunderstandings among probationers and supervisors regarding extensions of probation periods, due to unsatisfactory and poor performances. In some cases probationers are rated lowly on various qualities on their performance assessments.

The Supervisors argue that managing probation(s) is not linked to the Performance Management System (PMS) in general, neither to employee compensation; thus, they (supervisors) are not contracted to manage probations. That brings about absence of accountability. Khola (2011) explained that employees can be dismissed due to poor work performance during probation periods. However, the reason for not doing a satisfactory job is not known. Privott (1999) also found out that fifty percent (50%) of probationary employees in the State of Nevada, United State of America (USA) do not successfully complete their probation.

The Staff performance can improve if training is provided when needed, and supervisors frequently communicate with subordinates to provide performance feedback. Most people that complete their probation are not able to relate the cases in the questionnaires to specific probationers or supervisors, and there is a lack of systemic data relating to

probation where the research gaps have been identified. Since the literature consulted for the study at issue refers to research conducted in foreign countries, there is a need for further research related to probation in Namibia. The overall picture gives the impression that performance of employees during probation, or probation performance management is not easy for both supervisors and subordinates. Reference on studies done in foreign countries is the evidence of a lack of research on the probation process in Namibia. It is therefore of vital importance that research on the probation process, its factors and challenges should be conducted in Namibia. The case study would enlighten individuals on the role of probation during recruitment in the Public Service of Namibia. While on the other hand assist in enhancing and strengthening the application and understanding of probation regulation.

1.3. Research objectives

This research intends to achieve the following specific objectives. The overall objective for the study is to identify factors influencing staff probation being carried out properly and completing their probation cycle in the public service institutions in Namibia.

The specific objectives are:

1. To evaluate the existing probation process in ORC: DOEAC.
2. To identify factors that hinder the successful implementation of the probation process.
3. To identify the challenges with completing the probation process.
4. To recommend to ORC management and Public Service Commission measures needed to address challenges with the probation process.

1.4. Significance of the study

The rationale of the study is to establish why performance in the Namibian Public Services is not impressive, investigating it in terms of performance as an outcome of the probation process, while at the same time scrutinising the reasons why probation is said to be a formality. Further objectives are to thoroughly evaluate the current practice of probation, its factors and challenges that face probation performance. The findings should assist in providing recommendations on the re-designing of the probation policy in the Namibian Public Service. The study is important to shed light on how best the public servants are equipped, to take up their task of delivering services excellently.

Evaluation should result in a discovery of the pertinent matters to probation and possible ways to solve them. It should also assist supervisors (high and middle management) on the issue of what constitutes effective probation performance management. Another important question to answer during this process is to find out if probation is the most effective way to ensure performance by new employees in public institutions. Lastly, the study would serve as a yardstick to the policy makers in the Namibian Public Service, and also bridge the big gap on knowledge shortage about probation within academic literature.

1.5. Limitation of the study

Primarily, the research only covered factors that affect probation performance in the Namibian Public Service through the fulfilment of the specific objectives: evaluation of the existing probation process; finding factors that affect performance while on probation and challenges of completing probation; and recommendations to ORC and PSC on how to address those challenges. The following variables were studied:

objectives of probation, training, mode of instructions, duration, performance reviews, regular performance feedback, reliability of probation performance results, communication, assessment times, absenteeism, organizational culture, management of probation and motivation.

Secondly, the study only focused on the DOEAC in ORC, leaving out other Directorates, O/M/As and private institutions where the same problem might be prevailing. The study also used only a few respondents from the Directorate's population due to limited time and financial resources. Besides that there is a lack of quantitative data and academic literatures on the probation concept, hence few and old literature reviews were covered. Responses from the participants were limited, therefore the researcher spent much time calling and reminding the centers of distribution of non-returned questionnaires.

1.6. Thesis outline

The thesis is divided in five chapters. Chapter one covers the background of the study, the statement of the problem, research objectives, significance of the study, limitations of the study, thesis outline and Conclusion of the chapter. Chapter two covers the literature review of the established research objectives, the theoretical review and the empirical studies. Chapter three covers the research design, population, research instruments, sampling techniques, sample and data collection procedures, data analysis tools and research ethics thereof. Then Chapter four presents the data analysis using frequency tables. Finally, Chapter five presents the discussion conclusions and recommendations from the results and directions on further research areas.

1.7. Conclusion of the chapter

The study focus to discover factors that affect the successful completion of the probation process or the employee's performance during the probation period. Moreover, it is directed at the Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture (DOEAC). The probation has become a mere formality in the Public Service of Namibia, but the cause is not known. The objectives were to evaluate the probation process, factors to its implementation and challenges to complete it. Then recommend to ORC management and PSC how to address the challenges. The study is of importance because it would help in re-designing and formalise probation policy in Namibian Public Service. However the study only covered the Directorate of MOEAC in ORC.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

“Literature review is a process that empowers readers with a lot of information and knowledge. However, it is argued that such a process can be challenging, as one has to integrate viewpoints of various authors, in order to come up with new viewpoints” (Brynard et al 1997, p.54 as cited in Shafudah, 2011, p.7). In this study, the literature review will discuss the theories of motivation that influence performance, define probation, the probation period and the probation process revolution. It aims at discovering the objectives of employment probation in public institutions and their relevance to service delivery. The study will also evaluate the existing processes of probation, by investigating the ways it has been practised in different places in the world. Thereafter, it should link the probation to the performance review/appraisal, performance management and productivity measurement, as well as present the empirical studies on probation, examining the methodologies used and their findings related to the probation process. The chapter will also develop the conceptual framework of the case study.

2.2. The theoretical background

This discussion has explained theories and matters that management believe have influence on the performance of employees. There are Social Exchange Theories on performance, Public Service Motivation and the Vroom Expectancy Theory on motivation.

2.2.1. Social exchange theories on performance

“There are two social exchange theories or social comparison theories that are influential to performance” French 1982 (as cited by Hangula, 2010, p.32). These theories enable individuals to understand the dynamics of performance and motivation. The Consistency theory states that people tend to seek roles that are consistent with their self-images, rather than being most satisfied by the activities that maximise their sense of consistency or cognitive balance. On the other hand, the Expectancy theory presumes that people have expectancies about the likelihood that an action on their part will lead to intended behavior or performance (Hangula, 2010). Kehoe and Wright (2013) agreed that the relationships between employers and employees are predominantly based on the social exchange theory. The social exchange theory influences affective commitment which mediates the employees’ perceptions and absenteeism. “Recent studies have begun to point to a link between high-performance HR practices and employee outcomes” (Kehoe & Wright, 2013, p.383).

Meanwhile, Lee 1993 (as cited in Privott, 1999, p.18) suggests “that the influences [on] a probationary employee socialization can only be understood by using socialization theory, which is concerned with how an organizational member learns the required behaviour and supportive attitudes necessary to participate as a member of the organization”. These views highlight that the probationer(s) might not be performing well during a probation period, because their working environment is not favourable to be control and manipulate. In other words, during the probation period probationers need to be exposed to things that positively motivate them to do their best at work; with regards to improving the performance of staff members on probation.

It is assumed that people perform when the results would yield benefits to them. In case of the probation process it seems that the supervisors and probationers will commit more to the activities that will help them achieve self-actualization, economic proceeds or fulfill the social part.

2.2.2. Public service motivation

Motivation is defined as “a multidimensional concept that appeals to notions such as direction (purpose), intensity (effort) and duration (persistence in effort)” (Levy-Leboyer (2003) as cited in Suciu, Mortan & Veres, 2012, p. 173). The word motivation would refer to a set of aspirations by a worker to its workplace. Earlier research concluded that employees that were associated with public service motivation, experienced positive affects in their grades, performance ratings, commitment and organisational citizenship behaviours (Alonso & Lewis, 2001; Mostafa, Gould-Williams & Bottomley, 2015).

In the literature studied, the necessity of linking the concept of performance to motivation emerges. Public Service Motivation is defined as “a particular form of altruism or prosocial motivation that is animated by specific dispositions and values arising from public institutions and [their] missions” Perry, Hondeghem and Wise 2010 (as cited in Mostafa et al., 2015, p.747). At least, complementing the argument stating that performance of any kind goes with the level of motivation, as it is believed that people in public institutions are also committed to achieve their targets when their personal and institutional goals are aligned. It is for this reason performance during probation or completion of probation supposed to be the result of motivation by supervisors. In the evaluation of the existing probation process interest is strained to find

out if motivation of new employees and management is a factor to performance during probation.

It is evident that employees who expect to receive material reward for exceptional performance attain higher grades in performance ratings; although, government remains having obstacles in attracting, retaining and motivating employees (Alonso & Lewis, 2001). In the United States of America it occurs because the government supervisors has little flexibility to boost rewards for high performers, despite the experiments of desirability of board-banding pay in the countries. Jiang, Lepak, Hu and Baer (2012, p. 1278) “encourage [the] organisation to maximise the return on investment in HRM by using appropriate HR practices.” The practices can be on recruitment, selection or training.

Nel et al. (2008) indicate that the most common strategies used by management to motivate people are monetary rewards, service benefits and job security; aimed at the continuous satisfaction of needs on the physiological and safety levels. Once satisfied, they no longer act as a motivation factor, which makes this strategy to be no longer an incentive to perform. Nel et al. (2008) also acknowledged the Herzberg’s two factor motivation theories, which are used to identify factors that made employees feel exceptionally good, or exceptionally bad about their jobs. Further, they identified two sets of factors that influence motivation and job satisfaction: hygiene factors and growth factors.

Therefore, Nel at al. (2008), appreciate the idea of Maslow’s needs hierarchy based on the following: people continuously want things, depending on what they have. The theory states that Maslow divides human needs into five main categories, according to

their importance: physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, ego needs and self-actualisation needs. Self-actualisation is the inhibited expression of your true self and your talents. The discussion highlighted to readers that there are three main categories of motivational theories: content theories, process theories and consolidation theories.

Maslow's theory attributed concerns on the control function. The implication is that people need to control their environment in order to manipulate the delivery of their needs. If not, they become frustrated and tense. That create the necessity to find out who is the custodian of probation. It appears that the immediate supervisor has direct control on the performance of the staff member during probation, and has authority to control, manipulate and make a final verdict at the end of the probation process.

Hamumokola (2013) suggests that, employing effective implemented performance management systems has a motivating factor and enhances performance within organisations. Furthermore, it is emphasised that performances are boosted when goals are clearly set, continuously reviewed and adequately communicated to employees. Effective goal setting and continuous feedback lead to improved performance. Goals provide awareness of expectations and knowledge of whether set targets have been achieved or not. Knowing the status of performance progress allows shortcomings to be addressed and motivates one to set new approaches of achieving the previously unachieved goals.

To sum up, the Public Service Motivation is seen as a motivational mechanism, through which high performance HR practices influence effective commitment and Organisational Commitment Behaviours (OCBs). As far as performance is concerned, motivation is a vital component that actually boost the outcome of performance.

2.2.3. Vroom Expectancy Theory (VET)

Suciu, Mortan and Veres (2012) used Vroom's Expectancy Theory (VET) to analyse motivation. The VET assumes that human behavior is oriented towards goals achievements, depending on the approaches used. The performance during probation would depend on the duration, rotation, lack of training, management of probation, performance management, resource availability and power or authority. Privott (1999) identifies training and effective communication as two factors to probation. It is fundamental to link the performance and performance appraisal to probation, as they are all needed for the probation to materialise and achieve its purpose. The variables that are important to performance appraisal are level of trust, training levels and communication (Suciu, Mortan & Veres, 2012).

2.3. The conceptual background

The study was built around the following concept: probation performance as dependent variable, with training of supervisors and probationers, communication, mode of instruction, duration of probation, progress review (assessment and immediate feedback), performance management and productivity measurement, staff rotation, absenteeism, and reliability of performance results, as independent variables.

2.3.1. Probation and probation period

The literature review revealed that the terms probation and probationary period are used interchangeably. Globerson (1969, p.296) defines probation "as a fixed and limited period of time for which an organization employs a candidate in order to assess his aptitudes, abilities and characteristics and the amount of interest he shows in his job so

as to enable employer and employee alike to make a final decision on whether the probationer is suitable and whether there is mutual interest in his permanent employment.” In other words, probation is the institutionalised period of observation, in which management is interested to examine the employee on the job, to assess his capacities and attributes and verify his abilities and skills.

Meanwhile, McPhie and Sapin (2005, p.i.) define probation as “a crucial assessment opportunity before an appointment to the civil service becomes final”. Elliot and Peaton (1994, p.47) defined probation period as “a working period of varying length used by management, to observe employee performance before making a final selection decision- is the last step before an employee attains career status and property rights to the job”. The purpose of the observation is to match employees to their post designations and eliminate chances of wrong placement. Baloyi and Crafford (2006, p.12) explain that a probation period is “a discretionary period during which the suitability of a candidate for the post is determined and is generally viewed as part of the induction process”. This means that probation must be confirmed before permanent employment. Moreover, the employee’s attitude, ability to perform and tolerance of the work environment should be confirmed as totally excellent. It is regarded to be beneficial to new employees, as it fulfils an important socialisation function, through which employees are inducted into the organisation and are familiarised with the work situation. This allows for the period of adaptation in which both cognitive and perceptual gaps with regard to new work situations, can be bridged.

Apart from the above mentioned definitions, generally, probation is intended to protect the interests of the public service, by ensuring that every staff member, with the

exception of staff members on a temporary, fixed period contract, or expatriates serves a probation period before transfer, appointment or promotion is confirmed. During this period, they learn how to do the job effectively and efficiently and relate to their environment.

Mcpie and Sapin (2005) narrate that there is need for dramatic change in the culture and mindsets of employees. If probation was supposed to be a fair and effective tool of assessing new employees, until such a point as their ability to cope with the job is confirmed, then the current practice is not suitable. Kholá (2011, p.1) argues that the “selection and recruitment process is not a scientific one and recruitment decisions have at times turned out to be flawed due to the fact that during the interviews there was limited information on, among others, the applicant’s knowledge, his suitability for the position and his capacity to adapt to the employer’s working environment”. The greatest benefit is the fact that probation is intended to evaluate a newly hired employee’s suitability for permanent employment, while at the same time giving an opportunity to correct errors in recruitment and selection without incurring costs (Kholá, 2011). The suitability may not necessarily relate only to the employee’s ability to do the job; it may also include other aspects such as employee’s conduct, character, general attitude towards the job, as well as the ability to get along with other employees.

However, Privott (1999) indicates that the nature of the probation period has been criticised for violating or denying an individual’s first amendment rights, breeding timidity and denying agencies the benefits of a fresh and unbiased perspective. Therefore, Privott (1999) recommends supervisory training on performance and evaluations appraisal. Apart from that, the underscored criteria have no provisions made

on how candidates are helped to adapt to organizational culture during the probation process. The probation period was found to have pitfalls, even though it is used as a step to attempt at minimising risks on taking unknown employees. Burson (2009) narrated the following conclusions based on a study: Firstly, the probation period clause will not always have the effect that employers intended to see. Secondly, employers do not follow a fair process with the employees during probation periods; and finally the employment agreements are not specific regarding probation. Thus, such loopholes are associated with probation process applications, which bring about weaknesses in the system.

Consequently, the employers are reminded to be vigilant when dealing with probation issues. It is on this basis that the probation criteria should be specified in writing in the contract of employment. Burson (2009, p.28) suggests “when drafting the probationary period clause[s], it is important to pay careful attention to the wording, to ensure that it achieves the intended outcomes”. The employer should always remember that even during the probation, they still have to follow a fair process. It is unfortunate that people still use probation to threaten, mistreat or discriminate employees, due to their shortcomings, whereas the responsibility of the supervisor is to be a mentor to the employee in order to eliminate weaknesses.

2.3.2. Objectives of employment probation

The employment probation process is world widely practiced in different countries and people tend to use it with different intentions. This section will be looking at various uses or objectives that probation is meant to fulfill.

Several scholars suggest that probation is used to select unsuccessful performers so that they can be removed before making a long term commitment to them. It also provides the government with the opportunity to evaluate an individual's conduct and performance on the job, towards final appointment in the civil service. "In the Irish Civil Service the probation is the trial period during which new entrants are assessed for the suitability [which] usually lasts for a year" (Suciu, Mortana and Veres, 2012, p. 177). The assessments are in terms of efficiency, conduct, punctuality, health and sick leave record.

Loh (1994, p. 471) investigated the "gains that accrues to firms from imposing employment probation". The first advantage discovered is that, it helps the non-union firms to discharge any workers for productivity or other business related reasons, subsequent to the probationary period. Secondly, it help firms to spend time, money and effort to monitor and keep records on probationary workers, due to the economy of scales. It was then concluded that probation seems to be unnecessary and costly. Moreover, economists explained the use of probation, which allowed firms to obtain information that is unavailable before hiring, and served as a check on the quality of match between workers and their jobs, and it is found to be a cost effective way to discourage less qualified applicants from seeking jobs, rather than to negotiate the contracts of workers who are found to be unsuitable.

Loh (1994, p.485) concludes that "the empirical evidence which suggests that firms can reasonably expect the use of probation to attract applicants with certain desirable qualities [and] both workers and firms benefit from the widespread use of the probation in the labor market". The employee benefits from the choice between firms, with and

without employment probation, because that arrangement maximises their discounted lifetime income and firms benefit from the use of employment probation, as it can help them obtain employees of the kind they desire; more especially in the private sector (Loh, 1994).

2.3.3. Disadvantages of the probation process

Besides the uses and advantages that probation achieves, there are disadvantages, to the employee or organisation. The following are some disadvantages outlined by Gomez-Meija, Balkin and Cardy (1995) and Masango and Hilliard (1999) (cited in Baloyi & Crafford, 2006, p.12):“Many supervisors fail to see probation as the final step in the selection process. Supervisors lack the necessary training (knowledge and skills), on how to administer and manage the probation period. Probation may be abused by supervisors who allow their personal feelings to influence them when assessing and supervising probationers. Orientation (induction) is sometimes done after an employee has completed the probation period, (which is wrong). Probation periods are normally handled in a piecemeal fashion. Periods of probation can generate anxiety amongst probationers. In most instances, probationers do not receive normal employee benefits”. Some scholars indicated negative opinions on employment probation.

Privott (1999) expressed that probation is regarded as the opportunity to revoke first amendment rights. The result is that in some jurisdictions, a probationary employee can be removed without reasons and does not have appeal rights. Baloyi and Crafford (2006) reveal that the duration of probation which is currently 12 months in the South African context, is too long and unreasonable.

2.3.4. Probation, Performance Management and Productivity Measurement

Performance Management (PM) “can be as little as monthly tracking of revenues, key costs and profits” (Wilkes, Yip & Simmons, 2011, p. 22), supported by change programmes, looking at behavioral and capability aspects. Then PM has become one of the drivers for the organisation’s success, through which managers ensure that employees’ activities and outputs contribute to the overall organizational goals (Noe, Hollenbeck & Gerhart, 2011). Since the concern of an organisation always is to smoothly run the process to achieve performance objectives.

The study is to critically analyse the probation practice, while considering the understanding of the probation process part and parcel of excellence in the public service. Promotion occurs when an employee’s probation is confirmed, which means that confirmation of probation guarantees that a person is prepared and ready to assume greater challenges, more responsibility and more authority than offered by the current job. These responsibilities are usually accompanied with an increase in salary (Noe, Hollenbeck and Gerhart, 2011). However, there is still concern about the existing discrepancy between hiring the right people to do the job in the public service, and poor service.

Wilkes, Yip & Simmons (2011, p.22), suggested two ways to improve performance in companies or any other institutions, “one [being] strategic and transformational: company improves its business model, its competitive position and other long-term strategic contributors to performance” and secondly, “to get the most out of a company’s existing business model, assets and competitive position”. The first way of improving

performance appears to be risky, slow and expensive and the second way is where the PM plays a crucial role.

PM is responsible for monitoring the activities and outputs in the organisation's set-up, which is exactly what happens during probation. Supervisors then have the responsibility to ensure that the probation process is performed and activities are completed. The concept of performance stands for action, and management should observe actions to ensure results. Afterwards, the results have to be measured directly or indirectly. Direct measurement occurs when a person appointed to monitor performance is tasked to rate the output, and indirect measurement occurs when results are measured as a component of overall outputs of the organisation.

The HR Office has the mammoth task to facilitate the performance measurement process in professional organisations. Professional organisations are organisations that provide public service (Bruijn, 2007,). He emphasised that there has been a debate in the public sector on professional measurement. One being that, there is a view that performance measurement does not do any justice to the nature of activities performed by professional organizations, (Bruijn, 2007) and the opposite view begins with the idea of accountability. It is quantified that productivity measurement is a very powerful communication tool, since it aims at measuring the level of an employee's productivity, and reduces the complexity of performance of a professional organisation to its essence. According to Aguinis (2007), PM usually includes measures of both behaviours (what employees do, results and the outcomes of employees' behaviour). He further commented that performance does not include the results of an employee's behaviour, but only the behaviour itself. In addition, there are two characteristics of the behaviours

that label performance. First, they are evaluative, i.e. they can be judged as negative or positive for individual or organisational effectiveness. Secondly, they are multidimensional. This means that there are many different kinds of behaviours that have the capacity to advance or hinder organisational goals.

Performance can be defined as a holistic approach and process towards the effective management of individuals and groups, to ensure that their shared goals as well as the organisational strategic objectives are achieved. Therefore, measurement of performance is a nitty-gritty of the probation, as it allows for confirmation or extension of the probation period. Nevertheless, the measurement unit of the probationer's performance remains a problem, as the supervisors usually rate the qualities of the staff members, but no significance is associated with the rating.

Flanagan and Finger 1998 (as cited in Shafudah, (2011, p.11) stated "that most performance improvement processes consist of agreeing on the standards or expectations by managers and staffs: monitoring progress; recognising achievement and reviewing the performance displayed with recognition and review featuring in the maintenance plan. It is imperative that supervisors and employees agree upon and understand each other's expectations of the job".

Naturally, one does not see one's own wrong doings. Therefore, an independent body is supposed do the probation evaluation and compile a progress report to the HR Office on the new employees, rather than the immediate supervisor. It is possible that some people successfully complete their probation, because their supervisor rates them well, for them (supervisors) to clear their profiles.

2.3.5. Revolutionary changes on Performance appraisal or reviews

“In 1813, an Army General submitted an evaluation of each of his men, to the U.S. war department. This is looked up on as the start of formal performance appraisal in the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, performance appraisals were used primarily by military and government organisations” according to Wiese and Buckley (1998, p.235). “By that time, performance appraisals have been used for administrative purposes, such as retention, discharge, promotion and salary administrative decisions (De Vries et al, 1981, Murphy and Cleveland, 1995, Pattern, 1977, as cited in Wiese & Buckley, 1998, p, 236). The tools which were used are global ratings and global essays. There were too many errors that evolve around these tools, so they were changed.

In the discussion of probation, the assumptions are that staff’s evaluations are done properly and professionally. Thus, the results of probation performance would depend on them, to entertain the concept of performance appraisal and performance management. Freddie (2015) indicated that systemic performance appraisal has increased over the last few decades, though it came into prominence after the world war. Performance appraisal, whether attached to financial benefit or not, is needed in any strategy or process execution. It helps to measure the results against the set objectives. That is why during probation, staff evaluation is done and is aimed at seeing the level of progression on the expectations of the process. Also, the result leads either to extension, termination or confirmation of probation.

2.3.6. Definition of performance appraisal

The tool that is used to measure the performance of employees is called performance appraisal or reviews. Performance reviews have been a procedure used during probation and currently in most work environment industry, not necessarily during war. Cleveland et al. 2003 (as cited in Chouhan, Chandra, Goswami and Verma, 2016, p.49), defined Performance Appraisal (PA) as “a two way communication process, which involves active communication about performance between employees and supervisors,” while Yong, 1996 (as cited Freddie, 2015 p.3) defines PA “as an evaluation and grading exercise, undertaken by an organisation on all its employees, either periodically or annually, on the outcomes of performance based on the job content, job requirement and personal behaviour in a given position”. The performance reviews are defined as “appraisal of the progress made towards achievement of objectives and set targets” (PSSR E.VI part III).

PA is likely not to differ much from the performance review, only the wording differs. However, the PA in some institutions is enforced to relate to awards, although in others it does not. Evidence is seen in the evaluation that Namibian government’s O/M/As conduct with their employees. It is monitored through organisational and individual (staff member) performance review. It also contributes to advancing supervisor-employee understanding and reinforces organisational values (Kim & Holzer, 2016). Therefore, it is true that performing or carrying out a specific task only comes factual if the behavior of the executor is aligned with the goal of the task to be performed.

2.3.7. Probation and Performance Reviews or appraisals

According to Schweiger and Sumners (1994, p.3), “Performance Appraisals are used for two main purposes: judgemental and developmental”. The judgemental purpose focuses on assessing the relative value of each employee to the department, in order to make sound administrative decisions, such as salary increases, promotions, probations and lay-offs. The developmental purpose focuses on providing feedback to the auditors on past performance; discussing strengths and weaknesses; clarifying future expectations; establishing future goals; and assessing training needs. The discussed appraisal purposes are all correct, though the study will adopt the judgemental purpose for appraisal that is used in probation. It is suggested that appraisals have shortcomings, but the only way to eliminate them is to train the appraiser (Schweiger and Sumners, 1994).

As per the assessment form in Annexure A of the PSSR E.VI, the progress report of the staff member on probation is measured on diligence, conduct, job knowledge and skills, attendance, initiative, delegation and many more. While attempting to measure the different qualities, different grades are given to employees as a measuring unit. The meaning of the grades used are shown in the table 1 below:

Table 1: The grades of Performance Reviews, Chouhan et al (2016, p.53) and PSSR 1995 B. V Annexure A.

Grade	Meaning
Outstanding	Denotes excellent job performance in all aspects
Good	Well above average
Satisfactory	Just meets the basic requirement
Below Average	Performance much below the requirement
Very Poor	Badly performed
NT	Not tested

“The purpose of evaluation is to arrive at the appraisal of a man before one decides whether he is the right person to fill a bigger position,” Drunker, 1967 as cited in Shaikh (1995). This has fully complimented the purpose of probation assessment. Meanwhile, Shaikh (1995) raises concerns with the Indian job performance appraisals, i.e. no evidence to confirm counselling and performance feedback; performance objectives being set at the beginning of the appraisal year; reviews being carried out from time to time. For the purpose of the study, these three major concerns of the scholar can be related to probation evaluations or appraisal, of which the performance objectives and feedbacks will be the most critical.

The feedback system during appraisal gives a clear map on the expected performance of an employee being reviewed. Shaikh (1995) pointed out the type of errors that is committed during appraisal. It is said that when the evaluator gives the employee an

identical rating on all traits using average or above average it is called the Halo Effect, which is more prominent in quarterly probation reports. “The Quarterly Probation Reports (QPR) are raised once every three months during the one year probation of staff” (Shaikh, 1995, p.16). It is during this reports the errors appears. The table 2 will then present the types of common errors committed during performance appraisal and their meaning.

Table 2: The common psychometric errors in performance reviews, Schweiger & Summers (1994, p.4)

Psychometric errors are measurement errors due to the psychological predisposition of the appraiser.	
Leniency/ harshness	Higher or lower rating than warranted by actual performance
Halo	Appraise receives the same rating on logically unrelated performance criteria, due to the appraiser’s overall impression of the employee.
Restriction of range	Appraiser’s tendency to assign the same ratings to different employees, irrespective of their performance levels.
Recency	Recent performance is taken as entire year’s performance
Contrast	Inappropriately high/low rating after a deserved low/high rating to the previous employee

Shaikh (1995, p.16), presents evidence that, “there is no single performance appraisal review (PAR) that was reviewed and gave evidence of formal performance feedback and

counselling, “[always saying] the official was informed time to time” or “the official was told on a day to day basis about his/her performance, and other shortcomings, is lack of Key Performance Area (KPA). Meanwhile, people raise, review and countersign the appraisal reports and retain them at HR archives, but are not aware of absence of the KPAs. At least employees are expected to be aware of their KPAs, so that they develop their tactics to achieve and embrace them as the year goes.

“The evaluation aims to identify the performance gap (if any) and the feedback system aims to inform the employee about his or her performance quality” (Hangula, 2010:14). Although that is the purpose, proper care should be applied when carrying out the performance appraisal. The supervisor should possess adequate knowledge and training, to properly implement the appraisals or evaluation without being biased. On the other hand, employees need to understand the objectives of the performance appraisal.

The probationary period evaluation or appraisal is seen as the responsibility of the senior management staffs, to eventually ensure effective implementation and good results. No one should be left out, so that the purposes will be achieved with high percentages. Their obligation is to harmoniously unite the individual characters and goals with organisational objectives to reach positive ends. There might be a lot of factors affecting evaluation of the employees, but they are unlimited, due to the fact that they are in excess. But when developing the evaluation or appraisal form, the important ones should be included.

Academic researchers suggested many ways to achieve an effective appraisal system. It needs perfection because it acts as a reflecting mirror, where the organisation, section

and division see their positions. The following are a few recommendations to improve job performance appraisals: total commitment and support; HR to play a role of interventionist; training and retaining managers; identification of Key Performance Areas (KPAs); timely reviews and formation of appraisal review (Shaikh, 1995).

2.4. Empirical Reviews

Privott (1999) highlights that probation is used widely in the state level of government in the USA, except in the state of Georgia which ceased to use it in 1996. The state of Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) addresses six central themes, of which one, the dismissal of probationary employees without cause, requires pronounced attention. The 92.3% of probationers do receive orientation training with the specific department where they will be working, but the relationship between orientation training and successfully passing of the probationary period is not established. Thus, endorsement for further studies is highly recommended. Apart from orientation training, respondents testified that there was no other training offered, specific to the department they are going to work.

McPhie (2005) used a survey questionnaires and focus group discussions to obtain the viewpoints on the probation period and how they are being used. Nonetheless shortcomings were detected, e.g. they could not relate the responses between a particular probationer and individual supervisor. Privott (1999) outlined that the methodology used was qualitative method, which was chosen because of the lack of systemic data on the probation and limited time of the study. The problem is that not all questionnaires were returned. Baloyi & Clafford (2006), indicated that purposive sampling was used in their study, to ensure that research participants met the requirements of the qualitative study

carried out. Individual interviews to gather participant's views regarding the probation period were carried out. Their findings doubted the sample size which is drawn from one organisation only, as it affects the external validity. Further, research were recommended to determine if the probation is the best way to ensure performance in public service, as they identified problems surrounding probation period such as the duration.

In their findings, the purpose of probation “[is] establishing loyalty and commitment to the public service and imparting good values and practices were required of the dedicated public servants” (Baloyi & Crafford , 2006, p.14). This actually communicates that probation's purpose remains socialisation. The supervisors that partake in the survey indicated that probation acts as a bridging programme for the new staff members. Loh (1994) discovered that the purpose of probation is to induce self-selection among workers. If probation succeeds in inducing self-selection, firms will get the employees desired and there will be no increased likelihood of layoffs. Additionally, probation serves as a sorting mechanism.

The length of the probation period was an area of contention between supervisors and probationers, where some probationers felt the prescribed duration of twelve calendar months is extremely long and unreasonable. Meanwhile, probationers felt they should be given extension to improve performance (Baloyi & Crafford, 2006). Loh (1994) discovered that the duration of the probation period in the United States of America (USA) is reported in weeks, which goes up to 96 weeks, and some people did not know if they were on probation. Mcphie (2005) claims that the one year probation is not always practical in today's government, particularly if the probationer is a trainee. Many

of the respondents in his survey indicated that the probation duration was not sufficient enough and wanted the period to be extended.

The rotation, training, poor management and performance management are some of the challenges that face the probation process. In South African Public Service, probationers are rotated on an every three-month basis. In the study of Baloyi and Crafford (2006), rotation was done earlier, so employees did not gain any competencies in those sections. In the end probationers did not develop any ability to full capacity. The probationers also agreed that they were given orientation only and training was limited to ad-hoc trainings of the section and time. Due to the high volume of work; the training section should take up the responsibility to train the supervisors and probationers.

According to Baloyi and Crafford (2006), the lack of competence on the part of general supervision and managing of probation was discovered and supervisors blamed management for the lack of management training. The need of training is noted in this regard, in the areas of communication, conflict resolution, leadership/management training, performance management and knowledge of legislation and procedures. It has been reported that the supervisors do not adhere to the probation period reporting time frames. They report only when they were reminded and normally this violates the probation procedures. The supervisors in the study revealed that the quality of probation reports, is generally of poor standard, because dimensions on which probationers were assessed were not relevant.

The effectiveness of the probation period is severely limited, unless fair, in-depth assessment of the probationer and willingness to terminate the probationer becomes a

reality. Therefore, Baloyi and Clafford (2006) recommend further research to find out whether or not probation is the most effective way to ensure best performance on the part of new employees in the public service.

2.4.1. Summary of empirical review

Amongst the empirical reviews that were covered in the literature a summary of the journals and books on the probation period were drawn up as per table on the next page. The table is then organized that it presents the title of the document read, author, place of publication, methodology used, variables, tools of analysis and findings. The aim was to bring a brief overview on the topic.

Table 3: The summary of empirical reviews of the study

No	Title	Author	Place	Year	Methodology	Variables	Tools of analysis	Findings
1.	Employment probation as a sorting mechanism	Eng Seng Loh	United States of America	1994	Secondary data from National Center for Research in Vocational Education employer survey	Probation Wage growth Training time, orientation hours, years of education, employment duration, related experience, gender, labor force and position.	Labor market prediction model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Probation lowers the likelihood of quits, but does not affect the likelihood of layoffs. -The effects of probation on quit propensities, applies only to old people. Probation induces self-selection by workers into jobs with and without probation, providing support for the hypotheses that employment probation performs a sorting function for firms. -both the firms and employees benefits from widespread use of probation.
2.	The probationary period: A critical Assessment Opportunity	Neil A.G. McPhie	United States of America: Washington	2005	Surveys sent out randomly to probationers, questionnaires for agency input, the focus group	Assessment, probationer performance, communication	Qualitative analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Probation period is an assessment opportunity before final appointment -assessment is poorly done and effectiveness of probation remains severely limited -There is lack of agency support to the full use of

Table 3: The summary of the empirical review continues...

								probationary period.
3.	The probation period for debutant civil servants. Influencing expectancy	Suciu., L. E., Mortan M., & Veres V.	Romania local public administration	2012	Comprehensive Questionnaires	Probation period, expectancy, motivation	Descriptive statistics analysis, chi-square test and Kendall's rank Correlation coefficient	-Probation period influences the perception about their own person (self-esteem) and indirectly influences their work motivation as Vroom's Model states. - The study could not test the empirical testing?? The theory in public administration due to civil servants reticence or difficulty in operationalisation concepts.
4.	Problems that surround probation in the South African Public Service	Baloyi, Z & Crafford, A	South African Public Service	2006	Focus group and interviews	Lack of proper guidelines, duration of probation, rotation during probation, lack of training , poor management, anxiety and stress, power and authority, performance management	General qualitative principles of analysing qualitative data. Defining analysis-classifying data-making connections	-Probation is a developmental opportunity -No official policy on probation -probation period is extremely long -Performance management is unrealistic and supervisors are not prepared to do it. -Lack of competency on the supervisors side. -Lack of training and developmental initiatives.

Table 3: The summary of the empirical review continues...

5.	Probation periods-promoting excellence or legal loophole.	Privott, D.R	State of Nevada Government- Las Vegas	1999	Questionnaires	Probationary period ratio, Orientation Training procedures, supervisors training, employee evaluation training	Contingency tables and charts	50 % of employees does not complete their probation Effectiveness of probation needs to be assessed.
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2.4.2. Conceptual framework

Maxwell (2005, p.39) as cited in Tamene (2016, p. 50), defines the conceptual framework as “the primary conception or model of what is out there that is planned for the study, what is going on with these things and why – a tentative theory of the phenomena that is being investigating. The function of this theory is to inform the rest of the design - to help access and refine the goals, develop realistic and relevant research questionnaires, as well as select appropriate methods”. What the conceptual framework is made of, depends exactly on the researcher’s understandings of the topic, from the literature readings. Antonenko (2015, p.55) concludes that, “personal beliefs that influence the researcher’s thinking about the research problem (epistemic beliefs), play a critical role in research conceptualisation because they reflect an individual’s beliefs about knowledge, its structure and certainty”.

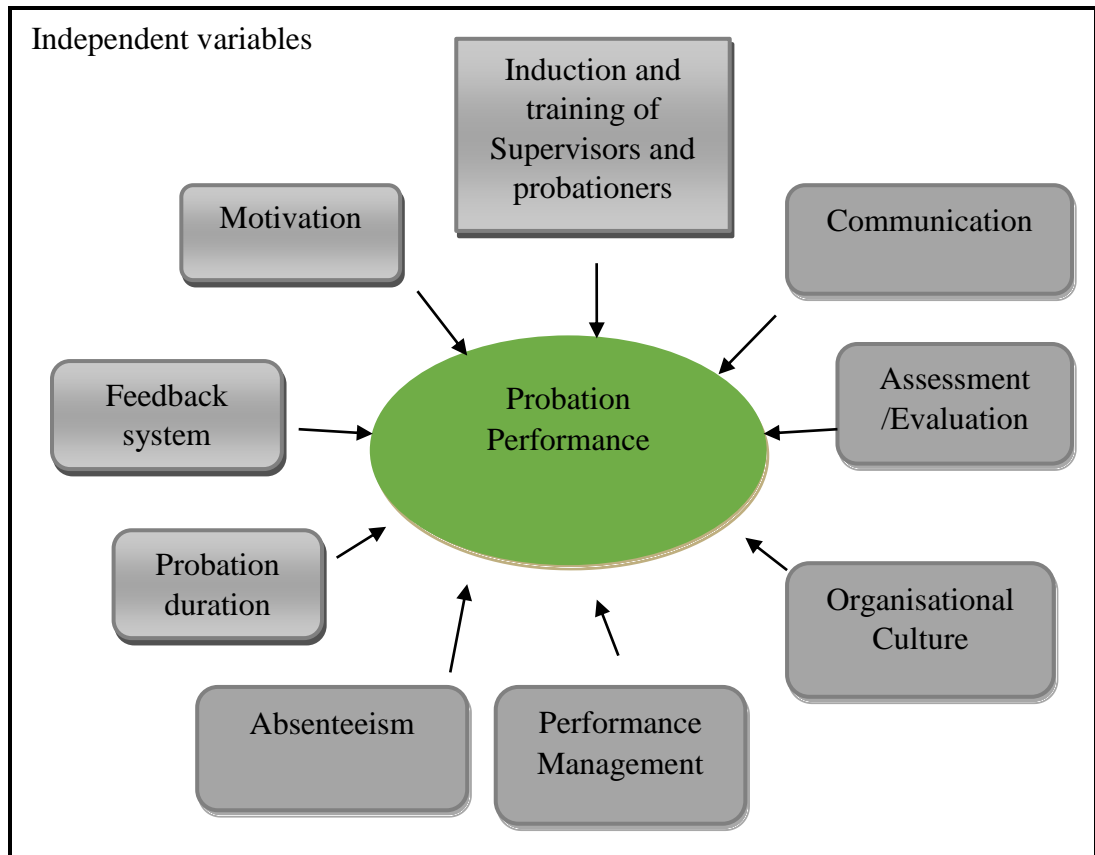


Figure 1: The conceptual framework

In Figure 1 above, the independent variables shown are the factors which affect performance during probation. The performance during probation is variable because it varies with the independent factors, which are induction and training offered to new candidates, motivation of candidates and supervisors, communication channels used, how often or type of feedback given, duration of probation, absenteeism, how assessments are done, type of organization culture and the type of management. Their effect can be positive or negative, depending on the manifestation; the outcomes are the results thereof. For instance, if a probationer is absent from work, the probation performance will be halted and then the result is an extension of probation.

2.5. Conclusion of the chapter

There are theories that influence performance of employees, which are Social Exchange Theories on performance, Public Service Motivation and the Vroom Expectancy Theory on Motivation. As far as performance is concerned, motivation is a vital component that actually boosts the outcome of performance. The greatest benefit of probation is evaluation of newly hired employee's suitability for permanent employment and opportunity to correct errors in recruitment and selection without incurring costs. The effectiveness of the probation period is severely limited, unless fair, in-depth assessment of the probationer and willingness to terminate the probationer becomes a reality.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

Research Methodology is the broad principles or rules from which procedures may be derived, to solve or interpret different problems within the scope of a particular discipline. Research methodology does not need to be a formula, rather a set of practices. This chapter presents the research methodology adopted in the study, the population of the study, the research instruments, sample and sampling techniques, as well as the data collection procedures and tools. This section will also provide the research ethics followed in the study.

3.2. Research design

The study adopted a mixed method research design (QUAL+ QUAN research). Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007, p.129) defined mixed method research as “an intellectual and practical synthesis based on qualitative and quantitative research. It recognises the importance of traditional quantitative and qualitative research, but also offers a powerful third paradigm choice that often provides the most informative, complete, balanced and useful research results”. Awaits and Toole, (2010) state that each research method has inherent strengths and weaknesses, but the mixed methods are expensive, though they improve the validity and reliability of resulting data.

The reason why a mixed method was chosen is that it is a method that can allow us to gather people’s feelings, experiences and views on the probation process (qualitative part); thereafter, examining the results and concluding on the objectives; such as

counting the number of people who selected a certain option (quantitative part). It is also due to the fact that the previous studies on the related topics used the same methodology. Baloyi and Crafford (2006) as well as Privott (1999), chose qualitative methods because of the lack of systematic data collected on the probationary period and the limited frame of the study. Shafudah (2011) also adopted a mixed approach that was broadly qualitative, through the standard questionnaires with opportunity to qualitative analysis through the general response in the questions and in-depth interviews.

3.3. Population

The Oshana Regional Council's Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture has 2941 personnel in total, which includes all non-teaching, support and teaching staff members (Intergrated Financial Management Systems (IFMS), 2016). This was the population considered in the study, which was generated from the IFMS in May 2016. The teaching staff are teachers, head of departments and principals, who are stationed at different schools. The non-teaching staff are officials doing administrative work, normally stationed at the Oshana Regional Offices, Ongwediva Teacher's Resource Centre, and Circuit Offices: Ompundja, Onamutai, Oshakati, Eheke and Oluno; while the support staffs are personnel like cooks, cleaners, hostel matrons, institutional workers and labourers, stationed at different schools and offices.

3.5. Research Instruments

3.5.1. Interviews

An interview is the most commonly used method in data collection; which involves conversation between individual respondent and researcher. The researcher was required

to develop the interview guide, in order to extract the relevant information from respondents, as per study objectives. The collection of primary data was done through personal interviews with supervisors, using structured questions and a pencil and notepad for writing the responses of the supervisors.

3.5.2. Questionnaires

The questionnaires that are self-administered were distributed to all the participants as per the sample population, in order to gather their thoughts, experiences, as well as getting further explanations on probation, as the method recommended (Baloyi & Crafford, 2006). Some questions were on a 4-point Likert scales, (Shih, Tsao, Liu, Chuang & Lee, 2011). Finally, an advantage of questionnaires is that they are cost effective and do not require the researcher to be present when respondent are completing them.

3.6. Sample and Sampling Techniques

It is believed that the best sample design depends on the survey objectives and survey resources. “Sampling refers to the process of choosing a sample of elements, from the total population of elements” (Amin, 2005, as cited in Fredie, 2015, p.18). It is therefore the researcher’s task to select the sample that will lead to a desired level of precision.

In generating the sample, the Yamane formula $n = \frac{N}{1+N\alpha^2}$ was used, with a 95% set as the level of confidence, a 0.05 margin of error or level of precision and sample size of 352, was identified Yamane (1967). The population was then grouped into five sub-groups, rank wise: teachers, heads of departments, support staff (non-teaching), principals and non-teaching staff (administration), who are still in employment. The

maximum variation techniques of purposive or judgmental sampling methods was further used to identify probationers, confirmed staff and supervisors, who are specific needs of the study criteria among the five sub-groups (Baloyi & Crafford, 2006; Iita, 2014).

The literacy promoters and temporary teachers were not part of the selected population for the survey purpose, since they do not go through probation (Public Service Act 1995, Act No 13 of 1995). In short, we say that the respondents were all permanent employees. Due to the limited time, only four supervisors from different sections of administration were interviewed.

All the employees that do not meet the selection criteria were not considered for the study. These are the people with terminated services in terms of payroll, due to retirement, death, resignation and transfer to other O/M/As and the temporary or contract employees. The verification was done through informed principals and heads of sections, who were the distributor during the questionnaire distribution process. One of the criteria of selection is that the probationer has to be a person who is employed, but have not completed their probation process (stayed on the same position, for not more than twelve calendar months). The confirmed staff is a staff member who has completed his/her probation (stayed on the same position for more than twelve calendar months, with probation confirmed in writing, even if it was extended); and the supervisor is the head of a section, subdivision, division, school, unit or directorate, who normally conduct the staff member evaluation during probation.

The researcher was also part of the population, but was not selected, in order to avoid a conflict of interest. The interviewees are not represented separately from the sample, as

they were handpicked from the same group of questionnaire respondents. This was done to avoid double counting. Supervisors were interviewed and their questions are set out in Annexure B. Table four below, show the sampling proportion of the study, as per job categories and percentages.

Table 4: The study sample composition, IFMS payroll module (May, 2016)

Job Category	Population	Sample per category	% of Proportion
Teacher	1950	233	66.39
Head of Department	170	20	5.79
Principal	121	14	3.98
Support Staff (Non-teaching)	544	65	18.52
Non-teaching staff (Administration)	156	20	5.68
Total	2941	352	100

3.7. Data Collection Procedure

The initial step before proceeding to the field, the researcher obtained an authorisation letter from the University of Namibia and the Chief Regional Officer of Oshana Regional Council to collect data, which was presented to staff members. The researcher scheduled a one day appointment with supervisors and participants, to avail themselves on the set date. The average time estimated for the interview was ten minutes. The questionnaires on the research were distributed to the participants, electronically via emails for three days, with the attached document only for the non-teaching staff (administration) and others were posted in hard copies, sealed in envelopes with the intended respondents' ranks and duty stations, through the Director's Office, to the

Circuit Office. “This arrangement allowed the adoption of a convenient sampling method, as long as the available members that met the criteria were picked as respondents” (Mostafa, Gloud-Williams & Bottomley, 2015, p. 75).

“The arrangement was made for respondents who are not comfortable with Information Technology to have a fair chance to participate and have a chance to write their views” (Shafudah, 2011, p. 32), while at the same time cutting cost for posting envelopes. The respondents were given sixteen days, after the three days of distribution of questionnaires, before gathering filled questionnaires. It was done in the same manner that the distribution was done. The arrangement was also convenient for the respondents who were located in the remote rural areas and would find it difficult to go to the post to drop the questionnaires. The researcher took the time into consideration, because of the work environment, in case the respondent was a teacher or principal, who needed to attend to school activities.

3.8. Data Analysis

Upon completion of data collection, all interview responses and questionnaires were examined and sorted into three groups: supervisors, teaching group and non-teaching group, to help ease the content analysis of outcomes. The sub-themes were used for presence of the responses. All the answers to the closed and four point questions were coded as: Likert scale: strongly agree (1), agree (2), disagree (3) and strongly disagree (4); otherwise, with systematic numbers from 1 till the last answer option is reached and the code 99 for no answer. Then, coded information was captured and analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) descriptive version 24.0 software and content analysis (Shih, Tsao, Liu, Chuang, & Lee, 2011). The study made use of

frequencies, charts, graphs and tables. The required equipment for the project was a computer to perform word- and data-processing. All the processing was done by the researcher.

3.9. Research Ethics

It is the Namibian Government's requirement that a person conducting research must secure permission, in order to carry out his or her research (Iita, 2014). Therefore, the researcher was granted authorisation by the University of Namibia and Chief Regional Officer of Oshana Regional Council, to conduct research in the Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture (see Appendix C, D and E). Confidentiality was guaranteed throughout the study, as participants were informed of their right to participate or withdraw. The return envelopes for questionnaires were sealed by respondents, to ensure confidentiality.

In order to protect the identities of the respondents, no names were used except ranks and duty stations. Furthermore, the researcher used pseudonyms in the form of numbers: 1, 2, and 3... to represent the respondent's name when necessary. Information collected was treated with strict confidentiality and not shared with anyone. A computer security code was used to block access to the information. A letter of assurance of confidentiality and consent, was signed by the researcher and issued as a cover letter of the questionnaires, to the respondents and presented to interviewees, to encourage trust and openness. The questionnaires used will be kept safe for a period of five years and will then be destroyed. All other scholars' ideas used in the study paper, were acknowledged in the text, in order to avoid plagiarism.

3.10. Conclusion of the chapter

The study adopted a mixed method research design (QUAL+ QUAN research), which was used to gather and analyse information on the case study. The Oshana Regional Council's Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture had 2941 personnels but only 352 people were sampled to participate in the study. But due to non-response only 196 responded. The questionnaires and interviews were the tools of data collection. A maximum variation technique of purposive or judgmental sampling methods was employed to select best sample from the population.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

This study focused on assessing the existing probation process, in ORC-DOEAC, as a public institution in Namibia, while at the same time, finding out the factors influencing probation performance and the challenges that hinder its completion. This chapter focuses on the presentation and analysis of survey responses rate and demographic profiles. The study also explains the employees' job positions, employees' background information on probation, evaluation of the existing probation process, its objectives, training during probation, communication, performance reviews, probation duration, feedback system and probation assessment peak. Additionally, the chapter outlines the factors and ways to improve the probation performance, current issues and challenges affecting probation process and mitigations of challenges. Thereafter, it presents the supervisors' interview responses on the probation process. All questionnaire's data are captured in the SPSS, analysed and presented in this chapter. The results were given in frequency tables, followed by the interpretation thereof.

4.2. Response rate for the survey

Table 5: The response rate for the survey

Category	Questionnaires issued	Questionnaires returned	Response rate (%)
Teacher	233	102	28.98
Head of department	20	19	5.40
Principal	14	13	3.69
Support staff	65	39	11.08
Non-Teaching staff	20	18	5.11
Number of questionnaires not completed	0	19	5.40
Number of questionnaires without ranks	0	5	1.42
Total	352	215	61.08

Table 5 above shows the questionnaire distribution lists and responses rates for the whole survey. There were 352 questionnaires printed and distributed through circuit offices. Only 215 questionnaires were returned in closed envelopes, and 19 of them were not completed. That is why the sample decreased from 352 to 196 respondents. The 352 was representing the 12% proportion of the 2941 population, now the 196 is representing a 7% proportion of the population.

4.3. Demographic profiles of the respondents

In this section, the demographic profiles are presented, in terms of the respondents' gender, age, level of education, terms of employment, date of appointment, job category

and employees' background information, e.g. if the probationer has ever gone through probation, their confirmation date of probation and probation period confirmation. The following aspects deal with the demographics characteristics:

4.3.1. Employees' job position

The job position of the respondents is classified into 14 groups and presented in the following table.

Table 6: Employees job position

Job Position	Number	Percentages (%)
Principal	13	6.64
Computer Technician	1	0.51
Hostel Matron	3	1.53
Librarian	3	1.53
Labourer	1	0.51
Institutional Worker	2	1.02
Teacher	102	52.04
Head of Department: Teacher	19	9.70
Accountant	7	3.58
Human Resources Practitioner	7	3.58
Inspector Of Education	1	0.51
Administrative Officer	21	10.72
Cleaner	6	3.07
Education Officer	5	2.56
No Answer	5	2.56
Total	196	100

Table 6 above shows the employee's rank. Part of this number is 6.64% Principals, 0.51% computer technicians and 1.53% hostel matrons. Additionally, there are 1.53% librarians, 0.51% labourers and 0.51% institutional workers. There were 52.04% teachers who participated in the survey, 9.7% heads of departments, 3.58% accountants and 3.58% human resources practitioners. Only 0.51% were inspectors of education, 10.72% was administrative officers and 3.07% cleaners' participants in the study. Finally, 2.56% of Education Officers of the participants were participated in the study and 2.56% participants' falls in the no-answer group. The proportions of the sample projected was good, even though not perfectly matched to the proposed number in Table 5. There is slight deviation from the original set sample proportion, which is justifiable.

4.3.2. Age group and sex of the respondents

Table 7: Age versus gender of the respondents

Age group of respondents * sex of respondents cross tabulation				
		Sex of respondents		Total
		Male	Female	
Age group of respondents	Below 25 years	4	7	11
	26-30 years	14	21	35
	31-35 years	14	27	41
	36-40 years	16	24	40
	Above 40	25	43	68
	No answer	1	0	1
Total		74	122	196

Table 7 above shows the age versus sex of the respondents of the survey. Conversion to percentages shows 37.76 % of the participants were males and 62.24 % females. The

large proportion of males and females were above the age of 40 which represented by 12.8% and 21.9% respectively.

The majority of the respondents were females. It is evident that the DOEAC used in the case study, has a female dominated workforce. Furthermore, the majority of the respondents (male and female) were in the age group of above 40. This proves that there are more matured employees in the DOEAC. A higher maturity ratio might give us a good promise that we have a well-disciplined and experienced working respondent's group to the survey.

4.3.3. Age of respondents and their levels of education

Table 8: Age and Education level of the respondents

Age group of respondents *level of education for respondent Cross tabulation							
		Level of Education for Respondents					Total
		Secondary	College	University	No education	No answer	
Age group of respondents	Below 25 years	1	0	10	0	0	11
	26-30 years	1	4	29	1	0	35
	31-35 years	7	10	24	0	0	41
	36-40 years	3	3	33	0	1	40
	Above 40	6	14	44	4	0	68
	No-answer	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total		18	31	141	5	1	196

According to the Table 8 above, the education levels versus age group were as follows: Only 0.51% respondents achieved secondary education and the rest 5.1% studied at university; which makes a total of 5.6% of respondents under the age of 25. In the age group of 26-30 years; 0.51% of respondents went to secondary school, 2.0% went to

college, 14.8% went to university and 0.51% received no education. Thus, the total percentage of respondents between 26-30 years is 17.9%.

There were 20.9% respondents in the age group of 31-35 years. Amongst them, 3.6% ended at secondary school, 5.1% went to college and 12.3% studied at university. In the age group of 35-40, only 1.53% had secondary education, 1.53% went to college, 16.8% achieved tertiary education at university level and 0.51% did not indicate their education levels. That gave a total of 20.4% respondents between the ages of 35-40 years. About 34.7% of respondents were above 40 years. In total 3.1% employees went to secondary school, 7.15% respondents attained college education, 22.5% graduated at the university and 2.04% has no education at all.

Lastly, only 0.51% of respondents who went to university preferred not to indicate their age group, rather, they chose “No answer”. The analysis indicated that 96.9% people were educated with different qualification levels, regardless of their age; thus, the literacy ratio is high. There were 2.6% employees with no education at all. It is evident that almost all the people in the study had ability to read and write. Again, a high literacy ratio would symbolise the ability to interpret and understand the probation guidelines.

4.3.4. Terms of employment of the respondents

Table 9: Terms of employment of respondents

Employment terms		
	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Permanent	190	96.9
Other specified terms	6	3.1
Total	196	100

The frequency table 9 above indicates that 96.9% of respondents were permanently employed; while 3.1% respondents indicated that they were employed by means of other terms, other than permanent or contract. As indicated in the sample size earlier, it is evident that no contract employees were sampled, which means that the sampling requirements were met. Only permanent employees, who went through probation, were permitted to be participants.

4.3.5. Appointments and confirmation dates for respondents

Table 10: Appointment date of respondents

Appointment date		
Year of appointment	Frequency	Percentage
Before 1990	21	10.7
1990-1995	13	6.6
1996-2000	23	11.7
2001-2005	24	12.2
2006-2010	41	20.9
2011-2016	70	35.7
No answer	4	2.0
Total	196	100.0

From table 10, shows the appointment dates of the respondents in the DOEAC of Oshana Regional Council; with the years grouped on intervals. 10.7% were appointed before 1990, which is before the independence of Namibia. There were 6.6% respondents appointed from 1990-1995, 11.7% respondents appointed between the years of 1996-2000, 12.3 % respondents were appointed from 2001-2005, 20.9% respondents

were appointed during the years 2006-2010 and 35.8% respondents were appointed from 2011-2016. Only 2.0% respondents did not indicate their appointment date. Inference is that the employment rate gradually rises with the years. More appointments were done in the last five years, which signifies the expansion of the workforce within the Directorate.

Table 11: Respondents who went through probation versus confirmation of probation cross tabulation

		Confirmation of probation			Total
		Yes	No	No answer	
Respondents who went through probation	Yes	168	10	2	180
	No	0	14	1	15
	No answer	0	0	1	1
Total		168	24	4	196

As per table 11 above, a total of 91.84 % respondents indicated that they went through probation, of which 85.72 % of the respondents' probations were confirmed and 12.25 % people responded that their probations were not yet confirmed and 2.04 % indicated that they have "no answer" to the confirmation of probation. Further, 7.66 % people responded that they did not go through probation, part of this were 7.15 % respondents who said they had nothing to be confirmed, as no probation for them and 0.51 % responded "no answer" to confirmation of probation. Only 0.51 % person who did not answer anything to the question. It is evident that probation exists in the Public Service.

Table 12: Dates of probation confirmation

Date probation confirmed	Frequency	Percentage
01/01/1985-31/12/1990	2	1
01/01/1991-31/12/1995	4	2
01/01/1996-31/12/2000	23	11.7
01/01/2001-31/12/2005	21	10.7
01/01/2006-31/12/2010	46	23.5
01/01/2011-31/12/2016	62	31.6
No probation that time	3	1.5
Does not know / not confirmed / did not go through probation	24	7.1
No answer	11	10.7
Total	196	100

The table12 shows the date of probation confirmation of the respondents to the survey.

A total of 80.6 % of the sample selected went through probation and were confirmed.

According to data collected 1% respondents confirmed between 01/01/1985-31/12/1990,

2% respondents confirmed between the period from 01/01/1991-31/12/1995, 11.7%

respondents confirmed from 01/01/1996-31/12/2000, 10.7% respondents confirmed

between 01/01/2001-31/12/2005, 23.5% respondents were confirmed during the period

01/01/2006-31/12/2010 and 31.6% respondents confirmed from 01/01/2011-31/12/2016.

Of the respondents 1.5% answered that there was no probation that time of their

employment date. Another 7.1% indicated that they did not know their confirmation date

/ were not confirmed yet / did not go through probation, even if probation process was in

full swing by then. Lastly, 10.7% of respondents did not answer anything to that

question. The confirmations of employees were too few in comparisons with the

appointments. The employees could not provide their confirmation date or reasons why their probations confirmation were extended / delayed.

4.3.6. Job category of respondents

Table 13: Job categories of respondents

Job category	Frequency	Percentage
Unskilled (Grade 13-15)	16	8.2
Semi-skilled workforce (Grade 10-12)	25	12.8
Skilled (Grade 8-9)	46	23.5
Specialised / supervisor (Grade 6-7)	45	23
Middle management (Grade 5)	29	14.8
Senior management (Grade 4)	9	4.6
No answer	26	13.3
Total	196	100

Deducing from table 13 there were 8.2% employees in the unskilled job category (Grade 13-15). In the group of semi-skilled workforce (Grade 10-12), there were 12.8% of the employees in this category, whilst there were 23.5% of employees in skilled workforce category (Grade 8-9). Furthermore, there were 23% of employees in the specialised/supervisory (Grade 6-7) category. There were 14.8% of employees, who fall in the job category of middle management (Grade 5). The job category of senior management Grade 4 had 4.6% of employees and 13.3% of employees with no answer on their job category.

4.3.7. Employees background information on probation period

Table 14: Probation period cycles

Probation cycles	Frequency	Percentage
Less than six months	6	3.1
Six months only	5	2.6
Twelve months only	135	68.9
More than twelve months	35	17.9
No probation cycle	11	5.6
No answer	4	2
Total	196	100

Table 10 above is drawn from the responses of a question posed to the sample, as to how long their probation period was. The intention was to find out the applicable time for probation, as per Namibian Public Service Staff Rules (PSSRs). Out of the responses, 68.9% of employees indicated that their probation lasted for twelve months. 17.9% of employees responded that their probation was more than twelve months. 5.6% of employees said that there was no probation cycle for them. Only 3.1% of employees had a shorter probation period, which was confirmed to be less than six months and 2.6% staff members completed their probation in six months only. Finally, 2% of the employees did not answer.

4.4. Evaluations of probation process

This section will present the results of the items evaluated under the current probation process in the Public Service of Namibia. The study looked at establishing why the use of probation in the government is not taken seriously and find out the following: when training was offered; the mode of giving instructions; ideas on duration of probation;

who do the assessments and how often; how often feedback is given; reliability of performance results; and communication of probation procedures.

4.4.1. Objectives of probation

The 196 respondents were asked as to what their understanding is, and why they use probation in the public service institutions, such as in the Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture. Below are five tables that show the results on the responses, as ratings of the uses suggested. Responses are ascertained on five objectives: familiarisation on job activities, screening right candidates, rating the performance of employees, for permanent appointment confirmation and probation is a rule, as per PSSR.

A Five point scaling is applied in ascertaining responses; strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and no answer. Respondents were asked about their opinions on one of the objectives, to familiarise employees to the work environment, based on practice experienced during their probation. The responses are presented against their educational backgrounds. A chi-square test using SPSS was run. To test the level of significance of responses on probation objectives, based on their educational backgrounds. If p-value is less than 0.05 means that there is a significant difference in responses based on levels of education. If p-value is more than 0.05, it indicates that there is significantly no difference between responses on the probation objective, based on their educational background.

Table 15: Rating Probation is used to familiarise employees on the work environment

			PROBATION FAMILIARIZATION					Total
			Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	No answer	
Level of education for respondent	Secondary	Count	9	5	1	1	2	18
		% within level of education for respondent	50.0%	27.8%	5.6%	5.6%	11.1%	100%
	College	Count	11	10	4	5	1	31
		% within level of education for respondent	35.5%	32.3%	12.9%	16.1%	3.2%	100%
	University	Count	47	43	14	24	13	141
		% within level of education for respondent	33.3%	30.5%	9.9%	17.0%	9.2%	100%
	No education /none	Count	3	1	1	0	0	5
		% within level of education for respondent	60%	20%	20%	0%	0%	100%
No answer	Count	0	0	0	0	1	1	
	% within level of education for respondent	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	
Total	Count	70	59	20	30	17	196	
	% within level of education for respondent	35.7%	30.1%	10.2%	15.3%	8.7%	100%	

Fifty percent of respondents from secondary level strongly agreed that the objective of probation is to familiarise probationers; 27.8% of respondents agreed; 5.6% of respondents were neutral; 5.6% of respondents disagreed and 11.1% of respondents did not answer. Amongst the respondents from the college education level, 35.5% strongly agreed, 32.3% were in agreement (agreed), 12.9% were neutral, 16.1% were not in agreement (disagreed) and 3.2% did not answer. At university level 33.3% of respondents strongly agreed, 30.5% agreed, 9.9% were neutral, 17% disagreed and 9.2% did not answer. The no education group comprises of 60% of respondents who strongly agree, 20% agreed and 20% neutral. A total of 65.8% of the survey respondents were in agreement that probation is used as a familiarisation tool.

Table 16: Chi-square tests results of association between education level and responses on probation objective familiarisation to working environment

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	17.782 ^a	16	.337
Likelihood Ratio	13.751	16	.617
No of Valid Cases	196		

At 95% level of confidence, the result yields the Chi-square value 17.782 and P-value (level of significance) is 0.337, which is high probability of the observed data, shows no significance difference. Since the p-value 0.335 is more than 0.05 the level of education

does not influences the responses on probation objective as familiarization to the work environment.

Table 17: Rating of Probation is used to screen employees for permanent appointment versus their level of education

		PROBATION SCREENING					Total	
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	No answer		
Level of education for respondent	Secondary	Count	12	4	0	1	1	18
		% within level of education for respondent	66.7%	22.2%	0%	5.6%	5.6%	100%
	College	Count	8	11	7	3	2	31
		% within level of education for respondent	25.8%	35.5%	22.6%	9.7%	6.5%	100%
	University	Count	54	40	10	25	12	141
		% within level of education for respondent	38.3%	28.4%	7.1%	17.7%	8.5%	100%
	No education /none	Count	3	2	0	0	0	5
		% within level of education for respondent	60%	40%	0%	0%	0.0%	100%
	No answer	Count	0	0	0	0	1	1
		% within level of education for respondent	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
	Total	Count	77	57	17	29	16	196
		% within level of education for respondent	39.3%	29.1%	8.7%	14.8%	8.2%	100%

66.7% of respondents from secondary level strongly agreed to the opinion that probation objective is just to screen probationers; 22.2% of respondents agreed, no respondent was neutral; 5.6% of respondents disagreed and 5.6% did not answer. From the college level of education 25.8% strongly agreed, 35.5% were in agreement, 22.6% were neutral, 9.7% disagreed and 6.5% did not respond. At university level 38.3% of the surveyed respondents strongly agreed, 28.4% agreed, 7.1% were neutral, 17.7% were not in agreement and 8.5% did not answer. Under no education level, 60% of the respondents strongly agreed and 40% agreed. A total of 68.4% of the survey respondents were in agreement that probation is used as a screening tool.

Table 18: Chi-square tests results of association between education level and responses on probation objective screening of right candidates

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	30.810 ^a	16	.014
Likelihood Ratio	25.485	16	.062
No of Valid Cases	196		

The Chi-square test indicated that the Pearson Chi-square value of 30.810 with p-value (level of significance) of 0.014. Since the p-value is less than 0.05; is evident that there is significance difference that the level of education has influence on the responses on screening of right candidates, as a probation objective.

Table 19: Rating of Probation is used to rate performance of new candidates versus education level

			PROBATION RATING PERFORMANCE					Total
			Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	No answer	
Level of education for respondent	Secondary	Count	12	4	0	0	2	18
		% within level of education for respondent	66.7%	22.2%	0%	0%	11.1%	100%
	College	Count	15	8	3	3	2	31
		% within level of education for respondent	48.4%	25.8%	9.7%	9.7%	6.5%	100%
	University	Count	60	57	6	8	10	141
		% within level of education for respondent	42.6%	40.4%	4.3%	5.7%	7.1%	100%
	No education/	Count	1	4	0	0	0	5
		% within level of education for respondent	20%	80%	0%	0%	0.0%	100%
	No Answer	Count	0	0	0	0	1	1
		% within level of education for respondent	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
Total	Count	88	73	9	11	15	196	
	% within level of education for respondent	44.9%	37.2%	4.6%	5.6%	7.7%	100%	

In table 19 above, 66.7% of respondents were from secondary education level and strongly agreed with the opinion that probation objective is to rate probationers; 22.2% respondents agreed, no respondent were neutral nor disagreed and 11.1% did not give response / any answer. From the college level of education, 48.4% strongly agreed with the opinion, 25.8% agreed, 9.7% were neutral, 9.7% disagreed and 9.7% did not respond. At university education level, 42.6% respondents strongly agreed, 40.4% agreed, 4.3% were neutral, 5.7% disagreed and 7.1% did not give any answer. In the no education category, 20% respondents strongly agreed, while the remaining 80% was in agreement. Therefore, 82.1% agreed to the notion that probation is used to rate the performance of candidate.

Table 20: Chi-square test results of association between education level and responses on probation objective rating performance

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	25.752	16	0.058
Likelihood Ratio	20.565	16	0.196
Linear-by-Linear Association	11.560	1	0.001
No of Valid Cases	196		

The Pearson Chi-Square value was found as 25.752, with p-value = 0.058, which is a high probability. Due to the fact that the p-value is not less than 0.05, there is no significance difference that the level of education has no influence on the responses on rating performance of employees as probation objective.

Table 21: Rating of Probation used to confirm new candidates for permanent appointment versus their level of education

			PROBATION CONFIRMATION					Total
			Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	No answer	
Level of education for respondent	Secondary	Count	11	4	1	1	1	18
		% within level of education for respondent	61.1%	22.2%	5.6%	5.6%	5.6%	100%
	College	Count	16	10	1	3	1	31
		% within level of education for respondent	51.6%	32.3%	3.2%	9.7%	3.2%	100%
	University	Count	77	41	9	9	5	141
		% within level of education for respondent	54.6%	29.1%	6.4%	6.4%	3.5%	100%
	No education /none	Count	2	1	2	0	0	5
		% within level of education for respondent	40%	20%	40%	0%	0.0%	100%
	No answer	Count	0	0	0	0	1	1
		% within level of education for respondent	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
	Total	Count	106	56	13	13	8	196
		% within level of education for respondent	54.1%	28.6%	6.6%	6.6%	4.1%	100%

The participants from secondary level responded to the opinion that probation is used to confirm candidates for permanent employment as follows: 61.1% strongly agreed, 22.2% agreed, 5.6% were neutral, 5.6% disagreed and 5.6% did not answer. From the college level of education 51.6% strongly agreed, 32.3% were in agreement with the opinion, 3.2% were neutral, 9.7% disagreed and 3.2% gave no answer. At university level 54.6% respondents strongly agreed, 29.1% agreed, 6.4% were neutral, 6.4% disagreed and 3.5% did not respond. Some of the respondents had no education qualification, and 40% of them strongly agreed, 20% agreed and the remaining 40% were neutral. Then 82.7% agreed that probation is used to confirm candidates for permanent employment.

Table 22: Chi-square tests results of association between education level and responses on probation objective as confirmation to permanent employment

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	34.677	16	0.004
Likelihood Ratio	13.688	16	0.622
Linear-by-Linear Association	22.863	1	0.000
No of Valid Cases	196		

The Pearson Chi-square value associated to the level of education of respondents and responses on probation objective as confirmation was found as 34.677, with p-value of 0.04, which is a very small significance difference. It is a fact, that the level of education does influence rating responses on confirmation of candidates as probation objective.

Table 23: Rating Probation is used according to the rule, versus their level of education

			PROBATION IS A RULE					Total
			Strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	No answer	
Level of education for respondent	Secondary	Count	1	3	3	9	2	18
		% within level of education for respondent	5.6%	16.7%	16.7%	50%	11.1%	100%
	College	Count	5	8	2	14	2	31
		% within level of education for respondent	16.1%	25.8%	6.5%	45.2%	6.5%	100%
	University	Count	26	17	26	57	15	141
		% within level of education for respondent	18.4%	12.1%	18.4%	40.4%	10.6%	100%
	No education /none	Count	0	1	1	3	0	5
		% within level of education for respondent	0%	20%	20%	60%	0%	100%
	No answer	Count	0	0	0	0	1	1
		% within level of education for respondent	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
	Total	Count	32	29	32	83	20	196
		% within level of education for respondent	16.3%	14.8%	16.3%	42.3%	10.2%	100%

About 5.6% of the respondents from secondary level, strongly agreed with the opinion that, the probation objective is used in adherence to the rule. 16.7% were in agreement, 16.7% respondents were neutral, 50% disagreed and 11.1% did not give any response. From the college level of education, 16.1% strongly agreed with the opinion, 25.8% agreed, 6.5% were neutral, 45.2% disagreed and 6.5% did not respond. At university level, 18.4% respondents strongly agreed, 12.1% agreed, 18.4% were neutral, 40.4% disagreed and 10.6% decided not to respond. Among the none-educated group, 20% of the respondents agreed, 20% were neutral and 60% disagreed to the opinion. It is concluded that 42.3% is in disagreement that probation is just not a rule.

Table 24: Chi-square tests results of association between education level and responses on probation objective, as a rule.

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.727	16	0.283
Likelihood Ratio	16.364	16	0.428
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.701	1	0.003
No of Valid Cases	196		

The Pearson Chi-Square value associated with the level of education of respondents and probation is just a rule, was found as 18.727 with p-value of 0.283. Since p-value is not less than 0.05, there is no significance difference, between the level of education and the responses on probation being just a rule as a probation objective.

The probation is used to confirm the candidates to permanent employment; rate the performance of the candidates; screen for the suitable or right candidates; and familiarise the candidate to their work environment. Although the other objective might be of use too, the one of confirmation to permanent employment is outstanding. It is also confirmed that probation is not used just because it is a rule or guideline, but it has a purpose.

4.4.2. Training during probation

Training is a very important management function. It is a phase where there is a transfer of skills and knowledge from an individual or source to another individual or group. Training is needed in the probation process, to enable the probationers to learn how to do the job, and improve execution thereof. It has become one of the most important inputs of probation to improve performance. The training referred to in this section is pre-training on the job and study interest is to find out if it is done by an expert on daily basis, training by the supervisor on request by employees themselves, or no training at all.

Table 25: Training modes during probation

No	Type of training offered during probation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Yes, upon assumption of duties, on a formal platform by an expert in the field.	63	32.1
2	Yes, on a daily basis, as on job training by immediate supervisor.	45	23
3	Yes, training is done when requested by the employees.	13	6.6
4	Yes, only if the appointed person is in on entry post.	10	5.1
5	Yes, but training offered is not relevant to daily tasks.	1	0.5
6	No, training was never done, until probation period was completed.	63	32.1
7	No answer	1	0.5
	Total	196	100

The respondents were asked if the new employees on probation received in-service training, specific to the departments they are recruited in, to equip them with rules and policies. Amongst them, 32.1% responded “Yes, upon assumption of duties, on a formal platform by an expert in the field”, 23% responded “Yes, on daily basis as on job training by immediate supervisor, 6.6% responded “Yes training is done, when requested by the employees”, 5.1% responded “Yes only if the appointed person is on entry post”, 0.5% responded “Yes, but training offered is not relevant to daily task”, 32.1% responded that, “No training was ever done until probation was completed” and 0.5% of respondents did not answer the question. The fact is that in-service training was given only to some people, which means that there is inconsistency in the applications of the probation process.

4.4.3. Communication of duties during probation

Communication is regarded as a useful tool in the face-to-face interactions. It has a lot of definitions, of which one is the messages that are intentionally directed to the other person that receive them (Littlejohn, 2002 as cited Chivuno, 2013). Therefore, the effectiveness of the communication channel in the process, will affect its results. It is imperative that the message gets across clearly and does not confuse or mislead anyone. Under this section, the interest is to find out how instructions were sent across from supervisors to probationers and how often the feedback is communicated.

Table 26: Mode of giving instructions to new employees

No	Mode of instructions	Frequency	Percent(%)
1	Written and clear	66	33.7
2	Communicated orally	68	34.7
3	No proper guidance	60	30.6
4	No answer	2	1
	Total	196	100

The respondents were asked how supervisors give instructions to probationers. Their responses are presented by Table 26 above by combining the total responses frequencies, then are presented as percentages of the survey sample. 33.7% responded that instructions were always written and very clear on what is to be done by the employees, 34.7% said instructions were communicated orally to the employees, but 30.6% said there were no proper guidance and sometimes the employees do tasks on assumptions; 1% did not answer. The communication does exist in the probation process, although is not properly monitored.

4.4.4. Opinions on the probation period duration

The duration of probation is arranged by the entrusted bodies in all countries and organisations. However, people will always have different feelings regarding established guidelines. It is against this background that the study wants to find out how the stakeholders in the process feel and experiences on the duration of probation.

Table 27: Opinions on current probation duration

Opinions	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No answer	Total
Probation is too long, making process boring	31	25	61	58	21	196
	15.82	12.75	31.12	29.59	10.71	100
Probation is too short, that adaptation is not smooth.	9	14	79	69	25	196
	4.59	7.14	40.30	35.2	12.75	100
Probation is adequate, allowing training and demonstration of abilities	103	58	19	9	7	7
	52.55	29.59	9.69	4.59	3.57	100

The respondents were simultaneously required to give their opinions on the probation period as being too long, too short or being adequate. Their responses are presented by Table 27 above, by combining the total responses of the strongly agreed and agreed and expressing them as percentages of the survey sample. The findings are that: probation is adequate was indicated by 82.15%, probation duration being too long by 28.57% and probation being too short by 11.73%. This implies that the 12 months' probation period is not long or short, but enough to allow the probation objectives to be achieved.

4.4.5. Performance progress review during probation cycle

The rater of performance in the process should be an ideal person who has the knowledge of the specific job. This person should also be able to recommend changes, if necessary. The ideal intention for asking this question was to ensure that the assessments are done by capable people, so that the report is on time and correctly compiled to enable control.

Table 28: Probation Performance evaluator

No	Performance evaluator	Frequency	Percent (%)
1	Myself	3	1.5
2	Colleagues	3	1.5
3	Supervisor/	129	65.8
4	Head of department	41	20.9
5	No assessment was done	18	9.2
6	No answer	2	1.0
	Total	196	100.0

On the question asked who does the progress assessment during the probation period the results are as follows: 1.5% responded “myself,” 1.5% responded “colleagues,” 65.8% responded “supervisor,” 20.9% responded “head of department,” 9.2% responded “no assessments was done,” and 1.0% did not answer. A total of 86.7% said supervisors and head of department were the ones responsible for assessments, which means not everyone has authority and that allows well-regulated management.

Table 29: Probation progress assessment reports

No	Assessment options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
a	After every two months	7	3.6
b	After every three months	77	39.3
c	After every four months	21	10.7
d	After every six months	15	7.7
e	Once at the end of the probation process	52	26.5
f	No progress assessment was done at all	21	10.7
g	No answer	3	1.5
	Total	196	100

The responses to the question: how often the progress assessments reports are submitted during the probation period, are expressed in percentages. Of the participants 3.6% indicated that progress assessment reports were completed after every two months, 39.3% said after every three months, 10.7% said it was done every four months, 7.7% indicated that it was done every six months; 26.5% respondents indicate that it was done only once at the end of the probation process, 10.7% said no progress assessment was done at all and 1.5% did not answer.

4.4.6. Reliability of performance evaluations

For any process or programme, performance should always be evaluated and the level of productivity should be measured. It is either how truthful they are, or how best one can rely on the information produced. Reliability in general terms would mean consistency, validity, or authenticity. From the experience of the probationers or supervisors, in order to make the general conclusion if each of them share their experience. The reliability of something should be something that can be validated by another person.

Table 30: Reliability of performance results

Responses on the opinions							
No	Opinions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No answer	Total
1	Reliable	40	54	43	35	24	196
		20.4	27.6	21.9	17.9	12.2	100
2	No true evidence	48	72	27	22	27	196
		24.5	36.7	13.8	11.2	13.8	100
3	Influenced by interrelationships	59	51	38	21	27	196
		30.1	26.0	19.4	10.7	13.8	196

Opinions were given on the responses to the question if performance reviews are reliable and they are done properly by supervisors during the probation periods. The results were as follows: 20.4% strongly agreed, 27.6% agreed, 21.9% disagreed, 17.9% strongly disagreed and 12.2% did not answer. Only 24.5% strongly agreed that reviews were too vague, since no tests and results were attached on the progress reports; 36.7% agreed, 13.8% disagreed, 11.2% strongly disagreed, and 13.8% did not answer. Then 30.1% strongly agreed that results for performance evaluations were more related to the type of the relationship between supervisor and the candidate, 26.0% were in agreement, 19.4% disagreed, 10.7% strongly disagreed and 13.8% did not answer. The probation results of assessments were mostly personal feelings as was evident by the highest percentaged agreed, i.e. 30.1% agreeing to it. In conclusion, 61.2% people agreed that no evidence was attached to progress reports during probation reviews, which affected the reliability of the process results.

4.4.7. Communication during probation

Table 31: Creation of awareness on probation

No	Way for creating probation awareness	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Yes, explained by HR Practitioner	32	16.3
2	Yes, explained by my supervisor	49	25
3	No, I read it in the Public Service Staff Rules.	38	19.4
4	No, heard from colleagues.	28	14.3
5	No, I read it on my appointment letter	46	23.5
6	No answer	3	1.5
	Total	196	100

The respondents were asked if the probation procedures were formally explained to them. Results were: 16.3% answered that was done by the Human Resources Practitioner; 25% confirmed that it was done by the supervisor; 19.4% said it was not done and 4.3% reported it was not done and they heard from colleagues; 23.5% said they only read about it on their appointment letters and 1.5% did not answer. Therefore, supervisors are the ones mostly informing the new employees about the probation; and so no other standard way to communicate issues related to probation.

4.4.8. Feedback communication

Table 32: Ways of communicating the assessment results during probation

No	Ways of communicating	Frequency	Percentages (%)
A	Supervisor writes a report to the employee on the assessment results regularly and timeously.	29	14.80
B	HR Practitioner sends the report to the employee, in a form of feedback report.	26	13.27
C	Supervisor gives the review form to the candidate to read through and signs before submitting to HR Office.	83	42.35
D	No one inform employees on their assessments, except the decision of confirmation, extension or termination of their probation, at the end probation cycle.	58	29.60
Total		196	100

Only 14.8% indicated that the supervisor wrote a report to the employee on the assessment results regularly and timeously; 13.27% said the HR Practitioner sent the report to the employees, in a form of feedback report; while 42.35% said the supervisor gives the review form to the candidate, to read through and sign before submitting it to the HR office. Further, 29.6% said no one informed employees on their assessments, except the decision of confirmation, extension or termination of their probation at the probation cycle.

To sum up on feedback communication, supervisors are the ones who fill the review forms of candidates, and report feedback on probation performance to HR on mutual agreement with the candidate.

4.4.9. Probation assessment peak

Table 33: Peak for probation assessment

No	Statements	Frequency	Percentages(%)
a	Assessment was done after every three months.	69	35.21
b	Assessment was done after six months.	8	4.09
c	Assessment was done once, at the end of probation period.	41	20.92
d	Assessment was done when the probationers requested for them.	51	26.02
e	Assessment was not done and probation period was not completed.	27	13.78
Total		196	100

The Table above indicates that 35.21% of the respondents strongly agreed that assessments were done after every three months, 4.09% indicated that assessments were done after six months, 20.92% that their assessments were done once at the end of the probation, 26.02% said assessment were done upon request by the probationers, and 13.78% said no assessments were done and probation was not confirmed. Lastly, 35.21% of respondents said probation assessments were done every three months (quarterly).

4.5. Factors affecting probation performance

The section outlines the factors that affect the process of probation or performance during probation. Probation performance is successful if the confirmation of the probationer is issued, or if the tasks and the transfer of skills occur during the probation process. The items looked at were: absenteeism, late evaluations, poor implementations,

extension of probation, long duration, lack of training, poor communication and improper feedback. The respondents were allowed to rate them all and results will be compared, to establish the vital factors to the process. Furthermore, the presentation of question 19(a) will be discussed together with answers to question 19 (b).

Table 34: Factors that affect the probation performance

No	Factors on performance	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No answer	Total
a	Absenteeism	67	56	24	26	23	196
		34.2	28.6	12.3	13.2	11.7	100
b	Late evaluation	85	67	16	10	27	196
		43.4	34.2	8.2	5.1	13.8	100
c	Poor implementation of probation policies	59	64	34	18	21	196
		30.1	32.7	17.4	9.2	10.7	100
d	Poor communication among stakeholders	66	75	23	7	25	196
		33.7	38.3	12.0	3.6	12.8	100
e	Extensions due to incompetency of probationers	36	43	57	29	31	196
		18.4	21.9	29.1	14.8	15.8	100
f	Long durations allocated to probation cycles	35	37	50	40	34	196
		17.9	18.9	25.5	20.4	17.4	100
g	Lack of proper training of stakeholders	72	62	22	12	28	196
		36.7	31.6	11.2	6.1	14.3	100
h	Improper feedback system	69	67	24	10	26	196
		35.2	34.2	12.2	5.1	13.3	100

The following can be observed from the above table: About 34.2% of respondents strongly agreed that absenteeism by employees during probation period delays its

execution, 28.6% were in agreement, 12.3% disagreed, 13.3% strongly disagreed and 11.7% did not answer.

Furthermore, 43.4% strongly agreed that most delays in probation were caused by late evaluation by supervisors, 34.2% agreed, 8.2% were not in agreement (disagreed), 5.1% strongly disagreed and 9.2% did not answer. Of the same group of respondents, 30.1% strongly agreed that most delays in probation were due to poor implementations of probation policies by HR officials, 32.7% agreed, 17.3% disagreed, 9.2% strongly disagreed and 10.7% did not answer.

About 33.7% strongly agreed that poor communication between involved stakeholders caused delays in the probation process, 38.3% agreed; 11.7% disagreed, 3.6% strongly disagreed and 12.8% chose not to answer. In the same group, 18.4% strongly agreed that delays in the probation execution were caused by incompetency of probationers, which caused extensions of the duration; and 21.9% were in full agreement, 29.1% were not in agreement, 14.8% strongly disagreed and 15.8% did not answer.

Also, in the same group of respondents, 17.9% strongly agreed that long durations allocated to the probation cycle caused delays in probation executions; 18.9% agreed, 25.5% disagreed, 20.4% strongly disagreed and 17.3% did not answer. The results further point out that 36.7% strongly agreed that lack of proper training to stakeholders caused delays in probation execution; 31.6% agreed, 11.2% disagreed, 6.1% strongly disagreed and 14.3% did not answer. Lastly, the same group responded as follows: 35.2% of respondents strongly agreed that improper feedback system caused delays in the probation process, 34.2% agreed, 12.2% disagreed, 5.1% strongly disagreed and 13.3% did not answer.

In summary, 77.6 % of respondents were in agreement that late evaluation played a major role in the probation performance, 71.9% thought that it was because of poor communication among stakeholders. Additionally 69.4% were of the opinion that it was due to improper feedback, 68.4% accepted that it was due to lack of proper training of stakeholders, 62.8% said it was because of absenteeism and 62.8% thought that poor implementations of probation policies was the cause. On the other hand, 45.9% and 43.9% rejected the notion that long duration of probation and extensions of probation, due to incompetency of probationers were not factors that affect probation performance

A structured question under 19 (b), as per Appendix A, was asked to the respondents, to comment on how being absent from work affects the probation process. The responses were analysed and the findings were as follows: 25.5% of the respondents commented that being absent affected the probation in a way that led to the probation period being extended; with the number of days absent, regardless of what type of leave he/she had taken.

Only 15.8% said that absenteeism did not affect the probation period, since they were not aware that it was an assessment criteria; 9.2% respondents indicated that absenteeism delayed the assessment process, since the person would not be there to be performing the tasks. Only 4.1% commented that being absent from work while on probation, affected their pace of becoming an expert / perfect on the job, which delayed competencies. Another 7.7% respondents responded that, it affected the supervisor's impression on the level of probationer's commitment.

There are always substitute arrangements established to replace employees when on leave and HR only count days that the probationers are at work. Though 4.1% respondents said being absent did not give them enough time to get proper orientation, supervision and cover work, so that they improve their skills and knowledge;32.7% people did not answer at all, wrote no comment or did not know how to answer the question.

4.6. Ways to improve probation performance

Earlier, the survey identified challenges towards probation performance. In this section, 19(c) the participants were required to suggest the applicable ways to improve probation performance. The alternatives were then summarised and presented in table 35, together with a discussion of how it would happen and their frequencies and percentages. Seventeen employees did not respond on this question.

Table 35: Ways to improve probation performance

No	Techniques	Discussion	Frequency	Percent(%)
a	Timely assessment /evaluation	Performance review is a factor to performance, it relates to effective, detailed, timely performance review, evaluation as well as assessments of both the supervisors and probationers. Thus enabling monitoring if the process is smooth and successful. On other hand it allows opportunities for feedback and improvements of the process execution. The daily assessment of employees assists in fast tracking of the process.	137	70.0
b	Communication	Communication is understood to be, communication of duties and responsibilities, sensitizing, clear instructions and expectations amongst the stakeholders. “Good communication and guidance between staff member and supervisor” quoted directly from one of the questionnaires.	54	27.56
c	Proper training for stakeholders	There was a need for in-service training for new employees and their immediate supervisors. In-service training should be able to respond to skills needed for that area of operations. They recommended proper induction before the assumption of duties and on-the-job training during probation. As far as the immediate supervisor is concerned, it can be training on how to assess the candidates and giving regular feedbacks.	57	29.09
d	Proper feedback system	Respondents stressed out that proper and timely feedback was a factor. Supervisors ought to give their subordinates feedback, on a monthly, or every three months basis, with regards to their performance. In addition, respondents pointed out that being aware of things was a factor, as probationers should be briefed and informed about the probation cycle and their expectations. There was a need for proper orientation on how the process operates.	45	22.96

Table 35: Ways to improve probation performance continues...

e	Inductions for stakeholders	Induction is a factor for probation performance. The purpose of induction is to familiarise and determine clear expectations for probationers, before their assumption of duties. The dos and don'ts have to be laid out beforehand. Demonstrations on how the job ought to be executed, are showcased here. Awareness is raised when expectations are explained.	13	6.64
f	Time management	Time management was a factor to performance, as narrated by respondents. Timeframes need to be laid down during probation, to enable completion of tasks and feedback be given on time. The time for facilitating the probation forms needs to be monitored to avoid late submissions.	13	6.64
g	Observation and supervision	Observation and supervision were needed in the process. This means to closely monitoring the observation, while the candidates perform the task(s). Strict supervision by immediate supervisors is needed, in order for the subordinates to be serious with their jobs.	13	6.64
h	Transparency and honesty	Transparency and honesty is a factor, as explained by respondents. Supervisors need to be honest, transparent and truthful to avoid using their personal feelings in the assessment.	11	5.62
i	Mentoring and coaching	Respondents reported that mentoring and coaching are key to performance. Probationers need to be allocated mentors, who will coach them throughout the process. This should be experts in the field of operations of the candidates. Mentors will provide support in the process and help candidates to cope with the pressure of the work	10	5.11
j	Motivation	Motivation has a role to play in the achievements of performance of probation. The respondents outlined that awarding best candidates is required. Encouragement and inspiring the probationer is a way to make them interested in the process. Encouraging and supporting them to walk the extra mile, should be a routine task of the supervisor	6	2.56

Table 35: Ways to improve probation performance continues...

k	Resources availability	Availability of resources was an element to assist in improving performance. Generally, probationers cannot perform well if their needed resources are not provided. Access to basic needs such as accommodation closer to the workplace, books, ICT (Information Communication Technology) equipment and peripherals, etc. is important.	6	2.56
l	Commitment of Stakeholders	There was a dire need for the commitment of supervisors, i.e. working hard, willingness to learn; and also dedication of probationers and supervisors to work to fulfill the expectations of the probation.	5	2.56
m	Adequate duration	Duration also had an influence; saying that 12 months was extremely long, thus, a reduction to 6 months period would do. It might become boring and people tend to lose interest in the 3rd and 4th quarter. It might as well hinder the learning and adaptation of employees to do their job. So, a reasonable time is therefore required.	4	2.04

4.7. Challenges on probation process execution

As indicated earlier, probation is merely a formality process. The question is, what exactly are the delays or threats to the process? The challenges will only be known by the stakeholders who were presented with the few challenges that were gathered in literature reviews. Their responses was just to validate if there were real stumbling blocks to the probation process. The suggested variables were poor communication, poor feedback system, duration of the probation cycle, rotation, competence, scarcity and allocation of resources, as well as improper training. Further in this section, the other responses to two question 20 (a) and (b), are presented simultaneously on the same time and linked to bring about coordination. The respondents 'responses as to which challenges hinder effective completion of probation in the public sector are presented in the table 36 below:

Table 36: Challenges of completing probation

Responses on challenges							
No	Challenges	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No answer	Total
a	Poor Communication creating uncondusive work	53.57	36.73	3.57	2.04	4.08	100
b	Poor feedback system.	45.9	36.2	7.1	2.0	8.7	100
c	Duration of probation period.	11.7	21.4	33.7	21.9	11.2	100
d	Rotation during probation.	16.8	21.9	28.1	21.4	21.9	100
e	Lack of competence among the stakeholders.	36.7	40.3	10.2	3.1	9.7	100
f	Scarcity of resources and allocation e.g. Finances and	41.8	29.1	11.2	8.7	9.2	100
g	Improper training.	51.0	29.1	10.7	3.6	5.6	100

Table 36 above, presents the rating of the challenges as follows: 53.6% strongly agreed that poor communication was a challenge and it created an uncondusive environment; 36.7 % agreed, 3.6% disagreed, 2.0% strongly disagreed and 4.1% did not answer. Additionally, the respondents' answers were analysed. It was found that poor communication was declared as a challenge by 12.76 % of participants; policies were not interpreted to the staff members; and due to lack of understanding, they ended up doing what satisfied them. Consequently, there was no uniformity.

Responses indicated that 45.9% they strongly agreed that poor feedback system was a challenge on probation, 36.2% agreed; but 7.1% disagreed, 2.0% strongly disagreed and 8.7% did not answer. Another 16% stated that the poor assessment system of probation performance was a challenge, as progress report forms were sent late to the supervisors; some supervisors were not serious with the reports and ended up causing frustration amongst the employees. Thus, they kept postponing the progress assessment feedback and some HR officials delayed the distribution of the progress evaluation forms to the supervisors.

According to table 36 above, 11.7% of respondents strongly agreed that the duration of probation is a challenge, 21.4% agreed, 33.7% disagreed, 21.9 % strongly agreed, while 11.2% did not answer. Also, 16.8% strongly agreed that staff rotation was a challenge to the probation process, 21.9% agreed, 28.1% disagreed, 21.4% strongly disagreed and 11.7% did not answer. To the question on whether competence of stakeholders affect probation, 36.7 strongly agreed, 40.3% agreed, 10.2% disagreed, 3.1% strongly agreed and 9.7% did not answer. Then 9.18 % respondents wrote that incompetency of supervisors is a challenge to the probation process. It appears that some supervisors are

not knowledgeable enough to do the job. They lack skills of supervision and do not exactly know what to do. “Some supervisors do not even understand probation and yet they are to supervise its implementation”, said one of the respondents.

In the same sample 41.8% strongly agreed that another challenge was caused by scarcity and allocations of resources, 29.1% agreed, 11.2% disagreed, 8.68 % strongly disagreed and 9.7% did not answer. Then 6.12 % participants expressed that scarcity and unequal distribution of resources had been a challenge to the probation process. It can therefore be inferred that there seems to be a shortage of experts in human capital and financial resources to train staff members. Thus, the process just ends up being a formality. Nevertheless, other necessities such as electricity and materials to be used to perform jobs are readily available.

On the question concerning training and mentorship the following results were obtained: 51% strongly agreed that improper training or no training was a challenge to probation, 29.1% agreed, 10.7% disagreed, 3.6% strongly disagreed and 5.6% did not answer. In the same vein 17% people indicated that lack of training and mentorship was a thorny issue. There was no established roadmap to guide the people in the probation process and errors were committed throughout. It is also reported that, overloading of supervisors and probationers with tasks and responsibilities affected the probation. There was not ample time to fulfill those tasks, due to frequent meetings and deadlines, which needed to be met. Sometimes being pre-occupied made people forget and underperform.

Only 5.6 % people responded that lack of commitments among some employees and supervisors delayed probation, as people did not commit much effort to achieve the best

results. 5.6% were of the opinion that another problems faced was poor management during the process, which brought about fear and tension. Conflict and dispute resolution was lacking, especially on disagreements regarding the feedback of assessment. Some supervisors ended up depriving the candidates of their benefits, arguing that they were on probation. Finally, 5.1% exclaimed that staff absenteeism was a challenge which directly affected the extension of the probation period.

Only 4.59 % people that took part in the survey group indicated that lack of information was a challenge, because information on probation was not disseminated well. Absence of documentation on probation procedures posed a crisis. Another 4.1% of participants mentioned that poor supervision affected the probation execution. They reported that supervisors were reluctant because no accountability audits were carried out. This made some people's probation period to lapse without any evaluation. It appears that the system is laid-back.

Only 3.57% respondents indicated that lack of transparency in the probation process was a challenge. There were some supervisors who allowed their personal feelings to influence their assessment of probationers, creating unfairness in the process. Many managers adopted a culture of praising the probationers in the progress reports, to avoid revulsions and resentment. It was concluded by 2.55 % participants that lack of induction was pointed out to exist in the public service system. No induction was given to new employees or promoted staff who joined the system clueless, and did not know what their expectations were, since they were not established; and no guidelines or driving factors were communicated.

Medical and health related issues were mentioned by 2.04 % participants as a challenge. Apparently some employees got employed and instantly went on maternity leave, before the twelve calendar months' probation finished. Sick leave due to illness also caused cessation to probation, because the participants were normally booked off from work. 1.5% people pointed out that rotation or a transfer of supervisor or probationers posed threats to the process. It would not be easy for the next person to continue with the process. Some people might not be experts in the field of operation and that could cause confusion. In addition, only 0.51 % person said that, late appointment of the supervisor delayed the process to kick off, in case there was no other senior person to conduct the assessments. Besides, all the answers provided by 24.0% candidates did not provide any answer to this question.

To conclude, the main challenges are ranked as follows in percentages: 90.3% respondent's alluded communication as the biggest challenge; 82.15% the poor feedback system; 80.1% improper training; 77.04% lack of competence amongst the stakeholders; and 70.92% scarcity of resources and allocations. Additionally 21.43% and 21.94% respectively, rejected the claims that long durations allocated to probation cycles and rotation during probation are not challenges. However, it was felt that some of the identified challenges by respondents might affect probation, but not significantly.

4.8. Current issues affecting the existing probation process

As the world continues to develop, most of the early established processes are affected by the changes. It is the responsibility of the human capital involved in the processes to review and address the shortcomings by doing adjustments, or adopting advance ways of execution.

Table 37: Current issues affecting the probation process

No	Issue	Resolution	True	False	No Answer	Total
a	Lack of Training	Proper and adequate training should be carried out, for both supervisors and probationers.	92.9	5.1	2.0	100
b	Poor Management of probation	Supervisor and all people responsible for managing the probation process, should go through training on communication, conflict resolution, leadership and knowledge of the public service staff rules.	92.7	6.1	1.2	100
c	Organizational culture	Conduct proper induction, orientation and training, before assumption of duties, to acquaint the staff members.	85.2	11.7	3.0	100
d	Poor motivation	Introduce incentives to motivate the stakeholders, such as supervision allowances and awards for best probationers.	62.2	34.2	3.6	100

Of the respondents 92.9% confirmed that lack of training is a current existing issue which affects the probation process. Proper and adequate training should be provided, for both supervisors and probationers. However, 5.1% indicated that it was false and 2% did not answer; 92.7% said that is true, poor management of probation affected performance and training in areas such as conflict/dispute resolutions, leadership, etc. Therefore such measures should be implemented; 6.1% said it was not true (false) and 1.2% did not answer.

Findings reveal that 85.2% confirmed that organizational culture affected performance and proper orientation should be done before employment; 11.7% denied it and 3.0% gave no answer. Moreover, 62.2% agreed that poor motivation affected probation and

introductions of incentives such as supervision allowance and awards for best probationers should be given to motivate stakeholders; 34.2% said it was false and 3.6% did not answer. To sum up, the survey results reveal that a lack of training, poor management of probation, organizational culture and poor motivation are current major issues that face probation.

4.9. Mitigation of probation process challenges

The participants were asked to make contributions, as to how they want the challenges to probation to be resolved; and their responses are summarised below.

Table 38: Resolutions to mitigate probation challenges

No	Resolution	Frequency	Percent (%)
1	Institutionalisation of mentoring and training programmes that respond to the employee's needs, with focus on area of operation; e.g. supervision skills, human resources, teaching, finance, etc.	13	6.6
2	Improved communication channels and dissemination of information by Human Resources Practitioners, to the right stakeholders.	10	5.1
3	The assessments to be done every 3 months (timely progress reports).	11	5.6
4	Employers increase budget on training and development programmes, as well as avail resources required for smooth performances.	15	7.7
5	Healthy oriented programmes to be established by employers through HR. That would raise awareness on healthy living and eating healthy, to target reduction of diseases.	25	12.8
6	Invitation of independent bodies of expertise in the field of operations, to conduct assessment of probation	48	24.5
7	Did not answer anything	74	37.8
	Total	196	100

In summary, the mitigation of challenges confirmed as follows: institutionalised mentoring and training programs, revive induction programs for stakeholders improve communication channels and dissemination of information supported by 6.6%, 5.1 % said timely progress assessments increase budget on training and developmental programmes and 7.7 % said procurement of resources, 2.8 % said health awareness orientated programmes and 24.5 % said assessment should be done by an independent body.

4.10. Interview data

The interview was performed on the 24th April 2017 with Heads of Department of Life Long Learning, Human resource practitioner, Senior Librarians, and Principal at Okatana Secondary School and libraries in the Oshana Region, which are managed by the Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture.

Table 39: Interview responses

Question no:	Candidate A:Senior Librarian	Candidate B: Senior Human Resources Practitioner	Candidate C: Principal	Candidate D:Chief Education Officer
<p>1. Do the supervisors get trained to perform supervisory tasks during probation, such as probation performance evaluations and on-the-job training? Comment on your answer.</p>	<p>No training offered on how to perform supervisory tasks. I trained my subordinates to the level of what I know. But the problem is, when you know nothing, everything collapses. Training needs to be done, especially on how to complete progress reports and when.</p>	<p>No training, but to my understanding, I was supposed to be trained.</p>	<p>No training was offered in line with supervision tasks. I only use my common sense to attach the new candidate to old staff members; pair them up, for planning and working together as a team.</p>	<p>We did not receive any training, in reference with supervision tasks; although there are review meetings and information sharing platforms, where the colleagues remind each other to ensure the progress report forms are completed.</p>
<p>2. Are there any kept records on each test done, on the new employees and their feedback report to refer to, when doing evaluations?</p>	<p>To be honest, I became a supervisor in 2009, but never kept any record.</p>	<p>I never kept records, but I did assessments depending on daily performance of the candidate on average judgement on the candidate performance.</p>	<p>No record kept. What we normally do, is give a general comment based on the support teachers or compare comments from school kids (learners).</p>	<p>I do keep records of tasks and associated information given to probationers and keep copies of their progress report forms in a file. I also make notes when necessary in the diary / notebook.</p>
<p>3. Are there any shortcomings that are identified in the probation process? Name them.</p>	<p>I never received the probation progress form on time within 3 months frame. Review is after 9 months or so, when a person (probationer) requests the HR Practitioner for his/her confirmation or</p>	<p>The shortcomings are lack of training: in a sense that I was never trained to handle people, and some other things.</p>	<p>The shortcomings are: staff placed in wrong specialisation: maybe a person trained to teach mathematics will be placed to teach physical science, because the school has a champion already on mathematics. So, such</p>	<p>The shortcomings in probation process are interrelationship (as a component where the supervisor and candidates to be getting orientation, because of candidates</p>

Table 39: Interview responses continues...

	<p>assessments. There will be a point when the HR Office will send you all four quarters' evaluation forms at once, commenting on the evaluations, "feedback" on evaluation, when evaluation is late. For instance, you recommend a person (probationer) for improvements / training but there is no change, since the time of probation has lapsed already. I did not recommend for extension of probation because every time forms of assessments come at the last minute. HR is to blame, since there was time for improvements but they were late.</p>		<p>compromise will intervene with the general impression that you give the person.</p>	<p>being difficult or so). Another one is communication: Dissemination of information, and again the expectations of probation are not set clear (no yardstick).</p>
<p>4. How are the performance shortfalls or shortcomings identified during performance evaluation reviews being addressed?</p>	<p>The shortcomings are recommended and forever being filled with the evaluations forms on Personnel Files at the HR Registry, no one attend to them. Since then no one comes back to us as supervisors on how the shortcomings were addressed.</p>	<p>The shortcomings are addressed by taking the candidate to attend training or in house coaching; re-assess for improvements if no change and motivate the candidate. If cases persist, the candidate's probation</p>	<p>In departmental meetings at school, we share expertise and skills. Mostly Heads of Department set mini-workshops to share best strategies and call for help from advisory teachers. So, that is how we train. The HR Practitioner does not really do much, the only issue they care about is absenteeism that they use to extend the probation. They do</p>	<p>In trying to address the shortcomings, the supervisor talks to the candidates and show them how to get things done; as HR does not come forth to address shortcomings, even if they are identified as problems.</p>

Table 39: Interview responses continues...

		can be extended.	not concentrate on the shortcomings of the candidate.	
5. Do supervisors receive incentives, when carrying out supervisory duties during the probation period of their candidates?	Receiving incentives due to supervision activities is not part of government regulations.	I admit that there is no need for incentives, because supervision work is part of the job description of any supervisory job category.	No incentive. In case of being an HOD, supervision is regarded as part of daily duties.	I have not received any incentive for supervising the probationers.
6 As a member of the public service, what recommendations do you have for the government in terms of improving the probation process?	The suggested items for improvements are: 1. Evaluation should be done on time and consistently. Immediately in three months the first progress report should be made available by supervisor. If the supervisor discovers areas that need improvement in the candidate's performance the HR Office should take a step / action to improve that area, before the second progress assessment or so forth. 2. Customer service: it is an attribute that each public servant is assessed on. So there should be a mechanism that allows the clients or service end-user to rate the employee (probationer). Supervisor may not know the correct status of the candidates. "Who knows,	I suggested that HR ensure that training programmes are introduced for every candidate to go through, before probation ends. Supervisors should also make sure their candidates are assessed on time and correctly.	The suggestions for the following improvements: that probation is to be supervised and tested on a serious note. Probation should be another practical interview. People's service should correlate with their qualifications, otherwise we need to refer the incompetent people back to school. Orientation should be a necessity platform to probationers, since probation period will determine their permanent appointment. The full salaries are supposed to be paid after probation. It seems the Public Service Commission pay for the qualification acquired, but not for service rendered.	My advice to the Government are that: Probation should be taken seriously at all levels; since some evaluations are not done and Human Resources Offices should monitor the flow of activities by supervisors during probation. Offer in-service training on handling probation matters, to create awareness. Effort to inform -Candidates should be informed properly on expectations in the probation process.

Table 39: Interview responses continues...

	<p>maybe they pretend when you are around.” 3. Progress report form: On the supervision required achieving objective the points: outstanding, good, satisfactory, below average and poor, do not make sense. I, guess it was supposed to say does the candidate need supervision to do the job? The answer could be yes or no.</p>			
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To sum up, all the 100% of people interviewed said no training of supervisors, is offered and people did not know what was expected of them. Then, 75% said no record keeping was done during probation, to act as reference during next evaluations. Other, general shortcomings to the probation process that supervisors identified in the interview are: ineffective use of probation feedback, lack of training, wrong placements, uses of general impression to rate candidate, communication and interrelations. Then the interventions recommended are: timely and consistent evaluation, in-service training of candidates, motivation, strict supervision and assessment, orientations, partly salary for probationers.

4.11. Conclusion of chapter

The chapter presented the findings of the survey, which included the response rate, demographic information of the respondents, evaluations of probation process, factors affecting probation performance, challenges of completing the probation cycle and resolution to mitigate challenges in probation. Thereafter, the current issues with the probation process in Namibia and the interview answers of a few of the supervisors were discussed.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

The main aim of this study was to evaluate the current probation process practised in the Public Service in Namibia, with a specific case study of the Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture, in the Oshana Regional Council. Secondly, the study aimed at finding out the factors that affect probation performance and the challenges faced in completion of probation; and finally to give recommendations on how to resolve these challenges. Chapter 2 is a discussion on the literature consulted on the topic. In chapter 3 the methodology is carefully explained and the Chapter 4 presented and analysed the findings of the survey. This chapter will align reviews in the literature with the findings. Finally, chapter 5 conveys the discussions, conclusions and recommendations.

5.2. Objectives of the study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To evaluate the existing probation process in Oshana Regional Council's Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture.
2. To determine the factors influencing the probation performance.
3. To identify the challenges of completing the probation process.
4. To recommend to ORC management and PSC measures to address challenges to the probation process.

5.3. Discussion of findings

5.3.1. Evaluation of the existing probation process

On the evaluations of probation, the researcher formulated questions to find out more on the current existing probation process in the public sector. After reading the previous studies from different countries, together with the current procedure on probation in Namibia; the researcher aimed at finding out more on what has been practised in the administration of public institutions.

5.3.1.1. Objectives of probation

The first objective of the study focused on evaluating the existing probation process in the public service. The first concern was to find out the objectives of the probation process. A huge percentage of 82.7% respondents to the survey agreed that probation confirms new candidates for permanent employment. Authors, e.g. Baloyi and Crafford (2006), and McPhie (2005) concluded that probation is used to confirm candidates to permanent employment; and is a highly effective tool to evaluate a candidate's potential to be an asset to the government, before appointment becomes final. Loh (1994) narrated that workers on probations do not typically accumulate any seniority and do not enjoy the rights associated with seniority before confirmation of their probation. Therefore, they go through probation, to acquire knowledge and skills and enjoy seniority privileges.

The study at issue revealed that 82.1% of employees agreed that probation rates the performance of new candidates (employees). In the literature review, Privott (1999) argued that the use of probation is regarded as the best and most valid determinant of a

newly hired employer's future performance. Elliot and Peaton (1994) confirmed the critiques of probation process, e.g. that probation is not really used by managers to terminate poor performers; as there is always low percentages of employees that perform unsatisfactorily at the end of the period and get eliminated.

68.4% respondents agreed that the purpose of probation is to screen the right candidates. Baloyi and Crafford (2006) concur, saying that probation is a discretionary period, in which the suitability of the candidate to the post is proven. That means, it selectively identifies if the person is correctly placed. That conclusion is depicted by the supervisor report. Nevertheless, Privott (1999) stated something slightly different, i.e. that probation is the last step in the selection process, where unsatisfactory performers can be removed before making a long-term commitment. That confirms the same objective of screening for the right personnel who can perform.

The findings indicated that 65.8% permanent employees testified that probation is used to familiarise employees to their work environment. This is in agreement with Baloyi and Crafford (2006), who established that probation fulfils an important socialisation function, through which employees are inducted and familiarised with the work situation. The purpose is to bridge gaps and consider new work situations. Elliot and Peaton (1994) acknowledged that during probation new employees get that first picture of the organisation, its leadership and its norms of expected behavior. During this phase they get to acquaint themselves with the organisation's culture, and create their comfort zone from which they operate.

Only 31.1% agreed that probation was used in adherence to the rule, however, this statement was not validated in the literature. Evidence is that a high percentage of 42.3% in this study also disagreed with it, ruling it out as an invalid objective of probation. To conclude, the facts are that probation is used to: confirm candidates for permanent appointment; rate performance of new candidates; screen for the right candidate and familiarise candidates with the working environment. These can happen simultaneously or otherwise. It is not true that probation is being used because the rule says so, therefore the study omit it from the probation objectives.

5.3.1.2. Training during probation

Another question of the evaluation was to find out if new employees on probation receive training, specific to the departments recruiting them, to equip them with rules and policies. Training is defined as the process of acquiring the skills and competencies necessary to perform the tasks and assume the responsibilities of a given job position (Dermol & Rakowska, 2014). Training focuses on the current job positions, developments and deals with future job requirements. There was 32.1 equal percentages of respondents who confirmed that training of probationers upon assumption of duties on a formal platform by an expertise in the field was received, and no further training was ever done until probation was completed.

Baloyi and Clafford (2006) revealed that a lack of training and other developmental initiatives is a problem related to the probation. The Supervisors and probationers confirmed that training was not taking place as expected and was restricted to ad-hoc training in their sections. The study at issue confirmed that, a total of 60.21% employees

received training, even though it is not a satisfying percentage if we are to achieve excellence in probation performance. Controversially, Privott (1999) confirmed that 92.3% of the responding agencies in USA identified that probationary employees do receive orientation training for the positions they will be performing. Meanwhile Elliot and Peaton (1994) in their study revealed that supervisory training is provided regularly, on an annual basis, which is probably once a year. Therefore precisely relate the two findings of the study to this Namibian study, because supervisors were part of the current study's sample and probation applies even to the promotional positions. It is evident that more emphasis on training the probationers or supervisors in the public service is needed.

McPhie (2005) discovered that, almost 1 in 5 supervisors never received any training, guidance or instructions. Only 40% of the supervisors received training in evaluation, effective communications and counseling in less than three years. In the end, it was concluded that training was the reason why a large number of probationary employees did not pass probation in that calendar year. Thus, inferring that training to both supervisors and probationers is essential towards the improvement of performance results. The findings of the survey indicate that, 32.1% of employees did not receive training at all, relating to the probation process, versus 48.98% probationers that got their probations confirmed. It is obvious that, some employees got confirmed, even if they were not well equipped with skills (not good performers). Training is so essential in probation, but it should be matched with required skills.

5.3.1.3. Communication of duties during probation

Evaluation on the probation process also raised a question to find out how supervisors give instructions to new employees. The survey outputs confirmed that 34.7% of the respondents said instructions were communicated orally; 33.7% people reported that the mode of instructions to new employees during probation was through written and clear instructions, while 30.6% respondents said there were no proper guidelines and sometimes the employees did tasks on assumptions. Privott (1999) highlighted that effective communication is part of the central themes related to the valid and effective use of the probation. Therefore the current study concurs, there is a need for research to determine if there is a positive relationship between supervisors who receive training in effective communication; and the number of probationers that get to be confirmed.

5.3.1.4. Opinions on the probation period duration

The next question that was raised was the question that was intended to find out the feelings of the employees on the duration of probation in the public institutions. The results show that 82.1% respondents agreed that probation duration was adequate enough to allow time for training and demonstrate abilities; 75.5% respondents disagreed that duration is too short for employees to adopt to new job , working environment and rules and 60.7% respondents disagreed that probation is too long and therefore makes the process boring. Therefore, probation duration which is twelve months, has been confirmed to be acceptable, not too long and not too short.

Dresang 1984 (as cited Elliot and Peaton, 1994) acknowledged that low level skills jobs may not require the full six months, whereas professional jobs with a variety of tasks may require two or more years of probation. Therefore presenting the fact that twelve months in some cases might not be even inadequate. It seems that in Namibia the duration of the probation process differs from that in different parts of the world.

5.3.1.5. Performance progress review during probation cycle

Performance during probation was a major concern of the study. The objective was to find out how probation is being performed, but for the results of probation to be known someone has to be an assessor of the probation process activities. One of the evaluation questions wanted to find out who conduct the assessment of probationers during probation in the public sectors. The results are 65.8%, the majority of respondents said supervisors conducted the progress assessment during probation and 20.9% said it was the HOD who was also a supervisor of teaching professionals, therefore making it a total of 86.73%. According to McPhie (2005), supervisors have a critical role in the administration of probation, since they determine whether the probationer's conduct and performance are acceptable, but some of the participants in his study appeared not to have adequate information to carry out the responsibility.

Managing the performance of probationers is one of a supervisor's most important and complex duties. It requires a sufficient period of time to observe the individual clearly and develop measurable standards to gauge the performance. Privott (1999) confirms that the probation process is there to avoid the attainment of permanent status by default and it is that system that forces the hiring authority to focus on the new employee's job

performance to be able to make definite decisions on his / her retention. Therefore, the rating of the candidates or the process performance is being carried out by the supervisors, who then give recommendation to HR office to confirm, extend or terminate the probation of the candidate. The final decision lies in the HR team. The General understanding drawn is that supervisors are generally thought to be a senior or middle management rank officials over the probationer's one and they have the responsibility to monitor, train and carry through the new employees before the permanent appointment at work. He / she should be present to oversee the process and be able to rate the probationer in all domains.

Probation assessment peak

One of the concerns in the literature review is that supervisors do not adhere to reporting time frames, they only report when reminded, and this normally violates the probation procedures (Baloyi & Crafford). It was therefore imperative to find out how often the progress assessment reports for new staff members were submitted. The majority of the respondents (39.2%) said their assessment reports were submitted after every three months during probation, whereas 26.5% respondents who said assessments were only submitted once, at the end of the probation process. One of the interviewees responded was that assessment forms were sent late by the personnel officer. As much as the process should be improved, it will not be possible, unless managing the process improves.

The PSSR E. VI part III section 5.2 states that the reviews of employees should take place in 3 months for all staff members, and every 6 months for accounting officers.

This means that there are supervisors who are not doing their work, by delaying assessment to once only over a twelve months' probation. The study did not cover probation for accounting officers, so no answer of twice a year was expected. As per results 7.7% said they get assessed every six months which is depicting twice a year. The overall findings are telling us there was slackening or lack of knowledge in the assessment, leading to poor management of the probation process.

5.3.1.6. Reliability of performance evaluations

One question intended to find out how reliable the results presented in the progress assessment report during the probation process and the results are: A considerable percentage 61.2% of the survey participants said the performance reviews were of a high quality and reliable since they were properly done. Then 56.1% said the reviews were too vague (no true evidence), since no tests and results attached to such report. Lastly, 48.0% of the participants responded that results/evaluations were relating to personal feelings of the supervisor towards the candidate. Danielle, Wiese and Buckley (1998), argue that the goal of the rater is not to evaluate the performance of the employee, but keeping him/ her satisfied and not to deteriorate their morale. Again the manager would consider their image in a sense that if poor ratings are received it would reflect poorly on the employees. So this explains the reasons why personal feelings interferes with the probation assessment results. The well recommended idea is to learn more about the conditions that encourage raters to use the evaluation system as it was intended to.

5.3.1.7. Communication during probation

Another question was asked to elicit answers as to how the probationers learn about probation. Only 25% said that they were informed about probation by the immediate supervisor before starting with work. Secondly, 23.5% said they read it in their appointment letters; 19.4% said they read it in the staff rules, 16.3% said they were informed by the personnel officer on the first day at work; and 14.3% said they heard it from colleagues. Inadequate and ineffective communication was identified by Hamumokola (2013) as a barrier to performance management, advocating that unclear understanding of what is being done, and of the objectives and methodologies of the systems will result in ineffectiveness. The results convey that there was no consistency on how the probation and its procedures was communicated. Some obtained the information from different documents and some were told by different people in their surroundings.

5.3.1.8. Feedback communication

The second part of the question was pointing out how the performance assessment feedback was communicated to probationers during the process execution. The motive was to see if the probationers got opportunities to know the areas of weak performances and to improve their efforts. According to the survey communication of feedback on the performance results was done through a review form that the candidates and supervisors sign after reading through and submitting to the HR office. That was evidently supported by the 42.35 % respondents. According to Freddie (2015) feedback brings about constructive improvement on performance and meeting performance targets. Hence, it

also capacitates the level of trust. In terms of the response rate, the feedback is given on consent between the rater and ratee.

In line with the literature stating that management does not adhere to reporting time frames in probation (Baloyi & Crafford, 2006), the survey has asked the participants to identify the probation assessment ultimate time. The findings are that assessments feedback were done after every three months according to 35.2% employees; while 26.0% and 20.9% employees respectively, said assessments were done when the probationers requested for them, no matter when; and once at the end of the probation period. Then 4.1% and 13.8% of employees respectively confirmed that assessments were conducted after every six months and assessments were not carried out at all. That means the study validated that assessments were not done twice per probation period at all and were abandoned completely.

5.3.2. Factors influencing probation performance

The survey provided a list appearing in the literature as factors to probation performance. The respondents were expected to rate them as per their experiences during their probations. Then 78.07 % of employees confirmed that late evaluation by supervisors was the number one factor, other factors mentioned were: poor communication between the involved stakeholders by 71.94 % employees; improper feedback system by 69.39%; lack of proper training of stakeholders during probation by 68.37%, and absenteeism by employees during probation and poor implementation of probation policies by personnel officials, by 62.76 %. The findings also rejected that long duration periods allocated to the probation cycle in the public service and

extensions of probation periods due to incompetency of probationers do not affect carrying out of probation or performing during probation.

In their own words the survey participants were asked to comment on how being absent at work affects the probation period. There are five common comments given by the respondents. Quite a few, 50.51% said being absent from work during probation did affect the probation. It caused extension to the probation period with the number of days absent. Their reasons were different: i.e. it did not give the probationers and supervisor enough time to carry out their daily activities; it delayed assessment process since one could not be assessed when at home, then others said it delayed the speed of catching up and becoming an expert in the operational activities and lastly some said it showed that you were not committed unless you were absent due to illness. But then 16% said absenteeism did not affect probation period, because they were not aware if it is an assessment criteria.

The findings of the study listed the following as the factors essentials to improve performance during probation: 69.90% said good performance review, 27.56% said good communication and guidance for stakeholders, 25.51% said training that responds to skills needed, 6.64% said observations, supervision and induction for new employees, 5.62% said transparency and honesty and 3.07% said motivation of the employees.

5.3.3. Challenges and their mitigation on completion of probation process

One of the main objectives of the study was to find the challenges that the probation process faces in real life. Probation is said to be there for formality sake, but there are challenges that were confirmed by the study has. The following problems were detected:

The majority, i.e. 90.31 % of employees said poor communication that create uncondusive working environment; 82.15 % of employees found a poor feedback system to be a problem; 80.11% said improper training; 77.04 % said lack of competence among stakeholders; and 71 % said scarcity of resources and allocation thereof were problems. A further 55.62 % and 49.49 % of respondents said the length of probation duration and rotation of probationers or supervisors during probation respectively, did not pose any effect to the process respectively.

In the same vein there are four issues that the researcher pointed out as threats to the system in Namibia. These were developed with the knowledge gained in the different studies read concerning performance management. For the purpose of the study we are concerned with probation performance. Therefore 92.86 % people agreed that lack of training for both probationer and supervisors and poor general management of probation process were currently issues in Namibia. Afterwards 85.21 % people confirmed that organizational culture and 62.25% said poor motivations were also threats to probation.

Challenges have to be resolved and a question was posed to find out how it could be done. The findings of the study reveal that 24.49 % people did not respond to this question. The respondents who answered suggested the following to be implemented to improve the process, in order of importance: Institutionalisation mentoring and training programmes that respond to the employees needs with focus on area of operation; revive induction programmes of the supervisor/ employees and outline the probation expectations; improved communication channels and dissemination of information by human resources officer to the right stakeholders; assessments should be done every 3 months (timely progress assessments); employers should increase the budget on training

and development and purchases of resources required for smooth performances; health oriented programmes to raise awareness on fitness should be established by employers through personnel; and invitation of independent bodies of expertise in the field of operations to conduct assessment of probation.

5.3.4. Probation objectives versus the level of education

A chi-square test was done to find out the probation objective and the level of education familiarisation, to the working environment. The chi-square results indicates that the level of education does not influence the responses on the probation objectives: familiarization, rating of performance and probation as a rule. But it has influence on the responses on the probation objectives: screening of candidates and confirmation for permanent employment.

5.4. Conclusion

The study concludes that the probation process is used in the Public Service administration to help the employees acquaint with their job and organizational culture. It is mostly aimed at confirming, screening, familiarising and rating candidates for permanent employment. Yet the application of probation has not achieved the said objectives. Training and communication emerge as crucial factors to the probation process, but no relationship has been established between training and communication and employees performance during probation.

Further analysis indicates that the duration of probation is twelve months, but it can be shorter or longer, depending on the complexity of the job to be covered. Supervisors are responsible for the assessments of probationers, and the reliability of the results lies with

the feedback they present afterwards. Probation management is not a smooth task as it is faced with various challenges, such as absenteeism, poor communication, and poor feedback system, lack of competence among stakeholders, improper training, and scarcity and imbalanced allocation of resources, amongst others.

Training during probation is offered to only some employees, either by experts in the field or immediate supervisors, but it is not matched to skills needed. While the giving of instructions to new employees is mostly done orally, it is not recommendable for effective communication. The supervisors are responsible to do reviews and write reports on candidates. The feedback is then given back on review forms when supervisors and employees have reached consensus.

The HR Office failed to spearhead the process of probation. Thus, an idea of independent bodies to audit the assessment report for a candidate is emphasized. The supervisors cannot really supervise because they have no specific training on supervision skills. It was detected that there are late assessments due to late distribution of assessment tools or laid-back attitudes of the supervisors. The performance of probation/completion of probation process is largely affected by late evaluation, absenteeism, and improper feedback, lack of proper training, poor communication and poor implementation.

The resolutions to challenges are to: institutionalise mentoring and training programmes where people will be prepared for the probation process; revive induction programmes of supervisors / employees and outline probation expectations; improve communication

channels and dissemination of information; improved and timely assessments and sufficient budgets for training and development and procurement of necessities.

5.5. Recommendations

In view of the findings the following recommendations are proposed:

1. The Namibian government, through the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) must go back to the drawing board to revise the probation process document and guidelines. And clearly set the aims, expectations, duration of the process and its assessment tools. The role of motivation theories should clearly be embraced and re-aligned in the goals of probation to re-energise the participants and re-direct their interests.
2. Training and induction programmes for the supervisors and probationers need to be revived and emphasised, to cover the gaps in competencies and ensure efficiency. The suggested training can be on supervision and leadership, implementation and interpretation of policies and regulations related to PSSR and the performance management systems.
3. It is recommended for supervisors to keep record of tasks given to employees and their performance score results and to act as reminders when compiling assessment reports. It is, more advisable for the assessments to be done on weekly basis to activate and stimulate the concentration of the participants.
4. The allocation of a sufficient budget for the acquisition of services or resources needed to improve the performances of the line ministries. This is necessary because some employees' performance is affected by the shortage of resources, e.g. teachers cannot

perform if they do not have textbooks. It therefore affects the performance of a probationer.

5. All new candidates have to go through board examinations that are prepared by an independent body or experts, before the permanent employment is granted. This should be done to ensure the probation process has imparted the necessary skills, and knowledges as well as control transparency and effectiveness of the probation.
6. Linking awards to probation performance. The attainment of confirmation to permanent employment should be linked to some remuneration package and benefits so that people get committed toward the process. Full salary should commence after probation is confirmed, pay should not be attached to qualification attained at first appointment.
7. The supervisors should have expertise in the field of operations, in order to be a role player in grooming the new ones for high attainment.
8. The management and supervisors should be encouraged to build stable and productive working relations and network with other team players and divisions of the organisation to smoothen coordination.

5.6. Directions for future research areas

After the study completion the following recommendations in terms of future research are to be considered:

1. It is recommended that a study be conducted to confirm the errors that are being committed by supervisors with the current assessment tool of probation.
2. A similar study should be undertaken to cover other line ministries or public institutions to establish the factors that influence probation performance.

3. Future research should focus on establishing the significance of the influence that training plays on the candidate's performance level during probation.
4. Further research should also aim at determining if there is a positive correlation between supervisors that receive training in effective communication and the number of probationers that get confirmation.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire for individuals

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is **Hildebert N.T. Shisaande**, a Master of Science student in Business Administration (Business Strategy), at the University of Namibia: Business School (NBS), Windhoek. I am conducting a case study on “**Factors influencing performance during probation in the public service: A case of Oshana Regional Council-Directorate of Education**”. The purpose of the study is to gather information on factors that affect performing (carrying out) and performing during the probation period. Please take a few moments to complete the questionnaire.

The information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality and used only for academic purposes. Could you please complete the following questions to help me in my study? You are expected to return the questionnaire in the **return envelope closed** in two weeks’ time from **17/01/2017-31/01/2017**. Any questions send me a text, call or email me on this mobile: 0817069302 email: hiwanapo26@gmail.com.

The questionnaire is printed both side with questions ranging from 1-21. Use an ink pen when filling in the questionnaire. After completion, please put the questionnaire in the white envelope provided and seal it.

Thank you for your time and effort in completing this questionnaire.

Respectfully

.....

Note: No information will be revealed without your permission. This is for academic purpose only.

Fill in the Following (compulsory)

Rank/Position:

Duty Station:

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Gender of the Respondent. Cross (x) your answer.

1	Male	
2	Female	

2. Age of the respondent. Cross (x) your answer.

1	Below 25 years	
2	26-30 years	
3	31-35 years	
4	36-40 years	
5	Above 40 years	

3. The level of education. Cross (x) your answer.

1	Secondary (Matric)	
2	College	
3	University	
4	None	

4. Terms of employment. Cross (x) your answer.

1	Contract	
2	Permanent	
3	Other(specify)	

5. When were you **first** appointed in the Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture: Oshana? Fill in the box below.

Date		Month		Year	

6. Which one is your job category? Cross (x) answer.

1	Senior Management (Grade 4)	
2	Middle Management (Grade 5)	
3	Specialized /Supervisor (Grade 6-7)	

4	(Grade 8-9)	
5	Semi-skilled worker (Grade 10-12)	
6	(grade 13-15)	

7. Have you ever gone through probation? Cross (x) option within the appropriate box.

1	Yes	
2	No	

8. Was your probation confirmed? Cross (x) your answer.

a	Yes	
b	No	

9. If yes, when fill in the box below.

Date		Month		Year	

10. How long was your probation period cycle? Cross (x) your option within the appropriate box.

A	Less than six months	
B	Six months only	
C	Twelve months	
D	More than twelve month	
E	No probation cycle	

SECTION B: EVALUATION OF PROBATION PROCESS

11. OBJECTIVES OF PROBATION

According to your understanding, why do we use probation in the public service institutions such as Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture? Cross (x) your option.

	Rating	Strongly agree	Agree	neutral	disagree
a.	To familiarize new employees with their work environment				
b.	To screen if you are the right candidate				
c.	To enable the supervisor to rate the performance of the new candidate				
d.	To confirm the new candidate to permanent appointment				
e.	Because the rule says so				

12. TRAINING DURING PROBATION

Does new employees on probation receive training specific to their departments they are recruited in, to equip them with rules and policies? Cross (x) the most appropriate answer(s) that fit your experience.

1	Yes, upon assumption of the duties on a formal platform by an expertise in the field	
2	Yes, on daily basis as on job training by immediate supervisor	
3	Yes, training is done when requested by the employees	
4	Yes, only if the appointed person is for an entry post	
5	Yes, but training offered is not relevant to daily tasks	
6	No, training was never done until probation period finished	

13. MODE OF GIVING INSTRUCTIONS TO NEW EMPLOYEES

1	Instructions are always written and very clear on what is to done by the employees	
2	Instructions are communicated orally to the employees	
3	No proper guidance and sometimes the employees do tasks on assumptions	

During probation, how do supervisors give instructions to probationers? Cross (x) the most appropriate answer that fit your experience.

14. DURATION OF PROBATION

Probation period in the state institutions is twelve months. Are you agreeing to the set duration? Cross (x) the appropriate box to illustrate your opinion on each statement.

No	Statements	Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Strongly
		Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
1	Duration is too long which makes probation process boring.				
2	Duration is short for employee to adapt to new job, working environment and rules				
3	Duration is adequate enough to allow time for training and demonstrate abilities.				

15. PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REVIEWS DURING PROBATION CYCLE

a) Who does the progress assessment during probation period? Cross (x) your answer(s).

a	Myself	
b	My fellow colleagues	

c	Immediate supervisors	
d	Head of departments	
e	No assessment was done	

b) How often are the progress assessment reports for staff members submitted during the probation period? Cross (x) your answer.

a	After every two months	
b	After every three months	
c	After every four months	
d	After every six months	
e	Once at the end of probation process	
f	No progress assessment was done at all	

16. RELIABILITY OF PERFORMANCE RESULTS

In your own opinion, how do you rate the quality and reliability of performance evaluations reviews which are conducted by a supervisor during probation periods? Cross (x) answers.

No	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a	The performance reviews are of high quality and reliable since it's done proper				
b	The reviews are too vague (no true evidence), since no testing cases and results attached to on such report.				
c	The results/ evaluations are more influenced by the type of interrelationship between supervisors towards the candidate. unrelated performance criteria, due to the appraiser's overall impression of the employee.				

17. COMMUNICATION

a) Was probation process and procedures formally explained to you? Cross out the applicable options.

No	Ways of explaining the probation process	Option
a	Yes, It was explained by my personnel officer upon the first date at work and gave me the staff rule document.	
b	Yes, it was formally explained by a /my immediate supervisor before I started work.	
c	No, I only read it in the public staff rule	
d	No, I heard it from my colleagues talking about it	
e	No, I only read it on my appointment letter	

b) How is the performance assessment feedbacks communicated to the employees during probation? Cross (x) your answers.

No.	Statements	Cross option(x)
a	Supervisor writes a report to the employee on the assessment results regularly and timeously.	
b	Personnel officer does the report to the employee in a form of feedback report.	
c	Supervisor gives the review form to the candidate to read through and signs before submitting to personnel offices.	
d	No one informs employees on their assessments except the decision of confirmation or extension or termination at the end of the probation cycle.	

18. TIME ON TASK

Were the probation assessments completed on time? Cross (x) your answers.

No	Statements	Cross option(x)
a	Assessment are done after every three months	
b	Assessment was done after six month	
c	Assessment was done once at the end of probation period	
d	The assessment was done when the probationers request for them.	
e	No assessment was done and probation period is not complete.	

SECTION C: FACTORS INFLUENCING PROBATION PERFORMANCE

19. FACTORS OF PROBATION PERFORMANCE

a) Which of the following causes most delays on the probation execution process? Select the appropriate option(s) in the box using a cross (x).

No	Factors	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a	Absenteeism by employees during probation period				
b	Late evaluation by supervisors				
c	Poor implementations of probation policies by Personnel officials				
d	Poor communication between involved stakeholders				
e	Extensions of probation periods due to incompetency of probationers				
f	Long duration periods allocated to the probation cycle in the public service				
g	Lack of proper training of stakeholders during probation				
h	Improper feedback system				

b) Does being absent from work affect the probation period?) Please comment on your answer.

.....

.....

.....

c) In your own opinion, which ways (things can be done) are essential to improve performance during probation process?

.....

.....

.....

SECTION D {Challenges of completing the probation process}

20. CHALLENGES ON PROBATION PROCESS EXECUTION

a) The following are the challenges that face the probation period. Rate the options by Cross (x) in the right column of your choice next to the challenge suggested.

No	Rating	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a	Poor Communication creating uncondusive work environment				
b	Poor feedback system				
c	Duration of probation period				
d	Rotation during probation				
e	Lack of competence among the stakeholders				
f	Scarcity of resources and allocation e.g. Finances and expert to do proper training				
g	Improper training				

b) State and explain in detail any other challenges that are specific to public institutions which hinder effective completion of probation period?

.....

c) Point out the issues in the current existing probation process that affect performance and suggest what could be done to improve them? Cross out your options as true when supporting the answers or false when rejecting the answers as suggested.

No	Issues	Resolution	True	False
a	Lack of Training	Proper and adequate training must be carried out for both supervisor and probationers		
b	Poor Management of probation	Supervisor and all people responsible for managing probation process should go through training on communication, conflict resolution, leadership, knowledge of the public service act regulations.		
c	Organization culture	Conduct Proper orientation training before employment start to acquaint the staff members.		
d	Poor motivation	Introduce Incentives to motivate the stakeholders such as supervision allowances, awards for best probationers.		

d) In your opinion, what would you recommend to be done to mitigate the challenges encountered during probation period as per your answer 20(b)?

.....

Appendix B: Supervisor interview guide

The position of the person interviewed:

Date:

Place:

1. Do the supervisors get trained to perform supervisory tasks during probation such as probation performance evaluations and job training? Comment on your answer.
2. Are there any kept records on each test done on the new employees and their feedback report to refer to when doing evaluations?
3. Are there any short comings that are identified in the probation process? Name them.
4. How are the performance shortfalls/shortcomings identified during performance evaluation reviews being addressed?
5. Do supervisors receive incentives when carrying out supervisory duties during probation period of their candidates?
6. As a member of the public service, what are the recommendations you would want the government to take in for improvements to probation process?

Appendix C: Letter to collect data from Namibia Business School (NBS)



02 November 2016

To whom it may concern

Ms Hildebert, N Shisaande of student number: 200524500 is registered for a Master in Business Administration- Management Strategy at the University of Namibia through the Namibia Business School.

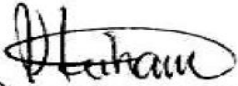
This letter serves to inform you that her research proposal was reviewed and successfully met the University of Namibia requirements.

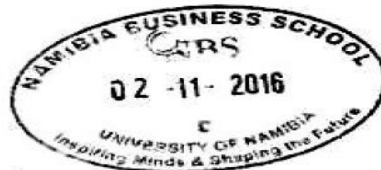
The student has been granted permission to carry out postgraduate studies research. The University of Namibia has approved the research to be carried out by the student for purposes of fulfilling the requirements of the degree being pursued.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact the Business School at the University of Namibia.

Thank you so much in advance and many regards.

Yours sincerely


PP Albert Isaacs, PhD
Associate Dean
Namibia Business School
University of Namibia
Tel: +246 61 413 500
Fax: +246 61 413 512
Email: albert.isaacs@nbs.edu.na



Board of Trustees: Adv. V Rukoro (Chairperson), Prof U Pallwal (Deputy Chairperson), Prof O Mwandemele, Mr I Shiimi, Mr S Thieme, Dr M T Tjirongo

340 Mandume Ndemufayo Ave. – Private Bag 15004 – Pionierspark – Windhoek – Website: www.nbs.edu.na
Tel: + 264 (61) 413500 – Fax +264 (61) 413512 – E-mail: info@edu.na – Trust reg. no T263/05

Appendix D: Letter to ORC for data collection

28 December 2016

The Chief Regional Officer
Oshana Regional council
Private Bag 5543
Oshakati

Dear Mr. Elago

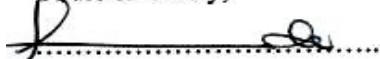
**RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH INTERVIEWS AND
SUBMIT QUESTIONNAIRES TO SUPERVISORS AND STAFFS**

I am currently busy with research for a Master of Business Administration- Management Strategy at the University of Namibia through Namibia Business School. The title of the intended research is “**Factors influencing probation performance in Public Service Institutions: A case study of Oshana Regional Council**”. The study is undertaken towards the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the enrolled course. The objectives of the study are to evaluate the existing probation process in the **Oshana Regional Council: Directorate of Education, Arts & Culture**, to determine the factors influencing the probation performance and to identify the challenges of completing the probation process. I believe the study will enable us to do recommendations in redesigning the probation process and finding resolutions to improve performance. It would also help in finding out if probation is the effective process to ensure performance by new employees.

I am hereby would like to request permission to distribute questionnaires and conduct interviews, if and when required, to the employees in your organization. This activity is expected to kick off during the month of **January 2017**. All information will be treated with confidential and no reference will be made to a specific individuals.

Your favourable consideration will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,



Ms. Hildebert NT Shisaande

For correspondence:

P.O. Box 11853, Oshakati. hiwanapo26@gmail.com

Tel: 264813174281/0817069302/065-209 325(w)

Fax to email: 0886558403

Appendix E: Authorization Letter to collect data from ORC



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



OSHANA REGIONAL COUNCIL
DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE
Aspiring to Excellence in Education for All
HUMAN RESOURCE ADMINISTRATION

Tel: (065) 229800
Fax: (065) 229833
Enq: Mr. Martin Ilonga

Private Bag 5518
OSHAKATI

Ref: SP

Ms. Hildebert NT Shisaande
Oshana Regional Office


Dear Ms. Shisaande

This letter serves to inform you that approval has been granted for you to conduct research interviews and submit questionnaires to supervisors and staff members of the Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture.

Kindly note that in order to be in compliance with the public service code of conduct, your research should have minimal interference to the performance of daily official work. Therefore it is advisable to make appointments with the people you intend to interview in advance.

It is trusted that you will gather all the information required for your research and good luck in pursuance of your studies.

Yours sincerely


MR. MARTIN P. ELAGO
CHIEF REGIONAL OFFICER
OSHANA REGIONAL COUNCIL

Handwritten date: 09/01/17

Appendix F: Namibia Probation Review/ Progress form



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

PROGRESS REPORT: STAFF MEMBERS ON PROBATION

PART A PERSONAL PARTICULARS		Report No.	
Name		Period	
Job Category		From	To

PART B GENERAL ASSESSMENT (Compulsory for all staff members)					
Qualities	Mark standard of achievement with an X				
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Below Average	Very Poor
Diligence					
Conduct					

PART C SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT (Compulsory for all staff members)					
Qualities	Mark standard of achievement with an X				
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Below Average	Very Poor
Job Knowledge and skills					
Quality of Work					
Output					
Work attitude					
Attendance					
Supervision required to achieve objectives					
Customer Care					
Acceptance of responsibility					
Initiative					

PART D ASSESSMENT OF STAFF MEMBERS ON SUPERVISORY LEVEL						
Qualities	If not tested write 'nt'	Mark standard of achievement with an X				
		Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Below Average	Very Poor
Expression on paper						
Oral expression						
Leadership						
Delegation						
Decision Making						
Organising						
Planning						
Team work						
Application of performance appraisal system						

FOR OFFICE USE			
Appointment /transfer/promotion on probation approved with effect from: _____			
Documentation			
Birth Certificate/Identity Document			<input type="checkbox"/> (Tick if received)
Educational qualifications: _____			

Health (accepted certificate)			<input type="checkbox"/> (Tick if received)
Other prescribed conditions:			

PROGRESS REPORTS NUMBERS			
1. _____	6. _____		
2. _____	7. _____		
3. _____	8. _____		
4. _____	9. _____		
5. _____	10. _____		
LEAVE DURING PERIOD OF PROBATION OR EXTENDED PERIOD OF PROBATION			
FROM	TO	NUMBER OF DAYS	NATURE OF LEAVE
TOTAL			
REMARKS			
+ Tag or page number of PF file			



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

CONFIRMATION OF APPOINTMENT, PROMOTION OR TRANSFER

STAFF MEMBERS ON PROBATION

CERTIFICATE

In terms of Section 22(3)(a) of Act 13 of 1995

Name _____

Job Category _____

Probationary period from _____ to _____

extended with _____ days to _____

I certify herewith that the above-named staff member during his or her period of probation or extended period of probation, has been diligent and his or her conduct has been consistently satisfactory and that he or she is in all respect suitable for the post which he or she holds.

He or she has complied with all the conditions to which his or her appointment, transfer or promotion was subject to.

Supervisor or Reporting Officer

Date

Permanent Secretary

Date

CONFIRMATION of the appointment, promotion or transfer

Signature

Date

Prime Minister or the holder of a post to whom the power to confirm employment on probation of a staff member has been delegated

Appendix G: Ethical Consent



**Research Ethics Review Committee
(UNAM ERC)**



340 MANDUNE NDEMUFAYO AVENUE, PIONEERS PARK, WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA; +26461413500; HTTP://WWW.UNAM.NA

**UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA
Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences**

Factors influencing performance during probation in Public Service: A case study of
Oshana Regional Council

Part I: Information Sheet

1. Introduction

I am inviting teaching staffs: teachers, Head of departments, Principals, non-teaching staffs (support staffs): administrative officer, cleaners, labourer, cooks, and matrons etc. and non-teaching staffs (administration): accountants, human resources practitioners, librarian, education officers, inspectors etc. who works for the directorates of Education the seconded functions under Oshana regional council to participate in the study. I will also interview five or less people from the sample.

2. Purpose of the research

This research aims to achieve the following two overall objectives which are to identify factors influencing probation being carried out properly and probationers completing their cycle during probation, in the public service institutions in Namibia. It's apparent that probation is not taken as a serious thing. We want you to assist us telling us your own experience during probation upon stating employment in the government. This would help us in reformulating, implementing changes and overall preserve the to the probation process.

3. Type of Research Intervention

The study will involve completing the questionnaires and short interview with few of you. The interviewers are the people that responded to the email invitation to participate.

4. Participant Selection

The questionnaire was given to the available respondents that are part of the sampled group. The interviewees are the one who agreed to be interviewed as per emailed request.

5. Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is your choice whether to participate or not.

6. Procedures

- A. Questionnaires: Provide a brief introduction to the format of the research study presented. The questions are demographic and structured where we are requested to view your own ideas and experiences. The questionnaires will be distributed by the head of the sections or school. The respondents can complete the survey themselves or someone help you so long as you are the one that gives the answers. Should there be any unclear information do not hesitate to contact me on the email or telephone details on the cover of the questionnaires. The rank and duties station are compulsory to be filled.
- B. Interview: The respondents were given choice to select the place where they best feel comfortable for the interview. The researcher will introduce herself and briefly explain the aim of the study and the expectations. The activity will last for less than 10 minutes. The interviews question are open ended and require any supervisory ranked personnel to answer them. They are generally based on Probation process. The researcher will write down the answers as precisely being said by the respondents.

7. Duration

The research takes place over 15 days in total during this time you are allowed to complete your questionnaires with time and return it closed in the return envelope. The interviews will simultaneously take place same time with the survey and it is estimated to last for 5 days due to the limited number of respondents to be interviewed.

8. Risks

The discussion is on opinions on Probation which is a government policy and in general no personal information is sought of, so feel comfortable talking about everything. You should not

have to answer any question or take part in the interview/survey if you feel the question(s) are too personal that makes you uncomfortable.) .

9. Benefits

There will be no direct benefit to you, but your participation is likely to help us find out more about how to probation process and help improve it, for efficiency and effectiveness in the public service.

10. Reimbursements

There will be no reimbursements

11. Confidentiality

The researcher will maintain confidentiality with the data and information related to the study. And it shall be used for the purpose related to the study. Participants will not be identified.

12. Sharing the Results

Nothing that you tell us today will be shared with anybody outside the research team. Unless if participants request it be shared with them.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

Participants were informed that participation is voluntary and includes the right to withdraw.

13. Who to Contact

If you have any questions, you can ask them now or later. If you wish to ask questions later, you may contact any of the following: Name: Hildebert NT Shisaande

Address: P.O. BOX 11853, Oshakati

Telephone number: 0813 174281/0817069302

E-mail: hiwanapo26@gmail.com

This proposal has been reviewed and approved by the University of Namibia Post Graduate

Studies Committee which is a committee whose task it is to make sure that research participants are protected from harm.

Part II: Certificate of Consent

14. Signature of research participant

I have read the foregoing information. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study

Print Name of Participant:

Signature of Participant:

Date / /

15. Statement by the researcher/person taking consent

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant, and to the best of my ability made sure that the participant understands that the following will be done:

- Write down their answer as they respond to interview questions
- Ranks will be used in the result discussions

16. Signature of a researcher

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

Print Name of Researcher/person taking the consent: Hildebert Ndawanapo. T Shisaande

Signature of Researcher /person taking the consent:.....

Date:

Appendix H: Acknowledgement of language editing

P. O. Box 21945

Windhoek

4 December 2017

To Whom It May Concern

I, the undersigned, hereby acknowledge that I edited the research report:

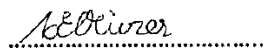
**FACTORS INFLUENCING PERFORMANCE DURING PROBATION PERIOD IN PUBLIC SERVICE: A
CASE STUDY OF OSHANA REGIONAL COUNCIL**

By **Hildebert N. T. Shisaande**, for language and typographical correctness.

I have indicated the areas in the dissertation to which attention should be paid. I trust that my advice was accepted and that these corrections and changes were executed as suggested.

Sincerely

Ms C.E. Olivier


.....

MA (Applied Linguistics);

BA Hons. (Applied Linguistics);

BEd;

BA;

LSTD (Lower Secondary Teacher's Diploma).