Rhodes Business School
Leadership for Sustainability

An Evaluation of the Delivery of the Eskom Customer Safety Education Programme in the Queenstown Customer Services Area

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by
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Declaration of Original Work

I, Kanyisa Mtyalela, hereby declare that the research "An Evaluation of the Delivery of the Eskom Customer Safety Education Programme in the Queenstown Customer Services Area" is my own original work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

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KANYISA MTYALELA   DATE

INTEGRATIVE SUMMARY

The aim of this research is to evaluate the Eskom customer safety education programme in the Queenstown Customer Services Area. The research focuses on the implementation of the programme with the aim of assessing whether there is need for optimisation in the way that the customer education and training is delivered.

The paper consists of three sections. Section one is directed to Eskom and is made up of (i) a review of the literature that is relevant to the Eskom safety education programme, (ii) the findings made from the study and (iii) recommendations from the author. Section two is a review of the key concepts which were identified for this paper and these are: (i) education and training, (ii) consumer education, (iii) citizenship education, (iv) training programme development, and (v) training programme evaluation. Section three provides detail on and justifies the research methodology that was followed for this paper.

The author adopted the deductive approach and collected data from literature sources and Eskom documents as well as face-to-face interviews with the Eskom trainers and customers. Qualitative data was collected from the interviews and is presented in section one of the report in the form of (i) narratives, (ii) graphs and (iii) tables. The research has identified some shortcomings in the delivery of the training and recommendations have been made on how these shortcomings can be addressed. Trainer skills, training evaluation and training tools are amongst the issues that require attention in the Queenstown Customer Services Area. The results revealed that 67% of the trainers have not received training related to conducting customer forums. Inconsistencies with regard to the evaluation of the training interventions were also identified and there were differences in terms of the training tools that are utilised at the forums. The recommendations made by the author are based on the literature that was reviewed as part of this study and are aimed at addressing the delivery of the training.

The respondents all displayed an understanding of the objectives of the Eskom safety education programme and made recommendations in terms of how Eskom can reduce the tampering of Eskom equipment. The recommendations made included the involvement of the community as well as unannounced door-to-door

audits aimed at identifying damaged and tampered Eskom equipment. These recommendations are in line with the guiding principles of safety education presented in McWhirter (2008: 32) which include the involvement of young people in real decisions to help them stay safe, as well as the use of active approaches in addressing safety issues.

A review of the electrical contact incidents which were reported to Eskom in 2011/12 revealed that in 61,5% of the cases that occurred in the Eastern Cape, Eskom had conducted electricity safety education before the incidents occurred. The recommendations in terms of the training delivery should be implemented to improve the delivery of the training. The author however recommends further research on how Eskom can reduce the number of electrical contact incidents that occur, as it has been proven through previous studies that safety education "has an impact on knowledge, behaviour, risk and skills and no papers have provided evidence of the impact of safety education on injury rates" (Mulvaney, Watson and Errington, 2012: 27).

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- God Almighty for giving me strength to continue till the end; and

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1. SECTION ONE: EVALUATION REPORT

1.1 ABSTRACT & INTRODUCTION

Eskom is a South African state-owned enterprise responsible for the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity. The company generates approximately 95% of the electricity used in South Africa and approximately 45% of the electricity used in Africa. The Eskom customer base includes industrial, mining, commercial, agricultural and residential customers as well as redistributors (Eskom, 2012: 1). As a state-owned enterprise, Eskom has a greater role to play than just the supply of electricity. "Eskom must consistently provide stakeholders with confidence that its activities are managed sustainably, effectively, and efficiently for the benefit of the South African economy" (Eskom, 2010b: 3). Protection of human lives and environmental duty of care are listed as two of the activities that should be done in support of the objectives of the Eskom Safety, Health, Environment and Quality (SHEQ) policy.

One of the ways in which Eskom can protect human lives and the environment is by educating members of the public about the safe use of electricity. The organisation receives reports about electrical contact incidents concerning members of the public on a monthly basis. Education is conducted at some of these areas and yet people still continue to act in an unsafe manner around electricity and end up injured or killed. A report on the electrical contact incidents which occurred between April 2011 and March 2012 shows that in 24 of the 39 Eastern Cape incidents, safety education had been conducted in those villages before the incident occurred (Eskom, 2012: 1).

In 2010, a study was carried out by an external company on behalf of Eskom to gauge public awareness of electricity safety and to identify gaps in safety practices that may need to be addressed (Eskom, 2010a: 1). The findings highlighted an improvement in terms of awareness and also indicated that there is great need for information on the safe use of electricity (Eskom, 2010a: 6). The difference between the 2010 and this one is that the former focused on general awareness regarding the safe use of electricity. This study focuses on the delivery of the training by

Eskom employees at customer forums, which are sometimes referred to as community forums.

The Customer Service and Safety Risk Management departments are responsible for ensuring that members of the public are educated on the dangers of electricity. The author of this research paper was the Customer Services Manager responsible for the Queenstown Area at the beginning of this research process. The research came about as a result of the author being interested in determining whether there were areas that could be improved in the delivery of the training. One of Eskom's values is Zero Harm, meaning zero harm to people (internal and external) and the environment. The safety education programme is one of the tools that is being utilised to achieve the goal of zero harm. It is therefore important to assess whether the programme is run in a way that supports Eskom in the achievement of the Zero Harm objective.

The research approach is deductive in that the researcher studied existing training delivery and training evaluation models, such as Kirkpatrick's four levels (2009) and Pineda's six levels of training evaluation (2010), and then drew conclusions with regard to the Eskom programme based on existing theory. The paradigm adopted in this paper is that of critical realism which Babbie (2011: 44) defines as "a paradigm that holds that things are real insofar as they produce effects". The safety education programme exists and is aimed at producing effects on the attendees. Those effects include creating a better understanding of electricity safety and how to react when faced with electrical contact incidents.

The research was conducted in the Queenstown Customer Services Area. Qualitative data was collected from Eskom documents which included policies and procedures, one-on-one interviews with Eskom staff who conduct the safety campaigns, participants from the campaigns, community members and academic sources such as journal articles and books.

The following concepts were identified as key to the execution of this study:

- Training and education
  - Training delivery
  - Training evaluation

- Safety education

- Consumer education

- Citizenship education

This study has revealed that there are areas of optimisation in the way that the customer education is conducted in the Queenstown Customer Services Area. This finding was made through the interviews that were conducted with Eskom staff and customers as well as through consulting the relevant literature. A number of recommendations have been made on how the shortcomings that have been identified can be addressed, and these can be found in section 1.5 of this research paper. These recommendations are aimed only at improving the delivery of the electricity safety education at customer forums and there is no guarantee that their implementation will result in the reduction of electrical contact incidents.

The author has made recommendations for further research on how Eskom can reduce the number of electrical contact incidents.

1.2   LITERATURE REVIEW

This section covers a review of the literature that is most relevant to this study. For this research paper the author focused on (i) training and education, (ii) consumer or customer education, (iii) safety education, and (iv) citizenship education. These concepts are key to this study as it involves training and education of customers who are also citizens and members of the communities within which they live. Each of these concepts will be explained in the following paragraphs.

1.2.1 TRAINING AND EDUCATION

According to Gravett (2001: ix) "education is seen as focusing on the development of the mind and of theoretical understanding, while training is viewed as the systematic development of skill patterns required by an individual to reach a particular competency or operative efficiency to perform adequately a specific, often vocational task". Gravett (2001: ix) further states that "good training needs to include some conceptual knowledge, and that education is more meaningful when contextualised in some form of practice". Aguinis and Kraiger (2009: 452) define training as the systematic approach to affecting individuals' knowledge, skills, and attitudes in order to improve individual, team, and organisational effectiveness. In Salas,

Tannenbaum, Kraiger, and Smith-Jentsch (2012: 74) training is defined as the planned and systematic activities designed to promote the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Laird (2003: 13) defines training as "an experience, a discipline, or a regimen that causes people to acquire new, predetermined behaviours".

1.2.1 (a) TRAINING DELIVERY

One of the areas which trainers should consider in the training process is what is called "learning styles", which is the manner in which individuals learn or process information as people learn in different ways. Some learn most effectively by hearing information. These people are referred to as auditory learners. There are also those who learn better by words or seeing visual images, graphics or pictures referred to as visual learners. The other type of learner is referred to as the kinesthetic learner which refers to people who learn by doing (King, King and William, 2000: 22). Cameron (2001: 133) recommends that facilitators make use of pictures and metaphors as much as possible in order to quickly develop a shared understanding of the issues being tackled.

1.2.1(b) TRAINING EVALUATION

Training programme evaluations are aimed at informing us whether the training programme has been able to deliver its goals and objectives in terms of costs incurred and benefits achieved (Al-Ajlouni, Athamneh and Jaradat; 2010: 1) and the most common reason for evaluation is to determine the effectiveness of a programme and ways in which it can be improved (Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick; 2009: 18) . Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2009: 18) further recommend that the following questions be asked in trying to answer the question of "how the programme can be improved":

- To what extent does the subject content meet the needs of those attending?
- Is the leader the one best qualified to teach?
- Does the leader use the most effective methods for maintaining interest and teaching the desired attitudes, knowledge, and skills?
- Are the facilities satisfactory?

- Is the schedule appropriate for the participants?
- Are the aids effective in improving communication and maintaining interest?
- Was the coordination of the programme satisfactory?
- What else can be done to improve the programme?

Responses to these questions would have to be carefully analysed in order to identify ways and means of improving future offerings of the programme. One of the challenges which have been identified around training evaluations is lack of data analysis. Even when data has been gathered for evaluation purposes, some trainers do not analyse the data for trends that would assist them in identifying areas of improvement (Boverie, Mulchany and Zondlo; 1995: 3). This is a challenge which was also identified in Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick's study (2009) where they state that organisations make use of reaction sheets and that no analysis is done for one or more of the following reasons:

- Evaluation is not considered important;
- They do not know what to do or how to do it;
- There is no pressure from higher management to do more;
- Trainers feel secure in their job and see no need to do more; and
- Trainers have too many other things that are more important or that they prefer to do.

According to Cameron (2001:105) "trainers should encourage the participants to give them feedback on how they did as there is no such thing as a perfect workshop" and Langdon (1999), cited in Chow, Woodford and Showers-Chow. (2008:323), notes that "feedback is one of the four main components of training; so having feedback from the trainees is an important aspect of determining the effectiveness of the training programme".

Trainers should view effective workshops as part of a larger process and share the workshop results with everyone who needs to know, through the use of concise and accurate reports. This is done to ensure that the contributions made by the workshop participants are put into good use for the benefit of the organisation (Cameron; 2001:87). The facilitator should produce a report after the workshop that encapsulates:

- What was covered in the workshop

- The structure of the discussion

- How the discussion went

- The broad timing of the session

- Ideas generated

- Evaluations generated

- Diagrams created

- Voting results

- Decisions made

- Actions arising

- Issues arising

The facilitator's opinions should not be part of the report, and the contents of the report should be restricted to facts rather than assumption (Cameron, 2001: 89), and issues which could not be dealt with at the workshop should be followed up with the workshop sponsor (Cameron, 2001: 91).

1.2.2 SAFETY EDUCATION

"Electrocution-related deaths constitute a serious problem in South Africa. Electrocution injuries typically involve the skin; however, vascular lesions, muscular injuries, liver, bone, neuropathological and eye changes have also been recorded. Carelessness, misuse or improper maintenance of electrical equipment represent the chief reasons for non-intentional, electrocution worldwide and it is also well known that numerous deaths result from the theft of electric utilities" (Blumenthal, 2009: 3). According to Kohn and Timmons (1988) and Cooper (1998) cited in Cooper and Cotton (2000: 482) "safety training is carried out to preserve life and health as well as to prevent accidents and control risks".

A number of factors have been found to play a part in the prevention and reduction of injuries. Towner and Errington (2004: 4) state that legislative, environmental modification and educational approaches all have a part to play in preventing or reducing childhood injuries, and their interactive effects are encouraging. This view is further supported by Mulvaney *et al.* (2012: 16) where they indicate that "injury prevention activities can be categorized into three general approaches; (i) education,

(ii) environmental modification and (iii) enforcement. These approaches can be targeted at whole populations or groups in particular settings or at high risk individuals".

Historically, health and safety education focused more on shock or guilt inducing approaches. These approaches have been widely discredited as they are not suitable for some groups (McWhirter; 2008: 13). They have in some instances been found to be counterproductive as they encourage risk taking behaviour amongst adolescents, pariculary those who are sensation-seekers (McWhirter; 2008: 13). The use of real life data and examples (but not those designed simply to shock) helps to engage young people and to challenge misconceptions e.g. 'accidents just happen' where necessary . McWhirter (2008: 13) refers to this way of using data as a normative approach; and it is the preferred approach since it encourages young people to make contributions and challenge misconceptions.

McWhirter (2008: 32) generated ten guiding principles of safety education and these are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: **McWhirter's ten guiding principles of safety education (McWhirter, 2008: 32)**

Guideline	Explanation
1. Encourage the adoption of, or reinforce, a whole school approach, within the wider community	This means that resources may deliver all or part of the whole school approach and should encourage or reinforce a whole school approach. A whole school approach encompasses the formal or informal curriculum, policy (both written and as implemented) and the relationships among staff and pupils.
2. Use active approaches to teaching and learning (including interactive experiential learning)	Active approaches include all strategies in and out of the classroom where the learner seeks out information for himself, develops physical skills, engages in discussion about a topic in pairs or in groups (interactive learning), is engaged in problem solving independently or in a group, adopts a role, or considers an issue from someone else's viewpoint.
3. Involve young people in real decisions to help them	Involving young people includes young people's participation in real decisions about keeping themselves safe, in and out of the classroom. Young people may be involved in designing or participating in surveys,

stay safe	school council, in peer education projects, in mentoring or peer support. Activities for young people should include identification of hazards, participating in risk assessment (e.g. assessing whether risks are trivial, tolerable or intolerable) and being part of actions to control or manage risk to themselves or others.
4. Assess children and young people's learning needs	Local and national evidence can help to identify factors that suggest children of a particular age or group are at risk. Teaching and learning strategies to address these needs should reflect the age and developmental stage of the learner, take account of social and cultural needs and the effects of gender on safety-related behaviour and learning. Strategies to assess learning needs can involve open-ended forms of questioning, whether through informal discussion, mind mapping, brain-showers or circle time.
5. Teach safety as part of a comprehensive personal social and health curriculum	A comprehensive personal social and health curriculum helps children and young people learn how to keep themselves healthy and to stay safe. It provides opportunities to learn specific and transferable skills and knowledge in a wide range of circumstances, but with attention to feelings, skills, attitudes, values and attributes.
6. Use realistic and relevant settings and resources	Real life data and examples (but not those designed simply to shock) help to engage young people and to challenge misconceptions e.g. "accidents just happen". Using data in this way is also known as the normative approach.
7. Work in partnership	Develop links with supporting agencies such as police, fire and rescue, local authorities and educational charities where these add value to work carried out in schools and other settings.
8. Address known risk and protective factors	Risk and protective factors can be anything that is associated with a greater or lesser probability of a child or young person experiencing harm. Risk factors are not static and can be divided into several domains: • Individual (knowledge and skill) • School • Peer group • Family • Community An understanding of risk and protective factors can help those designing and delivering safety education resources to focus on wider aspects of injury prevention and personal safety.
9. Address psychosocial aspects of safety e.g. confidence, resilience, self-esteem, self-efficacy	Psychosocial risk and protective factors are individual factors that may predispose children to injury, or to being a victim of bullying, violence or abuse. These aspects of behaviour operate dynamically with environmental factors (such as confidence, resilience, self-esteem, self-efficacy) within a whole school or whole community approach.

10. Adopt positive approaches which model and reward safe behaviour within a safe, supportive environment	It is helpful to identify the short- and long-term benefits of maintaining safe and healthy behaviour, and of modifying behaviour that is harmful to health. Children and adults learn from observing and modelling the behaviour of others, including peers, and generalise their expectation of positive outcomes across different domains.

In his 2008 review, McWhirter (2008:32) further points out that "safety education based on principles alone would be sterile, without a recognition of the values underpinning safety education". These values include respect for:

- all human life,
- the rights of children and young people to live safely and confidently in a changing world,
- the rights of children and young people to have a say in the decisions which are made about their safety,
- the rights of children to make informed choices about the risks they take;

And the responsibility of families, schools and communities to provide:

- opportunities for children to make informed choices,
- opportunities for children to discover their physical and emotional capabilities through play and exploration,
- a safe, secure environment in which children can grow and develop.

Towner and Errington (2004: 4) warn that "while studies of safety education can show knowledge gain and behaviour change there is insufficient evidence to link these impacts to injury prevention". This view is supported in the Safety Education, DfES Guidance 0161/20002, December 2011 cited in McWhirter (2008: 10) where it is stated that "knowing how to recognise hazards and assess and manage risks needs to be complemented with the right attitudes and behaviour."

1.2.3 CONSUMER EDUCATION

Consumer education programmes assume that "consumers have the right to full product information and well informed consumers will be able to get their needs met" (Adkins and Ozanne, 2012: 153). Benn (2002: 172) states that "as all forms of education, consumer education is based on the educational triangle pupil, teacher

and content, viewed from the perspective of today and tomorrow". Burton (2002: 127) has a similar view in that the definition provided highlights the provision of information and skills stating that "consumer education focuses on providing consumers with the skills to utilise information rather than merely the presentation of information and facts without any further support".

According to Kaeter (1994) cited in Burton (2002: 133) "consumer education can actually save money" in the sense that problems related to product usage can be avoided rather than waiting and dealing with them when they occur. Burton (2002: 133) further states that "it could be a much cheaper option to educate consumers to prevent problems occurring rather than waiting for problems to arise and then having to deal with them". Kirby (2008) cited in Chow *et al.*(2008: 320) is also of this view, stating that "ineffective training can lead potentially to claims for negligence". These views all point to the benefits of consumer education on a company's bottom line as the lack thereof would have financial implications for the firm.

According to Burton (2002: 135) the face-to-face method is one of the better ways of building relationships between the firm and its consumers even though it can be quite costly compared to other methods.

1.2.4 CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Citizenship education is aimed at ensuring that community members are informed about issues that affect them and the roles that they can play, not only on matters of individual interest but matters affecting communities at large. The Learning and Skills Development Agency (2005: 01) sets out the key features of successful citizenship projects as follows:

- a focus on practical action rather than simply acquiring political knowledge;
- the involvement of young people in decisions about their education;
- dedicated and enthusiastic staff citizenship "champions" to promote the importance of citizenship and adequate resources; and
- a clear definition of what citizenship means.

According to Benn (2002: 172) "the overall aim of education is that pupils and students obtain active competencies in a number of fields and or become

empowered to act as citizens in a democratic society". This puts emphasis on the person's ability to grow and transfer the skills learnt to others in order to ensure that the broader society is empowered. Down (2004: 18) lists what he refers to as the special aims of citizenship teaching as follows:

- to inculcate habits of good behaviour and right conduct;
- to develop in children a sense of social responsibility as a preparation in community and national life; and
- to give children a general knowledge of social institutions and of the problems of government.

McGregor (1999: 208) and Potter (2002: 59) refer to three elements of citizenship: (i) the civil, (ii) the political, and (iii) the social. For the purposes of this paper, the civil and social are more relevant as they both deal with issues that have to do with one's role in society. "The civil refers to community involvement, learning about and becoming helpfully involved in the life and concerns of one's community, including learning through community involvement and service to the community. The social refers to social and moral responsibilities wherein people learn self-confidence and socially and morally responsible behaviour both at work or play, at home and towards those in authority and towards each other" (McGregor, 1999: 208).

An important point that has been noted is that citizenship is also about preparing citizens for future occurrences and so the information provided during the education process should allow citizens to act on both present and future situations.

1.3   RESEARCH METHOD

This section provides a summary of the research method that was followed in addressing the aim of this research paper. The author adopted the deductive approach of data collection in that a number of literature sources were consulted and a decision was made in terms of which areas to focus on for this research paper. The literature provided guidance in terms of the key concepts of this research, the development of the questionnaire and the data analysis process.

The author targeted the Eskom Electricity Safety Week for the data collection process. During this week, all Customer Service Areas are expected to focus on

public safety education and customer forums are scheduled for each of the five working days.

Twelve respondents, made up of six Eskom employees and six customers, were selected and interviewed for this paper and they all signed a participant consent form, granting the author permission to continue with the interview process. The participant consent forms and the questionnaires were all approved by the Rhodes Business School Ethics Committee prior to commencing with the data collection process. Written permission was also granted by Eskom for the author to conduct this research before the data collection process began. The author obtained a list of all the customer forums which were scheduled to take place in the Queenstown Customer Service Area from the organisers and attended the forums which took place in Queenstown, Aliwal North and Cradock sub-areas. The Eskom trainers were all advised that the author would be attending these events and that customers would be interviewed after each forum.

The six Eskom employees who participated in the research process are all staff members who conduct customer safety education in the Queenstown Customer Services Area and face-to-face interviews were conducted with each of these respondents on a one-on-one basis. This was done to allow respondents to be open about their responses without concern of what someone else might have to say about their responses. This group of respondents is referred to as sample group B in the paper.

Sample group A (the six customers) were selected at customer forums in the following sub-areas: Aliwal North, Queenstown and Cradock with two selected from each of these sub-areas. The interviews with this sample group were also done on a one-on-one basis so as to allow customers to be open in their responses.

Appointments with the respondents in sample group B were set in advance as the author had knowledge of who these people were. The selection of respondents for sample group A was different as the author did not have information on the customers who would attend the forums. These respondents were therefore selected on the day of each customer forum. The author attended each of the customer forums and selected two customers from the available customers. This was done by identifying people who participated a lot throughout the entire

intervention. The author was of the view that these people would be open in terms of their responses as they were vocal during the training process. Each person was approached before the end of the training process and asked if they would be able to stay behind for a face-to-face interview after the customer forum. Everyone who was approached indicated they were willing to stay and be interviewed. Immediately after the end of the forum, the author met with each individual separately and explained the purpose of the interview, the types of questions that would be asked, and the fact that the participants were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. Before commencing with the interview, participants were asked if they were keen to continue with the interview and a participant consent form was given to them to sign. Once this was signed, the interview commenced and responses were captured during the interview process.

On completion of the data collection process, qualitative data analysis was conducted with focus on themes and similarities in terms of the responses that were received. Similar responses were grouped together and counted from each of the sample groups and at the end, similarities in terms of responses from the two groups were analysed and summarized.

1.4   RESULTS

In this section, the author provides a summary of the results of the interviews. The results from the two samples are presented separately and in the end, similarities in terms of participants' views are highlighted. Section 1.4.1 contains the results from sample group B, which is the Eskom employees who conduct customer forums in the area, and section 1.4.2 is made up of sample group A results.

1.4.1 SAMPLE GROUP B RESULTS (ESKOM STAFF INTERVIEWS)
The questionnaire was divided into five sections with the following headings:

- Assessing the respondent's understanding of the Eskom safety education programme objectives;
- Assessing the trainer's skills;
- Assessing the use of training tools;

- Customer understanding of content; and
- Trainer suggestions.

1.4.1 (a) UNDERSTANDING OF PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

This section of the questionnaire was aimed at assessing the participants' understanding of the Eskom safety education programme objectives. The author wanted to assess whether the participants understand why they are required to conduct the forums as well as the issues that they focus on during the customer training process. The participants' responses were compared to the aims of the Eskom public safety policy which is "to promote public safety and reduce injuries and deaths caused by unsafe and illegal connections" (Eskom, 2012: 8).

All respondents have an understanding of why Eskom has the public safety programme. There is uniformity in terms of the way the training is conducted as all trainers focus on the same issues during the training process which are:

- Tampering with Eskom equipment
- Safety inside and outside the home
- What to do in emergency situations such as low hanging conductors, open wires or in the case of someone who has received electrical shock
- Information required when reporting issues to Eskom
- Illegal connections.

The respondents believe that the programme does not achieve all the Eskom objectives even though there has been an improvement in terms of reaching some of the objectives. They listed the following as positives:

- Customers are more aware of the dangers of electricity.
- Customers know how to report safety issues to Eskom. One of the respondents indicated that "*in the past customers used to come flocking to my car when I visited the villages to ask questions and when I started conducting forums, people began to understand what they need to do when they want Eskom to attend to an issue. The number of people who stop me on the street has gone down if I compare it to when we did not conduct these forums.*"

- Customers do not have to spend money travelling to the nearest Eskom office to report, they know that they can report via the Contact Centre.
- There is a reduction in the number of fatalities and electrical contact incidents in the Queenstown area.

The concern from the respondents is that there are customers who still continue to tamper with Eskom equipment and there are still reports of illegal connections in some areas.

1.4.1(b) ASSESSING TRAINER SKILLS

In this section of the questionnaire, the author wanted to gain an understanding of the trainers' skills as well as training which they believe would assist them in the customer training process. Figure 1 shows the number of trainers who have received training versus those who have never been trained.

Trained versus untrained trainers

Trained
33%
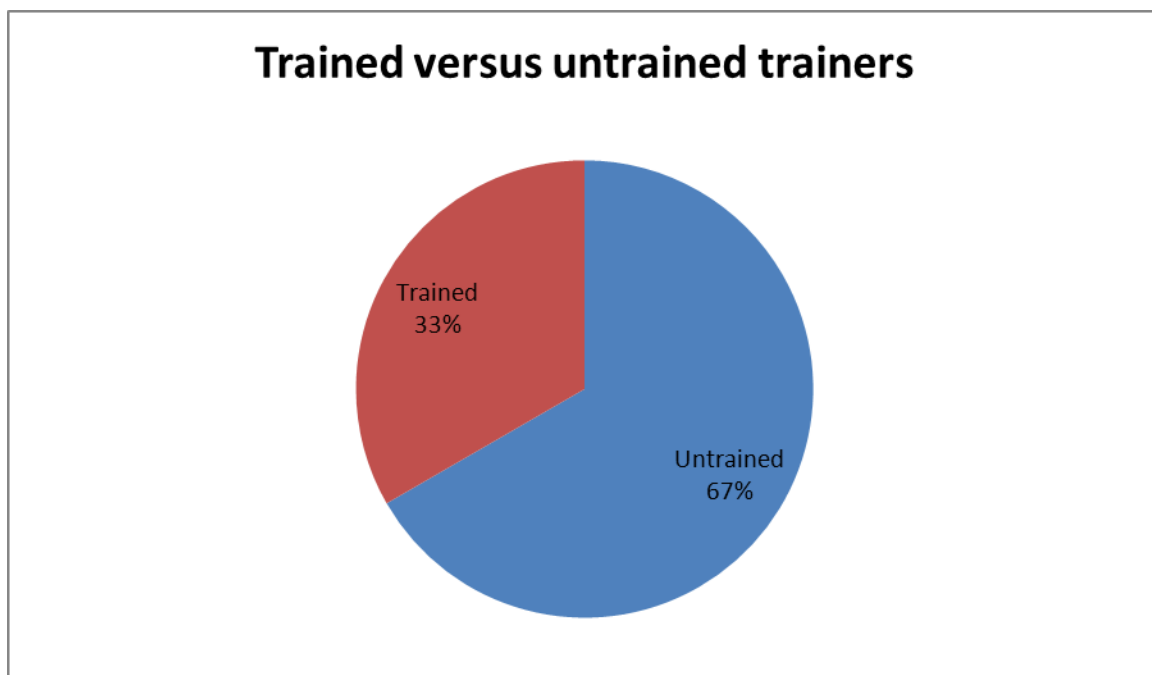
Untrained
67%

Figure 1: Number of trained vs. untrained trainers

Of the 6 respondents who participated, 67% (4 out of 6) indicated that they had never received training related to conducting customer forums. They all observed other staff members conducting customer training and assumed the trainer role without any other form of training. They all believe that they require training on

facilitation and presentation skills, which in their view is training that would develop their effectiveness as trainers.

The other 33% (2 out of 6) received presentation skills training some time ago and they are of the view that anyone who conducts customer training should be taken through this course as it equips one with the skills required to present information in an interesting manner and to manage customers during the learning process. One of these respondents said he would recommend presentation skills training for "newly appointed Service Representatives" as keeping customers interested in the presentation is a difficult task which requires skill.

1.4.1 (c) ASSESSING THE USE OF TRAINING MATERIALS

The aim of this section of the questionnaire was to assess the usefulness of the tools and materials that are used by the trainers at the customer forums. The author also wanted to solicit some ideas from the trainers in terms of material which they believe would be useful during the training process.

All the participants reported that they are provided with pamphlets and posters. These items contain information on how to contact Eskom, pictures depicting the do's and don'ts of working with electricity or electrical equipment for both inside and outside the home. All participants are of the view that the pictures assist in sending the message across as some customers prefer seeing pictures compared to listening to someone talking the whole time. The pamphlets are also viewed as useful tools since customers take them home and can go through them in their own time or whenever they need some information on Eskom.

Some of the trainers also make use of other items such as tampered Eskom meters, self-made stoves which are commonly referred to as MacGyver stoves, damaged cables, extension cords, kettles and plugs for demonstration purposes. These trainers believe that bringing these items to the forums assists in the training process as customers get a chance to see what is safe or unsafe to do or use when working with or around electrical equipment. The MacGyver stove is made by customers using an old paraffin stove frame, thin cables put together using plastic or sellotape and an electric stove plate. Due to the unsafe method of making this stove, a

number of children and adults have been killed or injured and the trainers take this to the forums so that they can explain how dangerous it is.

At the end of the customer forums, an evaluation form is handed over to the community leader. This is a standardised form which is used at all community forums in the Eastern Cape Operating Unit. There were mixed views concerning the usefulness of this evaluation form. The majority of the participants believe that this evaluation form is useful as it allows Eskom to receive feedback on how the forums are conducted. The participants also indicated that they make use of suggestions that are received from customers at the forums as well as the comments made by the community leaders. According to one of the participants "*the comments made by the community leader add value in that you improve because the comments are not always positive, the negative feedback is also positive*". One of the participants said that "*to me there is no value because it is yes or no answers*" and one indicated that they had not used the evaluation form.

The completed evaluation form is handed over to the responsible supervisor who is supposed to follow up on any requests and suggestions that are made. Some of the participants follow up on the issues raised; one person reported that they do not know if the supervisor follows up. When asked for suggestions on training tools, the participants raised similar issues. There is concern around the promotional items which are issued to customers in the prepayment market. Participants are of the view that most of these items do not add value to the lives of customers. They are of the view that Eskom should issue items which can replace the unsafe items that are used by customers: items such as two-plate stoves which would replace the MacGyver stove used by some customers, extension cords, kettles and other household appliances. The items in Table 2 were listed by all the participants as training items that would make the training process more interesting and add more value.

Table 2: Suggested training tools

Item	Use
Safety films/videos	These would be videos or films containing electricity safety messages.
Laptop	To play the safety videos and other important safety information.
Overhead projector	To display the films/videos.
Music system	For entertainment purposes. Eskom makes this available during the safety week interventions but not for other community forums. Trainers believe that the entertainment makes the intervention more interesting and draws people to the venue.
Sound amplifier	Some of the venues are huge and customers battle to hear, making it difficult for trainers to keep customers interested in the presentation
Tents	For areas that do not have community halls. The trainers reported that in some instances, they hold the meetings under trees with customers sitting on stones due to non-availability of community halls.
Pamphlets	In all languages that are spoken in a particular area. The concern from the participants was that most of the time, the pamphlets are printed in English, and in some areas customers require pamphlets that are printed in their own language.

1.4.1 (d) CUSTOMER UNDERSTANDING OF CONTENT

All the trainers reported that they evaluate customer understanding by asking questions and by also affording customers the opportunity to ask questions during or after presenting.

1.4.1 (e) SUGGESTIONS

General suggestions from the respondents included the following:

- Uniform for all presenters as presenters go in different outfits and do not look professional.
- Electrification information as according to the respondents "*some people attend the forums for information on when their villages will be electrified*". The electrification process is handled by a different department and the participants believe this is useful information for forums.
- A team dedicated to customer forums to ensure that Eskom attends to customer queries timely and is more visible in the areas. Currently the team

that conducts these forums also takes responsibility for all new prepayment applications, making it difficult for them to focus on customer education.

- Refreshments for customers at all forums.
- Increased visibility, at least once every three months.
- Door-to-door inspections to reduce meter tampering.
- Not less than two presenters per forum.

1.4.2 SAMPLE GROUP A RESULTS (CUSTOMER INTERVIEWS)

1.4.2 (a) OBJECTIVES OF THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

The participants reported that they had mixed views about the forums at the beginning. One participant said "I *thought that Eskom was here to announce that they were going to have a meter audit as our electricity was once disconnected due to illegal connections".* Another participant said they thought this was just an entertainment session and not an educational one. At the end of the forums they understood why Eskom had gone to their areas. One participant's response was as follows: "*the forums are aimed at improving our lives so that we may live better lives. In the past we struggled, using candles, fetching wood from the forests and boiling water outside but now because of Eskom our lives are much better than before. Now we can boil water at night, we do not have to get generators for our television sets and radios. We even have streetlights. We did not know that we are not supposed to touch damaged cables and that Eskom can come and fix these if they are reported. I come to these forums so that I can gain more information about electricity and know how to report unsafe situations.*"

1.4.2 (b) LEVEL OF LEARNING

The participants all believed that the presentations were easy to understand and they had gained some new knowledge from the forums. When asked about what they had learnt,they mentioned the following:

- Tampering with electrical equipment can result in fire.

- Electrical wiring should only be done by a qualified electrician. Some customers reported that there are people in their villages who do everyone's wiring without the necessary qualifications.
- Only Eskom employees and contractors can work on the Eskom network.
- Low hanging conductors are a danger to people and animals and should be reported to Eskom immediately. No-one should touch the cables.
- How to assist someone who has received electric shock.
- How to save electricity and ensure that it lasts longer by switching off appliances when they are not in use.
- Children should be stopped from throwing objects onto power lines.

Figure 2 depicts customer responses when they were asked about what they would do with the information that they acquired at the forums. Out of the 6 customers, 4 said they would share the information with others who had not attended such as family and friends. The other responses were that they would fix their wiring, stop extending cables to neighbours and report those who had tampered with Eskom equipment.
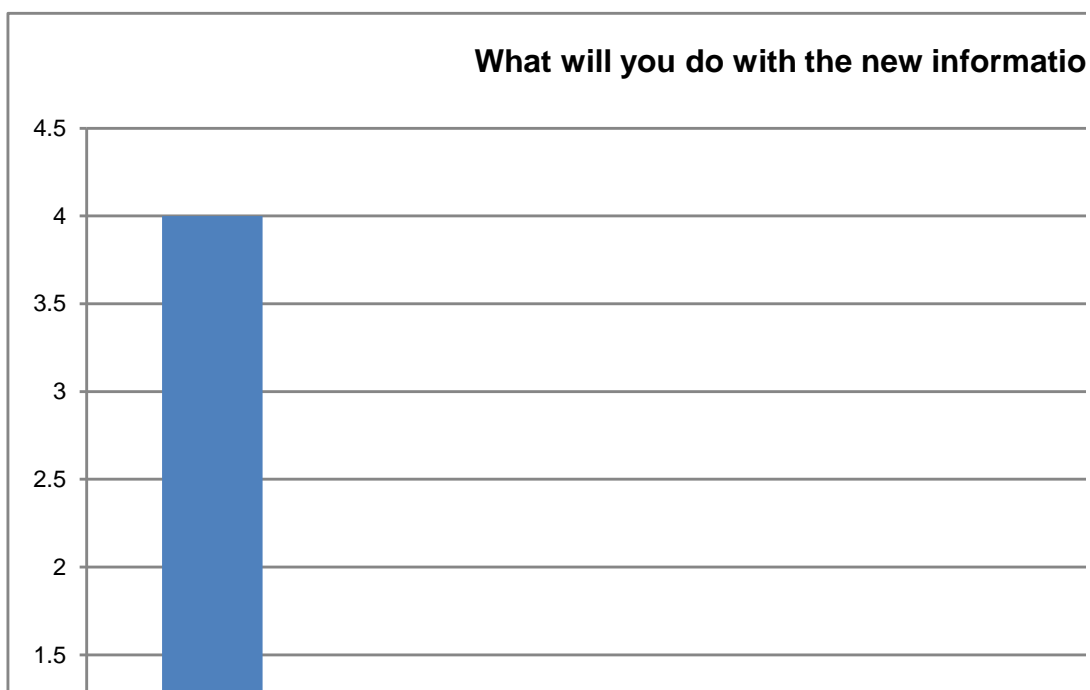
Figure 2: What customers plan to do with the new information

1.4.2 (c) VIEWS ON PRESENTER SKILLS

The participants all believed that the information was presented clearly and were also satisfied with the manner in which questions from customers were answered. One participant indicated that they "*liked the fact that the Eskom presenters took turns to answer questions and were all willing to respond without hesitation. When they take turns to present and respond to questions it keeps us awake as listening to one person can be boring*".

1.4.2 (d) GENERAL VIEWS

- Door to door meter audits. Customers strongly believe that the only way in which meter tampering can be curbed is through regular unannounced meter audits. Eskom needs to disconnect and remove all equipment as the issuing of fines does not deter people from tampering. They believe the current system of charging people who are found to have tampered with Eskom equipment does not work as people tamper over and over again. They believe that Eskom should remove all equipment if people steal or connect illegally. They believe it is unfair of Eskom to allow others to continue stealing while others are paying.

- Conduct customer forums more than once a year, with the majority of the customers saying that they would like to see Eskom at least once every three months.

- Appoint community members/volunteers. These people can visit old people who are unable to attend forums and educate them. They can also assist Eskom in identifying and reporting illegal connections and unsafe conditions.

- Bring refreshments as some of the people are old and sickly. Some have diabetes and need to keep their energy levels high.

1.5 DISCUSSION

This section is aimed at discussing the research findings and making recommendations in terms of the Eskom customer safety education programme in the Queenstown Customer Services Area. The discussion places focus on the following areas: (i) training delivery, (ii) trainer skills and competencies, (iii) training tools, (iv) levels of learning, (v) training evaluation, (vi) general suggestions from

trainers and customers. Recommendations made by the author are also part of this section.

The literature studied (King *et al.*, 2000 and Cameron, 2001) as part of this research paper suggests that trainers should take into consideration the learning styles of participants or learners so as to ensure that all participants learn through the training process. From the customer forums that were attended by the author as well as the interviews conducted, the finding in terms of the Eskom programme was that the trainers do take learning styles into account in delivering the safety education. All the trainers made verbal presentations, brought electrical equipment, put up posters and handed out pamphlets with pictures of what they were talking about. At one of the forums, a laptop with pictures of injured people was taken around the hall to show customers the types of injuries that can be caused by electrical burns.

Another observation from the customer forums was that the trainers made an effort to contextualise the safety education and this is a process which Gravett (2001) recommends as it adds more meaning to the education process. The Eskom trainers contextualised the education as they brought items which are used by customers for demonstration purposes. At all the forums, two electricity meter boxes were shown to customers: one had been tampered with and the other was still intact. The trainers highlighted the differences between the two meters advising customers on how to identify meters that have been reconfigured illegally. At the Aliwal North and Cradock forums, the trainers brought a MacGyver stove and explained the dangers associated with using this kind of stove and, to emphasise the dangers, pictures of children with burn wounds were also shown to the audience. A member of the public who was attending the forum informed one of the trainers that his son's limbs had had to be amputated after suffering burn wounds from a MacGyver stove. This person was requested to share his experience with the rest of the people with the aim of making people understand the dangers of illegal and sub-standard connections. Reference was also made to other unsafe situations such as working under Eskom power lines. One of the trainers relayed a story about the electrocution of a young lady who walked under a low-hanging power line carrying a metal container which was filled with water. This was aimed at putting the training into context as some of the people at the forum could relate to it.

There is a gap in terms of trainer skills and competencies in the Queenstown Customer Services area. As highlighted in the interview findings, only 33% of those who were interviewed reported that they had received some kind of training on how to conduct the customer forums. Having consulted Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2009) and King *et al.* (2000), the author has come to the conclusion that there is a need for all the trainers to be taken through a training course that would equip them with competencies that are recommended by these authors. The training would have to incorporate the skills and competencies needed by someone who conducts safety education. The work of authors such as McWhirter (2008), Towner and Errington (2004) and Mulvaney, Watson and Errington (2004) should be consulted for guidance on how safety education should be conducted. These authors provide some guiding principles on how to conduct safety education and also caution trainers against excessive use of "shock tactics" when conducting safety education as some age groups may ignore these warnings and actually act against them. Based on this, the author recommends that a training programme is set up for all employees who conduct customer forums and the training should focus on the competencies and skills of trainers as well as those specific to conducting safety education.

Another observation which was made is that there is a gap in terms of analysing the evaluation forms which are completed by the community leaders. It is clear that there is no clarity in terms of what should be done with these forms. Some trainers hand them to the supervisor with the expectation that the supervisor will do the analysis, while others go through these and provide feedback to the community leaders. The author recommends that a process be put together on how these evaluation forms should be handled. Cameron (2001: 88) recommends that a report be put together after each workshop highlighting a number of issues, amongst which the evaluations generated appear. The issue of analysing the evaluations is also highlighted in King *et al.* (2000) as a competence which should be possessed and carried out by trainers. Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2009) also emphasise the importance of training evaluation, hence the recommendation for the Eskom Queenstown Customer Services Area team to close this gap by putting together a process that would ensure that the evaluation forms are properly analysed after each forum. The author would also go as far as recommending that each trainer

compiles a report after each customer forum containing the information that is highlighted in Cameron (2001: 88). This would ensure that customer issues are attended to and feedback is provided to the participants where necessary. Cameron (2001) recommends that these reports be handed over to a workshop sponsor who is the person responsible for the programme. In the Eskom case, this would be the Area Supervisor as all the trainers report to this person. Through the evaluations, Eskom will be in a better position to understand the needs of the different communities it serves, and be able to cater for those specific needs with confidence that the training is being delivered at the right pace for that particular community.

The trainers made some recommendations in terms of their dress code at the customer forums. The concern that was raised was around the wearing of protective clothing at these forums as that is the only Eskom branded clothing that was issued to them. They are of the view that this is not appropriate as some of it is damaged as a result of being used on a daily basis and does not come across as professional. King *et al.* (2000) mention that visual appearance which includes the clothes you wear and your grooming is an important issue for any trainer as it can be distracting to learners. The observation made by the author was that some of the trainers were not dressed in Eskom branded clothing and that meant that customers could not approach them for information on Eskom issues as it was not easy to identify them as Eskom employees. Due to the facts mentioned in King *et al.* (2000) and the observations made at the forums, the author would recommend that Eskom considers the issue of standardised Eskom branded clothing for trainers as the current way of doing things can create a barrier between trainers and customers.

Participants from both samples mentioned the importance of serving refreshments at the forums and Cameron (2001: 84) also highlights the issue of food and drink as an issue which should be taken into consideration in arranging workshops. Cameron (2001) goes as far as recommending plenty of fruit and lean food as more appropriate types of refreshment when compared to "heavy, stodgy foods which would slow people's thinking". The deduction from the interviews was that trainers only serve refreshments at the Electricity Safety Week events and not at the other events that are arranged during the rest of the year. Due to the risk highlighted by the respondents of elderly and sickly people attending these forums, the author

recommends that Eskom serve refreshments at all forums to minimise the risk of people losing concentration or leaving the venue due to hunger. The author observed that all the forums took over three hours and that is a long time for people to be seated without something to eat.

Burton (2002: 135) states that the face-to-face method is one of the better ways of building relationships between the firm and its consumers even though it can be quite costly compared to other methods.

Sources consulted for this paper including McGregor (1999: 208) and Potter (2002: 59) refer to three elements of citizenship: (i) the civil, (ii) the political and (iii) the social. For the purposes of this paper, the civil and social are more relevant as they both deal with issues that have to do with one's role in society. These are more relevant because with the issue of electricity safety, citizens have a role to play towards their communities. An understanding of electricity safety would benefit not just individuals but communities too. In conducting the safety education, Eskom would have to focus on these two elements in order to make community members aware of the impact of their actions on the broader community, and enable them to act in ways that make them feel that they are playing an important role in terms of community empowerment. Out of the 6 customers who were interviewed, 4 indicated that they would pass the knowledge acquired onto others who were not present at the meeting.

One of the recommendations made by the customers was that Eskom should appoint ambassadors who would act on Eskom's behalf by reporting unsafe situations in the communities and also play a role in terms of conducting house visits and educating the elderly on electricity safety. It is recommended that Eskom explores this suggestion further to determine its advantages and disadvantages. One of the Eskom employees reported that Eskom used to have such people in the past but this was discontinued. This respondent could however not advise in terms of why this was stopped. The author recommends that this be explored further based on one of McWhirter's principles of involving young people in the safety education process, outside of the classroom environment. The classroom environment in this case would be the customer forum. McWhirter (2008: 32)

recommends that young people be involved in the "hazard identification process, participating in risk assessment (e.g. assessing whether risks are trivial, tolerable or intolerable) and being part of actions to control or manage risk to themselves and others". Mostovicz, Kakabadse and Kakabadse (2009: 247) assert that, "the involvement of citizens in public administration issues has evolved from a state where citizens were viewed as subjects that were controlled, to a state where citizens were provided more involvement in public affairs", hence the author's recommendation for this option to be explored.

The respondents also recommended that the customer forums take place at least once every three months so as to ensure that people do not forget what they have learned. This view is supported by a number of authors who state that "Studies suggest that the potential for effective injury prevention with single interventions is limited unless they are sustainable and part of a wider curriculum programme" (McWhirter, 2008:19). Hudson, Zimmerman and Morrel-Samuels (2006) cited in (McWhirter, 2008: 19) state that "evidence reviewed in anti-bullying programmes also demonstrates that once off activities have little impact while more sustained interventions of several sessions are more likely to demonstrate success, especially if delivered by trained facilitators". The author recommends that the frequency of these interventions be increased based on findings from other studies as well as the request from customers and Eskom employees.

1.6 CONCLUSION

It is evident that there are positives as well as gaps in terms of the delivery of the electricity safety education in the Queenstown Customer Services area. The author recommends that the recommendations made be implemented in the area and a similar study be conducted in the other three Customer Service areas in the Eastern Cape Operating Unit in order to ensure consistency in terms of customer training delivery. There is however no guarantee that implementing these recommendations will result in a reduction in the number of electrical contact incidents, illegal connections or the vandalising of Eskom equipment. While there is evidence to prove that customers do learn from these customer forums, there is however no evidence to prove that they will definitely report unsafe situations or share the information learnt with others.

The objective of the study was to determine areas of optimisation in the customer training delivery and this has been achieved as the author has identified these areas and made recommendations in terms of how they can be achieved. The study has revealed that safety education alone does not result in reduced injuries and so it is recommended that a further study be conducted on how the electrical contact incidents can be reduced as the focus of this study was on the optimisation of the training delivery.

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2. SECTION TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This section provides a review of the key concepts of this research paper. The following concepts were identified as key to the execution of this research: training and education, consumer training and education, citizenship education and training evaluation.

In the first sub-section, the concepts of education and training are defined. Thereafter, background is provided into the concept of consumer education and training. There is also a section on the difference between consumer information and consumer education, which is aimed at distinguishing between the two concepts as well as highlighting the relationship between them. Following this, is a section on citizenship education which consists of a review of the concept of citizenship education and its importance in the process of educating customers and members of the general public. Ozigi and Canham (1979: 13) state that "whatever education may be, good citizenship is clearly a part of it. We have a duty as educators to help our students to become good citizens". The sub-section after this places focus on training programme development and this followed by a section on training programme evaluation. In this section, the author covers the objective and benefits of training evaluations as well the pitfalls of training evaluations.

2.2 TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Aguinis and Kraiger (2009:452) define training as the systematic approach to affecting individuals' knowledge, skills, and attitudes in order to improve individual, team, and organisational effectiveness. In Salas, Tannenbaum, Kraiger, and Smith-Jentsch (2012:74) training is defined as the planned and systematic activities designed to promote the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Both definitions highlight the fact that training is systematic, meaning that there is a process that is followed. From these definitions, it is also evident that there are activities involved, meaning that this is not a once-off event but something which

involves a number of steps. What also becomes apparent is that the acquisition of new skills or knowledge means that the aim is to develop one or both parties through the training process.

According to Gravett (2001:ix) "education is seen as focusing on the development of the mind and of theoretical understanding, while training is viewed as the systematic development of skill patterns required by an individual to reach a particular competency or operative efficiency to perform adequately a specific, often vocational task". Gravett (2001: ix) further states that good training needs to include some conceptual knowledge, and education is more meaningful when contextualised in some form of practice. The deduction from Gravett's (2001) statements is that education involves the acquisition of knowledge which, when applied during the training process, results in the development of a person's skills, allowing that person to perform at improved levels in future. The education process can therefore also take place during the training process as the trainee would continue gaining new knowledge through this process. Training focuses on enhancing learner knowledge, which is what people know, and it also focuses on skills related to an individual's current performance (King *et al.*, 2001: 2). Based on the above definitions and statements, the acquisition of new knowledge is an ongoing process and this is pointed out by Ozigi and Canham (1979: 12) who they state that there is no limit to education and that education is a continuing process.

Further definitions of training emphasise its systematic nature. Goldstein and Ford (2002: 1) define training as "systematic acquisition of skills, rules, concepts, or attitudes that result in improved performance in another environment" and Laird (2003: 12) defines training as an experience, a discipline, or a regimen that causes people to acquire new, predetermined behaviours. The term regimen in Laird's (2003) definition describes the procedural or systematic nature of training.

In summary, training is an ongoing process which involves the transfer of skills and knowledge from one party to another. Both training and education are involved with the attainment of new knowledge and skills and are aimed at enhancing skills and knowledge or understanding of a particular subject.

2.2.1 THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CONSUMER EDUCATION AND CONSUMER INFORMATION

The concept of consumer education is relevant to this paper as the aim is to evaluate a customer education programme. The following paragraphs provide background into the concept of consumer education.

Consumer education is aimed at enhancing consumer skills and knowledge about products or services and is not merely the provision of information which cannot be utilised to the benefit of the consumer. This point is reinforced by Burton (2002: 127) where they note that "consumer education focuses on providing customers with the skills to utilise information rather than merely the presentation of information and facts without any further support". The deduction from the above statement is that the provision of information alone is not sufficient and that consumers should be empowered to utilise the product and make informed decisions after the education process. The ability to distinguish between consumer information and consumer education becomes critical as a result of this. Distinguishing between the two does not however imply that there is no relationship between the two concepts. Burton (2002: 126) defines the processing of information and the provision of education as processes, and knowledge is defined as an outcome which relates to how information and education are used.

In Burton (2002:126), three perspectives on the relationship between consumer education and consumer information are presented. The three perspectives, according to Burton (2002:126) are as follows:

- Generic material is correctly termed education, whereas knowledge relating to a specific product or service without generalising among purchase alternatives or wider consumption issues should be regarded as information. Dolan *et al.* (2000) cited in Burton (2002: 125) make a similar statement when they argue that "education should be neutral and informative".
- The second perspective is that consumer education should be a competitive effort, unique to the firm and its products or services, and not general in nature (McNeal, 1978:53 cited in Burton (2002: 125).
- The third perspective is that it is in the interest of the marketer to create knowledge about service alternatives and that when consumer knowledge of

a service alternative is comparable to or even greater than the competitive product, the difference in the amount of search or sources of information considered by the consumer disappears.

Education is a more involved process whereas provision of information is merely providing the customer with the basics which may not necessarily result in empowered consumers. "A basic level of knowledge about a particular service or product could be acquired through a relatively small amount of information. By contrast, the notion of education implies a greater depth of understanding and of consumer learning" (Burton, 2002: 127).

Organisations need to understand that information alone is not enough to assist them in the achievement of their goals and that consumer education has been proven to have positive results on a firm's bottom line. According to Kaeter (1994) cited in Burton (2002: 133) "consumer education can actually save money" in the sense that problems related to product usage can be avoided rather than waiting and dealing with them when they occur. Burton (2002: 133) further states that "it could be a much cheaper option to educate consumers to prevent problems occurring rather than waiting for problems to arise and then having to deal with them".

In summary, Benn (2002:172) states that "the overall aim of education is that pupils and students obtain active competencies in a number of fields and or become empowered to act as citizens in a democratic society". This puts emphasis on the person's ability to grow and transfer the skills learnt to others in order to ensure that the broader society is empowered. This kind of definition highlights the acquisition of knowledge in a certain field and also refers to empowerment of the individuals that are being educated. The focus is not only on availability of information but the effective use of that information. The consumer has to benefit from the education, learn new skills and be able to apply the skills learnt. There has to be an improvement in terms of the way the person has been doing things. Information alone cannot do this for the consumer, a transfer of knowledge is necessary to enable consumers to improve the way that they have always done things. According to Brennan and Coppack (2008: 307) "consumer education is concerned with the skills, attitudes, knowledge and understanding necessary to become an effective

consumer. It is recognised that this form of education needs to be provided at all life stages to empower young through to older consumers to enable them to lead confident, healthy, independent lives".

2.2.1(a) FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CONSUMER EDUCATION

There are a number of factors that should be considered before embarking on a consumer education programme. Burton (2002: 133) lists the following factors as practical issues associated with the implementation of consumer education initiatives:

- Method of delivery
- Abilities of existing customers
- Complexity of service
- Degree of segmentation
- Proportion of new and existing customers
- Appropriate sources of external information
- Rate of service innovation.

There are various methods of delivering training and each has its own implications for the firm. Depending on the type of consumer and the relationship between the firm and its consumers, a firm can select the most suitable method of training delivery. Burton (2002: 135) states that the face-to-face method is one of the better ways of building relationships between the firm and its consumers even though it can be quite costly compared to other methods. The method that is being evaluated as part of this paper is the face-to-face method of delivery as the Eskom safety education is conducted in the form of a presentation to community members.

2.2.2 CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

This section is aimed at providing background into the concept of citizenship education which is a concept that is closely related to consumer education. McGregor (1999: 209) defines a community as "a group of people who acknowledge their interconnectedness, have a sense of their common purpose, respect their

differences, share responsibility for the actions of the group and support each other's growth".

According to Dywer (2000), cited in Stewart and Atkinson (2012:164), "the concepts and theories of citizenship are modelled on a notion of the relationship between the individual and society in which they live on the basis of rights and responsibility". The concept of citizenship therefore focuses not only on the rights of the individual within society but also on their responsibilities towards society or a particular community, meaning that there is a role that one assumes as a citizen towards fellow community members. Stewart and Atkinson (2012: 164) further cite Beckett (2006) who also emphasises this point, stating that "most often citizenship is expressed as the rights of the individual and their responsibilities to contribute to the broader society of which they are part". According to Stewart and Atkinson (2012: 165) citizenship has also been defined as "a process of active engagement" aimed at the achievement of human rights for all citizens. From these definitions, it is evident that as a citizen one is expected to play an active role towards societal issues; and that citizenship is a two-way process in the sense that as a citizen, one has rights which must be protected and responsibilities which one is expected to carry out. Down (2004: 18) states that 'the study of citizenship includes the study of all things which make for public welfare – such as matters of property both personal and public; health; education and laws regarding all community adjustments". There is similarity in all the statements as they all highlight the interconnectedness between individuals and society. The other point that comes out strongly is that as citizens, people play a role in public matters.

McGregor (1999: 208) and Potter (2002: 59) refer to three elements of citizenship: (i) the civil, (ii) the political, and (iii) the social. For the purposes of this paper, the civil and social are more relevant as they both deal with issues that have to do with one's role in society. "The civil refers to community involvement, learning about and becoming helpfully involved in the life and concerns of one's community, including learning through community involvement and service to the community. The social refers to social and moral responsibilities wherein people learn self-confidence and socially and morally responsible behaviour both at work or play, at home and towards those in authority and towards each other" (McGregor, 1999: 208).

According to Mostovicz, Kakabadse and Kakabadse (2009: 247), the involvement of citizens on public administration issues has evolved from a state where citizens were viewed as subjects who were controlled, to a state where citizens were provided more involvement in public affairs. Mostovicz *et al.* (2009: 248) further refer to four different views of citizenship theories as follows:

- The micro-view, which is an instrumental view based on legal code and efficiency. In this view, citizens are viewed as subjects within authority and have limited involvement in policy making.
- The wide view, which is community-based with focus on social obligation and privilege. Citizens are viewed as active participants with equal rights and there is active, voluntary involvement in social and community affairs.
- The macro view which is based on rights and moral choice. Here citizens are viewed as individual actors with "overlapping values and identities" (Mostovicz *et al.* (2009: 248). This view is similar to the wide view when it comes to participation as citizens actively participate in policy formulation and administration.
- The long-term view, which is sustainability-based. Mostovicz *et al.* (2009: 252) are of the view that this is "theoretical only and is advocated by some scholars who define the ultimate goal of citizenship theory to be sustainability" citing Porter and Kramer (2006) and Schaefer (2004). The long-term view is based on dialogue and social justice and views citizens as long-term self-aware actors with an ethical responsibility for past, present and future social needs.

Potter (2002: 57) defines citizenship education as "the point where political ideology, education policy and strategies for social conclusion meet". Down (2004: 18) lists what he refers to as the special aims of citizenship teaching as follows:

- to inculcate habits of good behaviour and right conduct;
- to develop in children a sense of social responsibility as a preparation in community and national life; and
- to give children a general knowledge of social institutions and of the problems of government.

Citizenship education is thus aimed at ensuring that community members are informed about issues that affect them and the roles that they can play, not only on matters of individual interest but also on matters affecting communities at large. The Learning and Skills Development Agency (2005: 01) sets out the key features of successful citizenship projects as follows:

- a focus on practical action rather than simply acquiring political knowledge
- the involvement of young people in decisions about their education
- dedicated and enthusiastic staff citizenship "champions" to promote the importance of citizenship and adequate resources
- a clear definition of what citizenship means.

An important point that has been noted is that citizenship is also about preparing citizens for future occurrences and so the information provided during the education process allows citizens to act on both present and future situations.

One is a citizen before one is a customer and in providing customer education, an organisation should take the citizenship role into consideration. Ozigi and Canham (1979: 13) state that "whatever education may be, good citizenship is clearly a part of it".

2.3   TRAINING PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

In order for training to be effective, there must be a systematic way of conducting the training programme. The participants need to be clear in terms of what steps to follow in order for the training to meet the needs of the organisation and trainees. This is supported by Williams (1996: 5) who states "Traditional approaches to training can be fraught with problems in today's organisations. One of the problems is that training is not always planned and conducted systematically in ways consistent with what have long been known to be effective approaches to training design".

Williams (1996: 10) proposes a nine-step process to instructional systems design (ISD): see Table 4 below. According to Williams (1996), the process should start with an analysis of current problems. "Research evidence consistently shows, for

instance, that few organisations conduct systematic training needs assessment" (Williams, 1996: 9). The organisation should start by identifying areas of concern or areas that call for improvement in terms of performance. This means that there has to be a need for the training programme, it cannot be developed just for the sake of having one in place.

The second step is an analysis of the training context. There has to be an understanding of who is going to be trained, what conditions exist and what the expectations are of those who are going to be trained. The way that the training is conducted cannot be the same for everyone. A person in a rural area has different challenges to a person in an urban area and these have to be considered in the development of the programme. This point is linked to the three major issues highlighted by Boverie *et al.* (1995: 1) in that demographic issues have to be considered when developing a training programme.

The third step is assessing training needs with the aim of clarifying gaps. This is done to ensure that the trainer focuses on the trainee's needs in order to ensure that these gaps are closed through the training process. Thackwray (1997: 31) states "that this might be a particular target, such as improving research assessment ratings, or dealing with a problem such as levels of complaints or launching a new activity".

The fourth step in the ISD process is to clarify instructional objectives, which is where the objectives of the training programme are discussed and confirmed. According to Thackwray (1997: 31) "this should be done via appropriate consultation and discussion with stakeholders, key role players and the provider of the training". This is done to ensure that there is clear understanding of what the programme aims to achieve.

Step five of the process is about establishing assessment criteria. This is done to measure the success of the training programme. Key performance indicators are set to measure the success of the programme.

The next step involves compilation of the training materials, purchasing new or modifying available training material. King *et al.* (2001: 41) state that "if you detect a mismatch between the course material and the people signed up to attend training

you can direct learners into other programmes or adjust the course material so that it is better tailored to the training participants". This is what this step involves.

The seventh step of Williams' (1996) model is about testing the material to assess its relevance. This is also linked to the previous step and it is done to determine the appropriateness of the training equipment. According to King *et al.* (2000: 43) "there should be a match between the training material and the intended group of learners". Another point made by King *et al.* (2000: 43) is that even if the course material is reviewed before delivery, discrepancies may become apparent during the training process which may force the trainer to adapt materials to suit their audience. These should however be minor changes as major changes during the process would mean that there are fundamental problems with the design of the programme.

Delivery of training is the next step and according to King *et al.* (2000: 12) it involves the following:

- establishing and maintaining credibility
- managing the learning environment
- effectively using media
- using training methods appropriately
- providing clarification
- demonstrating effective presentation skills
- demonstrating effective questioning skills
- demonstrating effective communication skills
- evaluating learner performance.

"The International Board of Standards for Training, Performance and Instruction (IBSTPI) has developed a set of standards that uses a straight forward definition of the term competency as an essential skill without which an individual is not a qualified practitioner. These competencies are focused on the job skills and behaviours of anyone who delivers training" (King *et al.*, 2000: 10). To be a competent trainer, you should be able to demonstrate the fourteen training delivery competencies found in the IBSTPI Standards. These competencies are listed in King *et al.* (2000: 12) and are shown in Table 3 with explanations of what each competence means as well as the stage at which it is important or the stage at which

it should be carried out.

Table 3: The fourteen training delivery competences found in the IBSTPI Standards (King et al., 2000: 12)

	Competence	Explanation	Training stage
1	Analyse course material and learner information	Ensuring that an appropriate match exists between the training delivered and the people who attend the training.	Before training
2	Assure preparation of the training site	Ensuring that the physical environment matches the learner's needs and that it will make the setting conducive to learning.	Before training
3	Establish and maintain instructor credibility	This has to do with the ability to leverage personal conduct, social practices, professionalism, and content expertise to command attention and respect from learners and other stakeholders. A trainer who has credibility builds learner interest.	During training
4	Manage the learning environment	This refers to psychosocial conditions such as group dynamics and group trust level. This covers such issues as how to set the tone, maintain interest, identify need for adjustments during instruction and manage dysfunctional behaviour.	During training
5	Demonstrate effective communication skills	This has to do with managing communication in order to maximize learning and help learners achieve instructional objectives of a training program.	During training
6	Demonstrate effective presentation skills	This deals with the use of voice, eye contact and non-verbal behaviours to stimulate interest and facilitate learning, and organising content to enable smooth and seamless transition as well as the use of anecdotes, stories, analogies and humour effectively.	During training
7	Demonstrate effective questioning skills and techniques	Knowing when to ask questions, the types of questions to ask and how to direct questions appropriately.	During training
8	Respond appropriately to learners' needs for clarification or feedback	How to recognise learners with a need for feedback and clarification as well as how to give feedback that is performance-based and not person-based.	During training

9	Provide positive reinforcement and motivational incentives	Planing and using feedback and reinforcement during delivery as well as judging the adequacy and appropriateness of motivational strategies used during training, and adjusting as necessary.	During training
10	Use training methods appropriately	Implementing a variety of training methods and managing group dynamics associated with each method as well as being able to judge the appropriateness of a method.	During training
11	Use media effectively	Using hardware and media effectively, that is knowing when to use PowerPoint presentations, flipcharts etc.	During training
12	Evaluate learner performance	This is about administering tests and evaluating attainment of end of course objectives. This determines the value of the training and a number of tools can be utilised for this purpose.	After training
13	Evaluate the delivery of training	Ways of judging how well a training course works, issues such as the learning environment that affect perceptions of how effectively training is delivered.	After training
14	Report evaluation information	Preparing a report after a course, making recommendations and suggestions for new programs and activities.	After training

On completion of the above, the training evaluation process takes place to determine the effectiveness of the programme and establish whether or not the intended results have been achieved.

Table 4: The nine steps of the ISD taken from Williams (1996:10)

Step	Action
1	Analyse human performance problems
2	Analyse: • who will receive training • what working conditions will exist when learners apply what they learn • what work expectations will be the foundation for judging learner performance
3	Assess training needs to clarify gap
4	Clarify instructional objectives
5	Establish measurement criteria by which to assess success in training and sequence of instructional objectives
6	Make, buy or modify instructional materials to achieve instructional goals
7	Test instructional materials and revise them to make them more effective
8	Deliver training
9	Evaluate the training

The steps in Williams' (1996) model were put together for an employee training programme. The same steps can be applied to a customer education programme as both programmes are aimed at closing certain gaps that have been identified in terms of knowledge. "As for all forms of education, consumer education is based on the educational triangle pupil, teacher and content, viewed from the perspective of today and tomorrow" (Benn, 2002: 172).

Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2009: 3) also list a step-by-step process for the development of a training programme. The difference is that their process is a ten-step process. Both processes are similar in terms of what needs to be covered when planning a training programme. The identification of training needs is highlighted under both processes, meaning that the training programme cannot continue until a need or set of needs has been identified. They again all state that evaluation has to be conducted at the end of the training programme. In between these two stages (identification of needs and evaluation), both processes highlight the importance of organising all other resources required for the training programme. The ten-step process by Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick is shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Ten requirements for an effective training programme (Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick, 2009: 3)

Step	Action
1	Base the programme on the needs of the participants
2	Set learning objectives
3	Schedule the programme at the right time
4	Hold the programme at the right place with the right amenities
5	Invite the right people to attend
6	Select effective instructors
7	Use effective techniques and aids
8	Accomplish the programme objectives
9	Satisfy the participants
10	Evaluate the programme

2.4 TRAINING PROGRAMME EVALUATION

Wall (1994: 1) defines evaluation as "a purposeful, systematic, and careful collection and analysis of information used for the purpose of documenting the effectiveness and impact of programmes, establishing accountability and identifying areas needing change and improvement''.   Wall (1994) used the word "purpose", which is an indication of the fact that there has to be an objective to be achieved at the end of the evaluation. The purpose assists in defining the steps that must be taken to conduct the evaluation as it guides you in terms of what you want to achieve. The evaluation has to be systematic, meaning that it has to be well thought out, and a plan has to exist to guide the evaluator throughout the process.

Wall (1994: 2) suggests a nine-step evaluation process as shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Nine step evaluation process (Wall, 1994: 2)

Step	Definition
1	Define the purpose and scope of the evaluation
2	Specify the evaluation questions
3	Specify the evaluation design
4	Create the data collection action plan
5	Collect data
6	Analyse data
7	Document findings
8	Disseminate findings
9	Feedback to programme improvement

Training evaluation is a subject which many organisations have neglected over the years. "Few organisations conduct systematic evaluation of training" (Williams, 1996: 9). The focus has been found to be on carrying out the training and very little attention has been paid to determining the value that has been added by the

training. According Pineda (2010: 673) "organisations invest large amounts of resources in training, but rarely have the data to show the results of that investment". This is further supported by Mann and Robertson (1996: 14), who state that "few companies, despite the massive investment in training, are actually determining whether the training produced the desired results". Pineda (2010: 673) further argues that "only a few organisations evaluate training in depth due to the difficulty involved and the lack of valid instruments and viable models".

McLaughlin (1975) cited in Fleischmann and Williams (1996: 3) states that "evaluations of educational programmes have expanded considerably over the past 30 years. Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 represented the first major piece of federal social legislation that included a mandate for evaluation". McLaughlin's (1975) statement is an indication of the lack of evaluation in past educational programmes which appears to remain a concern even in recent years as Pineda (2010: 673) also highlights the lack of training evaluation, stating that "only a few organisations evaluate training in depth and that public authorities invest large amounts of resources in training, but rarely have the data to show the results of that investment".

Training evaluation should be part of all training programmes. According to Sims (1993: 591) "the training process is not complete until and unless evaluation has taken place, for it is evaluation which informs training and gives it meaning". In order for organisations to have an idea of whether the training programmes that have been implemented are adding value, evaluation needs to take place. "One purpose of any evaluation is to examine and assess the implementation and effectiveness of specific instructional activities in order to make adjustments or changes in those activities. This type of evaluation is labelled process evaluation" (Fleischmann and Williams, 1996: 4). Fleischmann and Williams' (1996) research was specifically on evaluation of school programmes by teachers; however the findings from their study can be applied to any other training programmes as they highlight the importance of training evaluation.

In 1998, amendments to the ESEA reauthorized the Chapter 1 (formerly Title I) programme, and strengthened the emphasis on evaluation and local programme improvement (Fleischmann and Williams, 1996: 4). Improvement plans had to be

put together for programmes that were not meeting the set standards. In cases where the improvement plans did not yield the desired results, further steps were taken to improve such programmes and raise student achievement which was the ultimate goal.

Evaluation should not be a once-off event. For each intervention that takes place, an evaluation should follow. "It must be emphasised that all components of the system and their interaction are the objects of scrutiny and that *personnelists* should ensure that training programmes are designed with a priori consideration given to evaluation" (Sims, 1993: 593). This statement highlights the importance of evaluating training programmes on an ongoing basis. Organisations should not only conduct an evaluation exercise at programme inception but ensure that evaluation remains part of the training programme. This will give participants an opportunity to provide feedback and make suggestions in terms of how effective the training has been. Participants in the training programme will not only be the trainees but all stakeholders who are involved in the training process, including the organisation that is offering the training.

As training involves some costs, it is important for an organisation to keep assessing whether the training that is being carried out adds value to the business. "Evaluation of any training programme must inform us whether the training programme has been able to deliver the goals and objectives in terms of cost incurred and benefits achieved" (Al-Ajlouni, Athamneh and Jaradat, 2010: 56). There has to be an assessment of the training to determine whether it is in line with the business objectives and whether or not it is worth continuing with the programme as it is.

There are a vast number of reasons why organisations evaluate their training initiatives and so it is important for the evaluator to have an objective in mind before carrying out an evaluation. Brethower and Rummler (1979, cited in Sims, 1993: 591) state that "evaluation of training means different things to different people." There has to be clarity in terms of why the programme is being evaluated. According to Brethower and Rummler (1979: 14) "when people can't agree on what they are trying to evaluate and why, they actually won't agree on how to evaluate".

2.4.1 TRAINING EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND BENEFITS

The purpose of the research is to evaluate the Eskom safety education programme with the aim of identifying areas of optimisation in the way that customer forums are conducted. "The primary and overriding objectives of the evaluation of agency training programmes should be to collect data that will serve as a valid basis for improving the training system and maintaining quality control over its components" (Sims, 1993: 593).

According to Al-Ajlouni, Athamneh and Jaradat (2010: 1) "evaluation of any training programme must inform us whether the training programme has been able to deliver the goals and objectives in terms of cost incurred and benefits achieved".

Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2009: 19) highlight three reasons for evaluating training programmes: evaluation can

- Tell an organisation how to improve future programmes;
- Determine whether a programme should be continued or dropped; and
- Justify the existence of the training department and its budget.

Both Kirkpatrick (1983: 1) and Homer (1965: 38) state that evaluation assists in determining whether or not a programme is worth continuing with and whether or not it is in line with business objectives.

Various authors highlight the benefits of training evaluation. Sims (1993: 593) also lists some benefits which can be derived from training programme evaluation, including "increased knowledge and expertise in the development and implementation of training programmes that produce the results for which they were intended". The benefit to the organisation is improvement in terms of the types of projects that are developed by the organisation. The organisation gets to understand what is important to the people who are being trained and therefore improves its standards so that they are in line with trainee expectations.

Sims (1993: 594) further lists the advantages of conducting training evaluations as follows:

- Ability to identify relevant audiences, interested in training evaluation, early in the process to ensure that evaluation feedback addresses their interests and

information needs.

- Development of an evaluation process that complements the training programme. Evaluative methods can be carefully incorporated to minimise any disruptive effects on the training programme.

- Ability to construct a research design that allows for valid conclusions about the programme's effectiveness. This includes finding appropriate measures, selecting appropriate groups or individuals to train, identifying comparison groups, and isolating extraneous variables prior to beginning training.

- Ability to delineate material, data, and human resource requirements for evaluation and incorporating these as part of the training programme.

- Ability to modify the training programme based on feedback gained through ongoing evaluation.

The advantages listed by Sims (1993) are applicable to Eskom even though Sims's research was focusing on personnel training, which brings the author to the conclusion that training programmes have similar benefits for participants regardless of who is being trained.

2.4.2 PITFALLS IN TRAINING EVALUATION

As much as the evaluation process has some benefits, there can be instances where the evaluation process is not conducted well or is lacking in certain aspects. "Too often, training programme evaluations have failed. Many of these failures can be attributed to inadequate planning or designing, lack of objectivity, evaluation errors of one sort or another, improper interpretation of results and inappropriate results" (Sims, 1993: 595). The process of evaluating a programme involves collection of data which can at a later stage be used to understand gaps in the current process. The data alone cannot be used to make decisions: it has to be turned into meaningful information. The organisation therefore needs to have the right tools and people to turn the data into information which can assist in the evaluation process. It is therefore crucial for an organisation to plan ahead and ensure that all the necessary steps are clearly outlined and are easy to follow and understand.

The trainers may be good at delivering the message that the organisation wants to convey while not necessarily being good at evaluating the training programme as a

whole. "Some trainers gather data for evaluation but do not analyse those data for trends or use them to improve existing training programmes" (Boverie *et al.,* 1995: 3). If evaluation is to be effective, all stakeholders should have an opportunity to evaluate the training programme. This means that everyone who is involved or impacted by the programme should have an opportunity to evaluate.

2.5   CONCLUSION

Education is important in ensuring that people are made aware of what is happening around them. The focus should not be on providing people with information but ensuring that their lives improve after the education or training process has taken place. Education should be treated as an empowering process by providing more than just general information. The consumer education process should pay specific attention to the needs that have been identified in a particular community and the organisation should not make use of the same training programme across different market segments.

Training evaluation should not be treated as a standalone process but should be part of the entire planning process. Trainers need to ensure that training interventions are evaluated on an ongoing basis as the feedback can be quite useful in terms of identifying the value that is being added by the programme. Proper plans and tools have to be available for the evaluation process as it can be quite an intensive process which requires an understanding of how to interpret the data that has been collected.

It is important to state the objectives of the evaluation before continuing with the evaluation process as these provide the evaluator with a guide in terms of what will be needed throughout the process. An evaluation cannot be successful if there is no goal in mind. The tools necessary to complete the evaluation process will be determined by the objectives of the evaluation.

Much of the research that has been referred to in this paper was research that was not necessarily aimed at consumer education programmes. However, there are common themes in all the processes suggested by the different writers. The development and management of a training programme is the same regardless of the type of training programme that is being evaluated.

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3. SECTION THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section consists of six sub-sections which provide an overview of the research methodology that was followed for this paper. The first sub-section section deals with the aims and objectives of the study and provides detail on the elements that were evaluated as part of the study. The second sub-section places focus on the research paradigm. The paradigm adopted in this paper is that of critical realism which Babbie (2011: 44) defines as "a paradigm that holds that things are real insofar as they produce effects". The third section provides detail on the population and sampling of respondents, which is how the author identified and selected the respondents. The data collection process follows with detail on how the data was collected and thereafter, there is a sub-section on data analysis. At the end of the section, the author provides detail on the ethical issues that were taken into account as well as how these were addressed and managed.

3.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objective of this research is to evaluate the delivery of the Eskom Customer Safety Education Programme in the Queenstown Customer Services Area. The researcher aims to identify areas of optimisation in the way that customer forums are conducted. The focus is therefore on the actual delivery of the training, that is, the manner in which the training is conducted at the forums.

For the purposes of this research, the focus is on the pedagogical coherence of the training process. "The elements that are evaluated at this level are those that relate to the design and implementation of the training and its suitability for the target group" (Pineda, 2010:682). These elements are as follows:

1) Training objectives – analysis is conducted on their relevance to the needs that are expected to be met.

2) Content – evaluated in relation to the training objectives, its relevance, the appropriateness of its selection, and the level of precision and structuring.

3) Methodology – its relevance is determined in relation to the objectives and content selected.

4) Human resources – evaluation of the trainers' teaching skills, in terms of both knowledge and practical experience as well as pedagogical skill and group management.

5) Materials and functional resources – appropriateness, relevance and other material aspects related to training.

3.2   RESEARCH PARADIGM

The research paper is aimed at evaluating the delivery of the training. Patton (198:14) cited in Clarke (1999: 1) "Programme evaluation is the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programmes for use by specific people to reduce uncertainties, improve effectiveness, and make decisions with regard to what those programmes are doing and affecting".

Babbie (2011: 32) defines a paradigm as a model or framework for observation and understanding, which shapes both what we see and how we understand it". The paradigm adopted in this paper is that of critical realism which Babbie (2011: 44) defines as "a paradigm that holds that things are real insofar as they produce effects". The safety education programme exists and is aimed at producing effects on the attendees. Those effects include creating a better understanding of electricity safety and how to react when faced with electrical contact incidents.

3.3   POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The author identified two populations from which data would be collected for this research paper. One population consists of the Eskom employees who are involved in the customer education process and the other population consists of the customers who receive electricity safety education.

- A Supervisor who is responsible for the training programme. This person has on some occasions delivered the training at the customer interventions

- A Service Agent who conducts training in the Cradock, Graaf Reinet and Queenstown areas; and

- Nine Service Representatives who conduct safety education in the following sub-areas which all fall under the Queenstown Customer Services Area: (1) Queenstown, (2) Aliwal North, (3) Cradock and (4) Graaf Reinet.

The author made use of purposive sampling to select respondents from the Eskom population. Babbie (2011: 179) describes purposive sampling as "a type of non-probability sampling in which units to be observed are selected on the basis of the researcher's judgement about which ones will be the most useful or representative". The researcher selected the following respondents from the Eskom population:

- A Service Agent – this person has been conducting customer safety education in three of the Queenstown Customer Services sub-areas (Cradock, Graaff-Reinet and Queenstown areas) and therefore has an understanding of the customers in these different areas. The author was of the view that this person would contribute positively to the research due to his experience and the data collected from him would also be compared to that received from the other respondents who have worked in the same areas as this respondent.

- A sample of five Service Representatives who conduct safety education in sub-areas which fall under the Queenstown Customer Services Area (which includes sub-areas Queenstown, Aliwal North, Cradock and Graaff-Reinet) was selected as follows: four from the Queenstown office and one from the Aliwal North office. The Service Representatives from each of these offices have different villages and townships on which they focus. Out of the six from the Queenstown office, four attend to customers in the Lady Frere villages/townships and the other two focus on the Whittlesea side of Queenstown. In Aliwal North, the four Service Representatives are split between Sterkspruit, Jamestown/Burgersdorp areas. The researcher selected two people from each office with the aim of ensuring that someone working on both sides of each sub-area was selected. Due to unforeseen circumstances, only one person was interviewed and this person has worked on both sides of the Aliwal North area.

Pineda (2010) suggests that participant feedback is an important part of the training process. For population group B, the author collected data using the interview survey method after the delivery of customer forums to determine if learning had taken place, and also to solicit some ideas in terms of the training delivery. The author utilised another type of non-probability sampling which is referred to as

reliance on available subjects when selecting a sample from the customers who attended the customer forums. This is due to the fact that the author did not have an available list of the customers who would be attending the forums. According to Babbie (2011: 178) the risk with this method is that "it does not permit any control over the representativeness of a sample and that great caution should be exercised in generalising the data collected". A sample of two individuals per forum who were willing to participate was selected and a questionnaire which the interviewer completed during the interview was utilised. The author attended each of the customer forums and selected two customers from the available customers. This was done by identifying people who participated a lot throughout the entire intervention. The author was of the view that these people would be open in terms of their responses as they were vocal during the training process. Each person was approached before the end of the training process and asked if they would be able to stay behind for a face-to-face interview after the customer forum. Everyone who was approached indicated they were willing to stay and be interviewed. Immediately after the end of the forum, the author met with each individual separately and explained the purpose of the interview, the types of questions that would be asked, and the fact that the participants were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. Before commencing with the interview, participants were asked if they were keen on continuing with the interview and a participant consent form was given to them to sign. Once this was signed, the interview commenced and responses were captured during the interview process.

In total, six customers were interviewed: two customers from each of the following sub-areas: Queenstown, Aliwal North and Cradock.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

From the range of instruments that can be used to evaluate the pedagogical coherence of training, Pineda (2010: 683) recommends the following which are most frequently used and provide the most significant findings:

1) Participants' questionnaire
2) Trainer interview
3) Observation

4) Self-evaluation

Qualitative data was collected through one-on-one interviews with the respondents. A questionnaire was put together and face-to-face interviews took place with each respondent. Open-ended questions were asked in order to create dialogue between the interviewer and the respondents.

The Eskom staff members were first contacted telephonically to explain the author's intention to interview them as well as the aim of the research project. Appointments were then sent via email by the author to each of the respondents with each appointment scheduled for 45 minutes. During the interview, the respondents were asked a mixture of open and closed ended questions with the intention of creating dialogue between the author and the respondents. Babbie (2011: 263) cites some benefits of using the interview as follows:

- Interview survey attain higher response rates than mail surveys
- The presence of an interviewer also generally decreases the number of "don't knows" and "no answers"
- The interviewer is able to probe for answers
- Interviewers can also serve as a guard against questionnaire items that are confusing
- The interviewer is able to observe respondents and ask questions.

The table below contains the interview questions for Eskom staff. The questions were aimed at (i) assessing the respondents' understanding of the Eskom customer safety education programme, (i) assessing the respondent's training skills, (iii) gaining information on the tools used during the training process, (iv) understanding the trainers' way of evaluating their training delivery, and (v) soliciting ideas from the trainers on how the training process can be improved if necessary.

Table 7: Interview questionnaire for Eskom staff

Assessing the respondent's understanding of the Eskom safety education programme objectives

1. What in your view is the aim of the Eskom customer safety education programme?

2. In what ways do you believe that the aims that you mentioned above are being achieved through the current programme?

3. Which aspects of safety education do you focus on during the training process?

Assessing trainer skills

4. What type of training have you received to equip you with the skills required to conduct customer forums?

5. What other skills would you like to develop? Skills that would assist you in the customer training process.

Assessing the use of training tools

6. What training material do you make use of at the customer forums?

7. Do you believe that the material provided assists you in delivering the training? Please support your answer.

8. Eskom provides you with an evaluation form which is completed by the community leader after the forums. What value is added by the evaluation forms in your view?

9. What do you do with suggestions that you receive from customers regarding the training that you conduct?

10. Please share any other suggestions which you have around the training material/tools.

Customer understanding of content

11. Would you say that customers benefit from the training that you offer? If so, how?

12. How do you evaluate customer understanding of the training that you deliver?

13. What would you say needs to be done in order for customers to understand and practise what is taught at the forums?

Trainer suggestions

14. Please feel free to share any other information that has to do with the training programme which you believe is important. Anything that would be of benefit to Eskom and its customers.

For population group B the intention was to cover the following during the customer interview process: (i) understanding of the objectives of the Eskom customer training programme, (ii) assessing the level of learning that had taken place during the forum, (iii) respondent's views on the Eskom presentation and trainer skills, (iv) views on how the programme can be improved. The questionnaire is shown in Table 7.

Table 8: Interview questionnaire for customers

Objectives of the Eskom training programme
1. What in your understanding is the aim of the Eskom Customer Forums?
2. Do you believe that these aims were achieved today?
3. Do you always make time to attend the Eskom customer forums? Why?
Assessing the level of learning that has taken place
4. What did you learn from today's forum?
5. What are you going to do with the knowledge that you acquired today?
6. Do you believe that the message from today's forum was easy to understand? Please support your statement.
Views on the presentation/presenter's skills
7. What did you think of the way the information was presented?
8. Do you have any suggestions for the presenter?
9. Is there anything which you believe should have been done to make the message clearer?
General views on the programme
10. How often should Eskom conduct the community forums?
11. Please share some suggestions on how you think the forums can be improved?
12. Would you recommend these forums to other community members? Why?

3.5   DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis process involved the identification of common responses from the respondents and counting how often those occurred. Creswell (2003: 220) refers to this approach as data transformation and defines it as an approach which "involves creating codes and themes quantitatively, then counting the number of times they occur in the text data". Creswell (2003: 221) further states that "this quantification of qualitative data enables the researcher to compare quantitative results with the qualitative data". Using this method allowed the author to make conclusions on customer and presenter responses, and also to identify common themes and make conclusions about the research. According to Flick (2007: 114) "all interviews are compared in order to derive commonalities and tendencies".

3.6 RELIABILITY AND TRANSFERABILITY

According to Babbie (2011: 129) "reliability is a measure of whether a particular technique, applied repeatedly to the same object, yields the same result each time". This study was only conducted in the Queenstown Customer Service area and there is no guarantee that it would yield the same results if conducted in a different Eskom area. The results are specific to the area within which it was conducted and due to differences in the areas that are supplied by Eskom, one cannot assume that respondents from other areas would provide the same responses.

In terms of the specific area within which the study was conducted, the results can be relied upon as common themes were observed from the responses provided by the respondents who participated during the data collection process.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The customer education programme is the responsibility of the Customer Services and Risk Management departments. The researcher is a Manager in one of the customer service areas and is therefore responsible for the execution of the programme. As this research will assist the Customer Services department in the implementation of the programme, the researcher remained objective and made use of all the information that emerged during the research.

Interviewees were given an opportunity to read their responses, in order to ensure that everything had been recorded correctly. Permission to conduct this research was granted by the researcher's immediate manager in writing. As the author used humans as research objects, an application was submitted to the Rhodes Business School Ethics Committee for approval of the research questionnaire prior to commencing with the interviews.

3.8 REFERENCES

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